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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. COLLINS of Georgia).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
March 14, 2018.

I hereby appoint the Honorable DOUG COLLINS to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

PAUL D. RYAN,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 8, 2018, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties. All time shall be equally allocated between the parties, and in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m. Each Member, other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip, shall be limited to 5 minutes.

EDINA GIRLS HOCKEY CHAMPS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. PAULSEN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the Edina High School girls hockey team for winning the State hockey championship, their second consecutive championship they have won in a row.

The bar was set high for the girls from Edina after last year's championship win, but they proved to be up to the challenge. Impressive wins over Brainerd/Little Falls and Eden Prairie were a prelude to a showdown in the finals with the Centennial Cougars, who, in December, defeated Edina in one of only two losses they suffered all season.

There is no doubt the game was tense, and the teams entered the third period tied at 1. It was there in the third that the Hornets snuck one past Centennial's defense. Edina never looked back, holding a 2 to 1 lead until time expired.

Mr. Speaker, the hard work and determination of these student athletes is impressive. Congratulations again to the players, the coaches, the fans, and the parents on winning the State championship. The entire community is proud of their effort.

CONGRATULATIONS, MERCY HOSPITAL

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Mercy Hospital in Coon Rapids for being honored with the 2018 Distinguished Hospital Award for Clinical Excellence from Healthgrades.

Healthgrades measures hospitals across the country and awards this honor only to hospitals that achieve outstanding patient outcomes. Patients treated in these facilities achieve better clinical results than 95 percent of hospitals across the country, and that means that more of Mercy's patients make it home to their families healthy and free of complications.

In addition to the Distinguished Hospital Award, Mercy Hospital also earned recognition for its quality critical care, gastrointestinal care, and general surgery. Patients who have treatments or surgeries in these areas have a lower risk of mortality and also of experiencing a complication during their treatment.

Mr. Speaker, the many doctors and nurses and staff who support Mercy Hospital work hard to provide world-class care to their patients, and I am really pleased to see them recognized for their dedication and their diligence. Patients in our community can be confident that they are receiving the highest quality of care.

MINNETONKA HOCKEY CHAMPS

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the Minnetonka High School boys hockey team on winning the State championship title, their first State championship in program history.

Minnetonka claimed their title with an impressive 5 to 2 victory over Duluth East in front of 18,000 fans in the Xcel Energy Center. Duluth East was on the board first with a goal early in the first period, but the Skippers came back to tie the game, scored a second goal in short order, and never trailed for the remainder of the game.

Mr. Speaker, the road to the championship is not easy, and these student athletes also had to balance their time in the classroom with their sports and training schedule.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate Coach Sean Goldsworthy for bringing the team to a State championship in his inaugural season as head coach, and to all of the players, families, and friends of the Minnetonka High School boys hockey team.

PRECISION MEDICINE

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to ask my colleagues to support the Increasing Access to Precision Medicine Act, legislation that I am coauthoring with my colleague Congressman SWALWELL.

Precision medicine is care that is tailored to a specific patient's genetics, environment, and lifestyle, an emerging field that is showing tremendous promise. It gives providers a better ability to diagnose and treat genetic disorders like cancer, and it helps identify individuals at risk of disease.

Precision medicine also allows providers to reduce healthcare costs and improve outcomes for their patients

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through better testing and analysis, but today, many of these tests are not covered by insurance providers.

Our bill will have the Department of Health and Human Services and the National Academy of Medicine study the effects and cost savings of precision medicine and offer suggestions for ways to cover the costs of genetic and genomic tests for Medicaid beneficiaries.

Mr. Speaker, the Increasing Access to Precision Medicine Act will increase the quality of care while finding ways to lower costs for patients.

WE NEED A BUDGET THAT INCLUDES THE DREAM ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. GUTIÉRREZ) for 5 minutes.

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. Mr. Speaker, on September 5 of last year, the day after Labor Day, the temperature was 86 degrees in Washington, D.C., so that was a long time ago. On that date, President Trump and his henchmen announced that they were killing the DACA program.

The next day, meeting with my Democratic colleagues, I said I would not support any spending or budget bills that didn't include a Dream Act or some other serious attempt to put Dreamers with DACA in a safe place. That was 6 months ago, and we are right back where we started.

The Republicans have a bill to cut legal immigration and abandon the Dreamers in some semilegal limbo, and the chairman of the Judiciary Committee had a press conference about it yesterday and is touting his bill as the last chance to get something done about DACA.

No, this will not resolve DACA. We will not support it in exchange for it.

What the chairman did not mention is that his bill is actually about something else: it is about changing the racial makeup of America's immigrants so that more of them are White and fewer of them are from countries in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, and Latin America.

Analysis by the Center for Global Development of Goodlatte's proposal states the following: ''Hispanic and Black immigrants would be roughly twice as likely to be barred by the immigration cuts as white immigrants.''

The legal immigration cuts would bar the majority of Muslim and Catholic immigrants from coming legally to the United States of America.

While the President keeps saying that he wants a better class of immigrants coming to America, the cuts would actually substantially reduce the number of university graduate immigrants.

The Goodlatte bill would expand some work visas, but we would only add one university graduate for every seven workers removed by eliminating the family visas and diversity visas.

Now, tell me, how does cutting out hardworking immigrants and guaranteeing that the only available avenue to come and work in America is an illegal one, how does that protect Dreamers? It doesn't.

We are once again chasing bad policies down a rabbit hole, because the real agenda on the other side of the aisle is to leverage the national concern over the plight of Dreamers into a radical reordering of legal immigration to make it whiter.

Sorry. That is not the agenda of my party and, frankly, not the agenda of my fellow Americans. So, with more than 80 of my colleagues, we will release a letter today at a press conference we wrote to the leaders of both parties in the House and the House appropriators. It echos what I started saying 6 months ago: we need a budget or spending measure that includes the Dream Act, a clean Dream Act, and that is it.

This week or next week, we all know we need to pass a budget to keep the government open, and Democrats are clear: our country, our Congress, and our leaders need to figure out how Dreamers get to live in the country they grew up in, the country they love, the country that has invested so much in them and received so much from them.

Don't be lulled into a false sense of security. The Federal courts didn't settle this or give us a permanent solution. They just gave a lot of lawmakers a convenient excuse for inaction.

I am not buying it and neither should you, because also in the spending bill there are likely to be billions of dollars for deportation, detention, breaking up families, and breaking down doors in neighborhoods across the country. That is why our letter says we do not only want a clean Dream Act included in the omnibus, but we want to reduce funding appropriated to DHS' detention and deportation machine, specifically funding for detention beds, deportation agents operating under ICE or CBP, and an end to border militarization.

We oppose any funding that expands the construction of walls or fencing at the southern border. We should, instead, allocate border security resources to modernize the infrastructure and technology at our ports of entry, which would actually benefit our country and our economy.

Mr. Speaker, 6 months after Donald Trump and Jeff Sessions instigated this crisis by proclaiming their desire to deport Dreamers and kicking their safety and security in our Nation to this do-nothing Congress, we now have what could be the last opportunity to actually take permanent legislative action.

Do not be distracted by the President's nativist agenda or the bills in Congress that seek to implement his nationalist view. Do not give up on taking action that is serious and will actually protect Dreamers and the communities that they live in, and do not allow the deportation and family destruction machine to thrive and grow on our watch.

We must take a stand right here, right now, and stand up for what is right and what is beneficial for our Nation. I am proud to stand with the majority of Americans and 83 colleagues who have joined me on this letter. The time is now.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a letter from 83 Members to House leadership and appropriators.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
Washington, DC, March 13, 2018.

Hon. PAUL RYAN,
Speaker of the House, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.
Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Democratic Leader, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.
Hon. RODNEY FRELINGHUYSEN,
Chairman, Committee on Appropriations, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.
Hon. NITA LOWEY,
Ranking Member, Committee on Appropriations, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER RYAN, LEADER PELOSI, CHAIRMAN FRELINGHUYSEN, AND RANKING MEMBER LOWEY: With the newest government funding deadline on March 23, 2018 looming, tens of thousands of Dreamers continue to lose their protection from deportation since President Trump rescinded the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program on September 5, 2017. And while numerous stopgap measures to fund the government have been enacted since September of last year, zero legislative action has been taken to protect Dreamers permanently. Congress is long overdue in acting on this issue, and the failure to pass the Dream Act has resulted in countless lives put in peril. Meanwhile the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) tears families apart by targeting Dreamers, long-term residents, asylum-seekers, families and children for detention and deportation. As the negotiations for the Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 Omnibus Appropriations bill are ongoing, we urge you to:

(1) include the bipartisan Dream Act;

(2) reduce funding appropriated to DHS's detention and deportation machine, specifically funding for detention beds, deportation agents operating under Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Customs and Border Protection (CBP), and border militarization; and

(3) oppose any funding that expands the construction of walls or fencing at the southern border, and to instead allocate border security resources to modernize the infrastructure and technology at our ports of entry.

The appropriations for ICE and CBP have come at significant, detrimental cost to our communities throughout the country because all immigrants are in the crosshairs of the Trump Administration's mass deportation agenda. When agents for both ICE and CBP operate without any discretion or regard to length of residence in the U.S. and deep ties in our communities, the fear and mistrust in our neighborhoods is heightened. It is an abuse of ICE and CBP funds to rip fathers from U.S. citizen children and tear severely ill children or young infants from their parents' arms. Now more than ever, we cannot fund the detention and deportation of valued members of our communities on the border and in the interior and vulnerable individuals and families seeking refuge in our country, especially when the key components of DHS that enforce our nation's immigration laws operate with negligible oversight.

As Congressional leaders, we must exercise our powers responsibly to protect the

Dreamers through legislative action and to wield our power of the purse to ensure that the Department of Homeland Security does not make immigrant families and communities casualties of a reckless, indiscriminate detention and deportation machine.

Sincerely,

Luis V. Gutiérrez; Adriano Espaillat; Raúl M. Grijalva; Jerrold Nadler; Zoe Lofgren; Michelle Lujan Grisham; Judy Chu; Joe Crowley; Jan Schakowsky; José E. Serrano; Steve Cohen; Eliot L. Engel; Ted Deutch; Dina Titus; Nydia M. Velázquez; Lloyd Doggett; Carolyn B. Maloney; Linda T. Sánchez; Gene Green; Paul D. Tonko; Alcee L. Hastings.

Al Green; Albio Sires; Peter Welch; Barbara Lee; Adam Smith; Keith Ellison; Gwen Moore; Henry C. ''Hank'' Johnson, Jr.; Ben Ray Luján; Maxine Waters; Bobby L. Rush; Elijah Cummings; Danny K. Davis; Eleanor Holmes Norton; Yvette D. Clarke; Robert A. Brady; Hakeem S. Jeffries; Grace F. Napolitano; Jared Polis; Norma J. Torres; Juan Vargas; Bonnie Watson Coleman.

Donald Norcross; Tony Cárdenas; Kathleen M. Rice; Mark Pocan; Mark Takano; Darren Soto; Michael E. Capuano; Ed Perlmutter; Nanette Diaz Barragán; Grace Meng; Robin L. Kelly; Jimmy Gomez; Bill Foster; Joaquin Castro; Ruben Gallego; Brenda L. Lawrence; Robert C. ''Bobby'' Scott; Brendan F. Boyle; Donald S. Beyer, Jr.; Earl Blumenauer; Dwight Evans.

J. Luis Correa; Pramila Jayapal; Ro Khanna; Suzanne Bonamici; James P. McGovern; Joseph P. Kennedy, III; Jamie Raskin; Colleen Hanabusa; Jacky Rosen; John Lewis; Mark DeSaulnier; Val Butler Demings; Frank Pallone, Jr.; Ted W. Lieu; Alma S. Adams, Ph.D.; Salud O. Carbajal; Donald M. Payne, Jr.; John Yarmuth; Alan Lowenthal.

CELEBRATING PUBLIC SCHOOLS WEEK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, this week our Nation celebrates Public Schools Week. It is a time when we acknowledge the diversity and success of our public schools and the sound education that they provide.

Strengthening America's public schools is the best way to ensure our children's future success and our country's prosperity. Ninety percent of American children attend public schools.

This week, supporters across the country will share stories of the many students, schools, and professionals who make public schools such a vital component of our communities. This includes parents who are working hard to improve educational outcomes for children. Advocates nationwide will share scores of stories about public school students and their successes.

Mr. Speaker, public school teachers truly make a difference in the lives of our students. They prepare them for a bright and successful future. It is their dedication to our students that builds strong public schools and, therefore, strong communities.

As a senior member of the Education and the Workforce Committee and a product of public schools, I know the incredible role our schools play in communities across the Nation. Public schools today have much good news to share, from increasing graduation rates and reduced dropout rates to improved ratings given by communities on school performance.

In fact, public school graduation rates have risen from 79 percent in 2010–2011 to 83 percent in 2014–2015. This increase of the measured 5 years reflects that four out of five public school students receive a regular high school diploma within 4 years of starting ninth grade.

While the graduation rates varies among States, 34 States have reported graduation rates between 80 and 89 percent, with the highest being 91 percent in Iowa, followed by 90 percent in New Jersey. Based on data from the current population survey, the dropout rate has steadily decreased, from 10.9 percent in 2000 to 7.4 percent in 2010 and 5.9 percent in 2015.

Last year, 69 percent of recent high school graduates enrolled in a 2-year or 4-year college.

We are making progress, but we can do more.

In many communities, the school district is the largest employer. Teachers, busdrivers, administrators, cafeteria workers, coaches, and facilities management all depend on the school district, and all of these jobs contribute to the fabric of a community. Communities are stronger and schools are better when we all work together to support public education.

Public schools also make sure our kids receive at least one nutritious meal a day. More than 30 million school lunches are served each day, including 20 million free and 2 million reduced price lunches. For some students, it may be the only meal they receive will be the one at school.

Mr. Speaker, a child's opportunity for success should not be left to chance. Every child needs a quality, well-equipped school right in their neighborhood where they can learn, be inspired, and thrive.

Public education has always been the great equalizer in the United States, and I am grateful for the contributions of our public schools. I know that, together, we will continue to work to strengthen them for our most precious resource: our children.

Happy Public Schools Week.

GUN VIOLENCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI).

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, today, thousands of students across the Nation are walking out of their schools to demand real action to end the tragedy of gun violence. Young men and women across the country—children, really—from coast to coast and in the heartland of America are standing up and speaking out for change. Members of Congress will meet some of them on the west front lawn to join them in saying this: Enough is enough.

Mr. Speaker, I thank our distinguished colleague from Florida (Mr. DEUTCH) for his extraordinary leadership, whether it is with the students, with legislation on the floor, or in the community at large to help make the difference.

□ 1015

Here we are, community after community, reeling from the horror of gun violence, perpetrated against our children, our families.

Our hearts ache for those in Orlando, San Bernardino, Mother Emanuel Church, Las Vegas, Sutherland Springs, Parkland, Newtown. The list is a very long one, and it is, in addition, on the streets and in the homes across our country.

There has been too much violence and too much pain. This should not be a political issue. The American people overwhelmingly want action. A full 97 percent of Americans support requiring background checks for all gun buys, including 97 percent of gun owners. There is a commonsense, bipartisan path forward in the Congress. We can take action today on comprehensive background checks without the dangerous Concealed Carry Reciprocity bill, allowing the CDC to study gun violence, and gun violence restraining orders that empower law enforcement to intervene when someone is a threat to themselves or others.

We should all be listening to the American people on both sides of the aisle, and we should allow the House to vote on bipartisan gun violence solutions. The families and students suffering from the heartbreak of gun violence deserve real leadership in this body, not a Republican White House and Congress that are saying one thing and doing another. It is deeply disappointing that, just days after embracing the need for commonsense, bipartisan gun violence prevention, still we have nothing coming forward.

House Democrats have filed discharge petitions to force votes on the Thompson-King bipartisan background check bill with 200 cosponsors. Two hundred cosponsors for a background check bill. That is a start. That is remarkable. And also the Background Check Completion Act. Democrats will continue to press for bipartisan progress to reduce the epidemic of gun violence in our Nation.

Let me say, as we go out in a little bit to join the students who are doing their walkout across the country, an enormous thank-you to them. An enormous thank-you to them. While we have sympathy for everyone who has loss of life because of gun violence across the country—they are always in our prayers, in our thoughts, and in our determination to make a difference—the eloquence, the courage, the determination of these young people in Florida to come forward in such

an eloquent and articulate way. They have been on the other side of a gun. That shouldn't happen to our children.

So while we all respect the Second Amendment and what that means for our country, and while we all want to do something very important, we must listen. And what the kids are doing is on top of a lot of positive action taken by the Bradys, taken by every town, taken by our former colleague Gabby Giffords and her initiative, The Promise of Newtown, and all over the country. So much activity has happened, and now it has hopefully culminated at a place where the children, with how savvy they are about social media and the rest, identifying with each other across the country, will be the tipping point that will make the difference to make our country safer.

We thank them for what they are doing, for their leadership. We also thank them for taking their grief and turning it into action to save lives. And to remember how important, in all of this, the vote is.

And so I say to my colleagues, there isn't one of us in here whose political survival compares in the slightest bit to the survival of our children. These kids have the courage to come forward. We have to have the courage to vote and take action to save lives. Ninety-five percent of the American people support us supporting legislation to do just that.

As we pray and have our moments of silence, let's act upon those sentiments with real action, again, to make a difference. Again, I salute the kids, the young people. I look forward to seeing them on the steps outside on the west lawn. We will gather in the rotunda. All Members are invited to gather in the rotunda, to go outside and associate ourselves and sing the praises of these young people for their courage.

HONORING THE LIFE OF MIKE MABIN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FITZPATRICK) for 5 minutes.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of a man who touched so many lives in Bucks County, Pennsylvania.

Mike Mabin, a lifelong resident of lower Bucks County, Pennsylvania, was a man who took immense pride in his community and selflessly gave back to it every chance he could. A successful businessman, Mike was the president and CEO of PennFab, Inc., in Bucks County. And as a member of the St. Mary Hospital Advisory Board and the vice chairman of the Bucks County Industrial Development Authority, Mike cared deeply about and worked tirelessly for all of his neighbors in our community.

A proud veteran of the U.S. Coast Guard, Mike was proud to be an American and deeply valued service to country. His advocacy was instrumental in making sure that Congress passed the Fairness to Veterans Act, as he wanted to make sure that all those who courageously served our Nation were given opportunities here back home.

I ask all my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join me in sending our deepest condolences to Mike's wife, Marion, along with his children: Heather, Michael, and Jillian. May they take comfort in knowing that Mike made a positive and significant difference in so many lives, and he will be remembered for his patriotism, his loyalty, and his friendship.

GUN VIOLENCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, there are so many important issues and such little time, but today I want to stand in solidarity with my colleagues, with parents, with students, and with Americans across the country who are calling for action to address the crisis of gun control.

Over the weekend, I had the opportunity to connect with nearly 150 students and their parents in my district at a townhall meeting. I listened to their personal worries and worst fears. I heard their thoughts and the solutions they want decisionmakers here in Washington to consider. I felt the emotional strain of wondering if their own classrooms were safe.

Above all else, I heard the question: Why? Why can't we limit access to military-style weapons specifically built to maximize damage? Why can't we improve the background check process? Why won't Congress act? Why? Why?

The President recently set forth a series of empty proposals that continue our practice of shrinking away from these questions. Arming teachers, school personnel, and volunteers is dangerous, ill-conceived, and does nothing to solve the problems we have with gun violence. To keep our children safe, we need fewer guns, not more.

And in backing away from his initial pledge to limit access, the President again prioritized the interests of the National Rifle Association over the pleas of countless students, teachers, and parents. In fact, he is the one who has demonstrated that he is afraid of the NRA.

The wish for safe spaces to learn was clear in the comments I heard from my constituents on Saturday: young people who want to walk through the hallways of their schools feeling nurtured instead of afraid. Stashing pistols in their teachers' desks will not bring them that feeling.

If the administration or the leaders controlling what we debate here on the floor of Congress were actually interested in protecting our schools, we would be debating legislation to strengthen background checks, we would be working on increasing the firearms purchasing act to the age of 21, we would be banning assault rifles, we would be limiting and tracking excessive ammunition purchases, and much, much more.

There are bills in our hopper to do all of these things. They are ready, and they are waiting for debate, including my own bill. All we need is for the Speaker of this House to show the will, determination, and courage to put young lives ahead of the gun lobby.

While much of my townhall meeting was centered on anxiety and fear, I left the event filled with an overwhelming sense of pride and hope, pride in a generation of future leaders who have endured an endless and unbearable stream of school shootings and are stepping up to the plate to hold their leaders accountable. Some of these students were born at a time when that is all they have seen in their lifetime are these mass killings at schools.

I hope that we can finally agree on a path of action and their voices will be heard. I will continue to lift these voices here with my colleagues and fight with them for action and change because that is what a better deal is for all Americans.

REMEMBERING PEARSE LYONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. BARR) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the extraordinary life and legacy of Dr. Pearse Lyons of Lexington, Kentucky, who passed away on Thursday of last week at the age of 73.

Dr. Lyons was a pioneer, the ultimate dreamer and innovator, a larger-than-life contributor to human progress, and his legacy will forever be remembered. Dr. Lyons, originally from Ireland, is truly the embodiment of the American Dream. He came to the United States in the late 1970s and launched his own business in Lexington in 1980, named after the initials of his daughter, Aoife. Alltech was founded with an initial investment of just $10,000.

Today, Alltech is a multibillion-dollar international business with operations in animal feed, meat, brewing, and distilling with more than 5,000 employees worldwide. Dr. Lyons was honored as the Business Person of the Year by Business and Finance magazine. He received the Ireland-U.S. Council Award for Outstanding Achievement, and Irish Prime Minister Enda Kenny recognized him with a St. Patrick's Day Science Medal in recognition of creating a global business based on scientific research.

As impressive if not more so is the impact Dr. Lyons and Alltech have had on Kentucky and, in particular, central Kentucky. Dr. Lyons was the driving force behind bringing the Alltech 2010 World Equestrian Games to Lexington, the first time the games had been held

outside of Europe. Due to Dr. Lyons' vision and drive, the 2010 Lexington Games were considered to be the most successful in the event's history.

Dr. Lyons also established ONE: the Alltech Ideas Conference, which has been held in Lexington for more than three decades. The conference is now the city's largest annual room booking, attracting nearly 4,000 attendees from over 70 countries to the bluegrass. It is often said that through the World Equestrian Games and the Alltech Ideas Conference that Dr. Lyons brought the world to Lexington. This is undeniably true, but it is also true that he brought Kentucky to the world.

In addition to its animal feed and agricultural products, Alltech reopened the Lexington Brewing Company in 1999 and launched Kentucky Ale, which can now be purchased across the United States and in many countries across the world. Alltech also opened the Town Branch Distillery in Lexington, which produces a line of spirits including its signature Town Branch Kentucky Bourbon.

He and his beloved wife, Deirdre, have also given back directly to many causes. Dr. and Mrs. Lyons built more than a dozen state-of-the-art science labs in primary schools in Kentucky and in Ireland. They also established the Alltech Young Scientist program, the largest global agriscience competition for university students, and the Alltech Vocal Scholarship Competition awards for more than half a million dollars in scholarships annually to promising young vocalists.

On a personal note, I will miss Pearse's friendship; his kindness to me and my family; and his extraordinary ideas, passion, and vision. I will never forget the time that I went to the Nicholasville headquarters of Alltech, where Dr. Lyons educated me about how world population growth would put immense pressure on food production requirements and how Alltech scientists were investigating and developing nutritional and agricultural products and techniques to meet the future food needs of the human race.

The problem and challenge he described was daunting, but with that infectious smile and with a sparkle in his eye, this innovator told me that there was no limit to what we could do and no limit to what Alltech could do. Pearse was a dreamer, and he also lived life to the fullest. I will always cherish and remember those Alltech ONE conferences where he stood in front of 4,000 people from 70 different countries in Kentucky with the Kentucky Bourbon and the Kentucky Ale and he sang ''Molly Malone'' in honor of his home country.

My wife, Carol, and I extend our deepest condolences to Deirdre; their two children, Aoife and Mark, with whom I grew up; the extended Lyons family; Alltech and its many employees; and all those touched by Dr. Lyons.

Pearse Lyons loved his family, both his own family and his Alltech family. He loved music. He loved science and innovation. He loved his native home of Ireland. He loved America. And he loved Kentucky.

And for all of his achievements, for his contributions to science and human progress, his philanthropy, and the mark he left on Kentucky, I hope all of my colleagues will join me in honoring the extraordinary life and work of Dr. Pearse Lyons.

□ 1030

ENOUGH IS ENOUGH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. FRANKEL) for 5 minutes.

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I join with millions of Americans and the students who are walking out today and who are saying enough is enough for the gun violence in America.

Seventeen families in Parkland, Florida, are living a nightmare, and our hearts ache for them and the Parkland community. They join a growing club of grieving families all over this Nation because their loved ones were massacred in a place we expected to be safe: a concert in Nevada, a nightclub in Florida, a college in Virginia, an elementary school in Connecticut, a church in Texas, a McDonald's in California. The list goes on.

Last year there were 346 mass shootings in this country, making it the deadliest year of mass killings in a decade. Ninety Americans a day are killed by gun violence. These are not just statistics. Ninety Americans a day means 33,000 grieving families, heartbroken families who lose a child, a parent, in a click of a trigger.

We have had enough thoughts and prayers for grieving parents and enough thanks for the first responders that answer the call. The time now is for action.

I want to especially thank the young people in south Florida and now across the Nation for their courage, their passion, and persistence.

Students today are demanding we do more than shed a tear and wring our hands saying it is too complicated. Students are walking out today because they know there are too many guns in the hands of the wrong people; too many guns on the street that are made for war, not for civil society. They know that is why we should ban the sale of assault rifles and high-capacity magazines and bump stock devices, expand our background check laws, and reinstate Federal funding for gun research. There is not just one solution, but it is not so complicated that we do nothing.

So today I am going to join America's students and I will be walking out because Americans deserve a better deal, and because enough is enough.

GUN VIOLENCE REFORM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MATSUI) for 5 minutes.

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the courageous students in Sacramento, California, and across America who are saying enough with this country's epidemic of gun violence.

Last week, I held a gun violence prevention student townhall in my district, and we were fortunate enough to be joined remotely by Skype by two students from Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida: Adam Alhanti and John Barnitt. They inspired us all with their dedication to a future without a fear of gun violence.

The students that filled the auditorium of Kennedy High School in Sacramento to listen to Adam and John were fully informed, passionate, and focused on the future. They wanted to know how we can enforce stronger background checks, ban assault weapons, change a culture of guns in this country, and how they can amplify their voices.

After hearing their thoughts and questions, I know one thing for sure: these amazing young people are not going to back down from achieving progress on this issue. I believe it would be incumbent upon all of us to listen to their voices. They are the voices of the future.

As Adam from Parkland said during our townhall, this issue of gun violence affects all of us. No one wants to live in fear about going to school, work, the movies, church, a concert, or just walking on the street; so no one can afford to sit on the sidelines and do nothing to reform gun laws in this country. We owe it to these students, to our children, our grandchildren, and all future generations to come together and take action on commonsense legislation.

Many of the things we want to see reformed are largely supported by the American people. In fact, one high school student in Sacramento pointed out to me that policies like universal background checks have widespread support from the public. It is true. Polls indicate that over 90 percent of the American people support stronger background checks.

Under current Federal law, people who purchase firearms at a gun show, through classified ads, or on the internet bypass a background check. There is no excuse not to act to close those dangerous loopholes.

It is our job to represent and act on the will of the citizens of this country. We can by voting on solutions like the bipartisan Thompson-King legislation that would expand and strengthen the current background check system. Yet another week in Congress and here we find ourselves without a vote on real gun violence reform legislation.

At one point during my townhall last Friday, Adam from Parkland said: ''We

are heard. There is no more, 'Can we be heard?' It is now. People hear us. They ask, 'What's next?'''

These young people are rightfully going to keep up their demands until we make significant reforms that make a lasting impact. I ask my Republican colleagues to not only listen to these students, but to also take meaningful action to address the gun violence epidemic in this country. Words are not enough. We must move forward.

THE DO-NOTHING REPUBLICAN CONGRESS IS MISSING IN ACTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. JEFFRIES) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JEFFRIES. Mr. Speaker, exactly 1 month ago, 14 innocent students and 3 innocent teachers were massacred at a high school in Parkland, Florida.

We are in the midst of a gun violence epidemic in this country; mass shooting after mass shooting after mass shooting; massacre in the workplace in San Bernardino, California; massacre at a nightclub in Orlando, Florida; massacre at a concert in Las Vegas, Nevada; massacre in churches down in Charleston, South Carolina and in Texas; massacre in schools, in Newtown, Connecticut, and Parkland, Florida.

We are in the midst of a gun violence epidemic in this country, yet the do-nothing Republican Congress is missing in action.

The overwhelming majority of the American people support universal background checks. The overwhelming majority of the American people support limiting access to weapons of war. The overwhelming majority of the American people support raising the age of purchase from 18 to 21. Yet the do-nothing Republican Congress is missing in action.

Our students should be able to go to school and focus on reading, writing, and arithmetic; but, instead, they are often in school with their hands in the air, participating in active shooting drills. Yet the do-nothing Republican Congress is missing in action.

All throughout the country today, tens of thousands of students in blue States and red States; students in urban America, rural America, and suburban America; students in the North, the South, the East, and the West, are walking out of class for 17 minutes to demand that Congress pass commonsense gun violence prevention legislation.

I salute your courage. I salute your conviction. I salute your determination to make a difference.

The students of this great country have stepped up. Now it is time for Congress to do the same. It is time for Congress to choose. We can either stand with the students, or you can stand with the NRA. History will judge us all.

The students of this country are being cut down in the classroom in cold blood, yet the do-nothing Republican Congress is missing in action.

We don't work for the NRA. We don't work for the gun manufacturers. We don't work for the merchants of death. We work for the American people, and it is time for us to finally address the gun violence epidemic in America.

Enough is enough. The American people deserve a better deal.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All Members are reminded to direct their remarks to the Chair and not to a perceived viewing audience.

WE NEED RESPONSIBLE GUN SAFETY LAWS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. DEMINGS) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. DEMINGS. Mr. Speaker, 1 month ago today, a man brutally murdered 17 children and educators in Parkland, Florida. He killed these innocent people using a semiautomatic, assault-style weapon. These weapons, designed for the battlefield, are easily available across this country.

It has been 19 years since the Columbine school shooting. That massacre shocked America. Our country debated that shooting and the causes for months, for years. But in what has become an all-too-familiar pattern, Congress did nothing to address the factor that makes these massacres so deadly, the easy access to guns.

You see, after Columbine, the gun lobby knew that they were in trouble, so they put a whole lot of time and a whole lot of money into confusing the issue. They said: ''It's not guns. It's bullying. It's not guns. It's the lack of school security. It's not guns. It's our violent culture, music, and video games.''

Well, other countries have all of these things, but other countries do not have mass shootings like ours because other countries have responsible gun safety laws.

Today, 1 month after the Parkland shooting, we are, once again, discussing guns. Today, as after Columbine, the gun lobby knows that they are in trouble because this time these children who survived the Parkland shooting are not trying to return to the way life was before the shooting. They are taking a stand. And, yes, we do stand with them.

See, these children believe that they can change the world. They should, and they are. I mean, after all, isn't that what we taught them: that when they see something wrong, they do something about it?

So the gun lobby is going back to their same old tactics: It is not guns; it is the fact that the teachers don't have guns.

□ 1045

How surprising that the gun lobby solution to school shootings is to buy more guns. But as a former law enforcement officer who has been trained in active shooter situations, I can tell you that arming teachers is a dangerous and disturbing idea. We should prevent mass shootings and not complicate them.

I can tell you that having multiple armed individuals present in an active shooter situation only complicates the response. Arming teachers would lead to taxpayer-sponsored shootouts, endangering outscaled and outgunned teachers, putting our children at risk.

We already ask our overworked and underpaid teachers to do too much. A national survey of teachers found that, if offered the choice to carry a firearm, most would refuse. Many have said they would quit.

The solution to gun violence is not shootouts between teachers and school shooters. Instead, we can finally take serious but real measures addressing gun safety.

We should stop this absurd idea before it becomes reality. Congress should move swiftly to prevent the administration from shifting tax dollars meant for antiterrorism programs to buying guns for teachers. I had hoped to incorporate this commonsense idea in a bill scheduled to come before the Homeland Security Committee last week, but I was blocked for doing so, and that is why, last night, I introduced a new bill to put the idea into law. Money for fighting terrorism should stay where it is, and our teachers should be allowed to teach.

We saw that in my own congressional district in Orlando, Florida, the result of lack of action where 49 people were killed and 58 still suffer life-changing injuries when they were gunned down in a nightclub. See, everybody, living in a country that we say is the greatest country in the world should have the right to go to church, to go to school, to go to a mall, to go to a movie theater without being gunned down.

Mr. Speaker, we should take action after this shooting and do our jobs to protect our children and serve our communities.

TAKING A HARD LOOK AT GUN VIOLENCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. MEEKS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning because the camera of history is rolling. It is rolling and it is recording. It is recording the fact that the NRA continues to distort the meaning of the Second Amendment, that the NRA continues to incite its members with propaganda and then threatens my Republican colleagues, and that my Republican colleagues, in fear, hover down to their wishes and do nothing to prevent mass shootings in the United States of America.

The camera of history is rolling, Mr. Speaker, and the camera will record the fact that we have a President of the United States who believes in reality TV shows. In fact, he had an open

press reality show-type meeting where he made big promises of improving gun safety. The President declared, in that meeting, that Republican lawmakers are so scared of the NRA. He said that and admitted that the Republican lawmakers are scared of the NRA, but he said that he was not.

Then, just a short time thereafter, what did he do? He didn't have an open show meeting with the NRA. He didn't want the American public to see how he hovered down and gave in to the wishes of the NRA. It wasn't an open press meeting.

If he was so strongly against the NRA or could stand up to them, he should have had a meeting in the Oval Office and had the same press coverage so that we could hear what he was saying to them and they were saying to him. But all we know is what the results were.

The results were that, after he had this behind closed doors meeting with NRA, he didn't come out so strong anymore. He started to back down. He started to say—well, he was so strong about, hey, it didn't make sense about 18 to buy a gun, 18 to 21. That was not in his plans anymore. We saw that he had changed his whole demeanor. Something took place.

We say, Mr. President, if you are not afraid of the NRA, then you do an open meeting with the NRA with the same press as you have done with Members of Congress.

This is the 30th day since we have had that terrible shooting in Florida, and we have got young people now outside who are saying enough is enough. Some think young people don't have an effect on American history and the camera. Well, I dare say to you, I can recall a young person who was only about 17 years old who stood bravely and took beatings to say he wanted America to go in a different direction. That young man is now a Member of Congress and someone whom we admire. He goes by the name of JOHN LEWIS. He was only 16, 17 years old, and it changed America.

And I dare say, there are some 16- and 17-year-olds who are outside today who will change America and make it a better place, and we need to join them. We have got to stop the kinds of letters that I have been receiving in my office.

I have been receiving letters from individuals from the Jack and Jill Association, a large association of young people who want a better America, one named Jeremy Chavez, who said: ''My mother has been forced to discuss with me my fear of safety while at school in light of the mass murder of children our age in a place that should be a safe haven for our education.''

This is a conversation that neither Jeremy's mother nor any mother should need to have. Yet, with 7,000 innocent children killed since Sandy Hook in 2012, it is one that parents across America are forced to have with their children.

Parents have to instruct their kids to hide under the desk as I did as a child when I was afraid or we were afraid of a nuclear weapon when we were in the arms war. We used to have to have shelter drills. Here we are, in 2018, and our children have to have shelter drills because of Americans and others who can come in with an assault rifle and take lives in a matter of seconds.

No, that is not the United States we want. That is not the United States that these young people want to live in, and they will stand and fight and change the course of America.

DEMANDING VOICES BE HEARD ON GUN VIOLENCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, students from across the Nation, including from my Ninth District in Michigan, are demanding that their voices be heard on the issue of gun violence. They are upset with the carnage they have witnessed. They are fearful for their safety, and they are tired of excuses and inaction.

But 1 month after the tragedy in Parkland, Florida, not to mention so many prior school shootings, Republican leaders in Congress have failed to bring up any legislation that might meaningfully control the weapons that are being used to kill and wound so many Americans. So all of us Democrats are coming here today, many of us. On the Republican side—I am not sure the screen can show—we see empty seats. No bill on assault weapons, no bill on improving background checks, no bill to ban bump stocks, nothing—this is a terrible moment of silence when we desperately need a moment of action.

While there is no single answer to gun violence, any credible response must address the weapons of war that are turning our schools, houses of worship, movie theaters, and concerts into battlefields. Assault weapons with magazines holding 30 bullets are not needed by hunters nor are they required for self-defense. They are killing machines, and increasing numbers of our fellow Americans have become their victims.

Congress must stand up to the NRA and say, ''Enough.'' Even President Trump called out Republican Members of Congress for being too afraid of the NRA to act, saying the NRA has ''great power over you people; they have less power over me.''

But ever since, President Trump has been backtracking, showing he, too, is more scared of the NRA's political muscle than he is of the public's demand for change. This outcome is depressingly familiar.

Fifty years ago, 1 week after Bobby Kennedy was assassinated, I spoke on the issue of gun violence at Wayne State University. I felt compelled to speak about the myths that the NRA was spreading regarding any effort toward sensible gun control. In my 1968 speech, I said: ''One of the favorite sayings of the NRA and the rest of the gun lobby is that 'guns don't kill people; people kill people.' The figures show the inaccuracy of the statement. The truth is that 'people with guns kill people.' ''

This remains as true today as it was 50 years ago, and yet we still remain paralyzed by the NRA. And what is its solution to gun violence? More guns. More guns in the classroom by arming teachers, more guns on the streets through lax concealed carry laws, and more guns crossing State lines by overriding local laws. In this deranged math, more guns somehow equals less violence.

Grieving parents and terrified students deserve so much better. They are tired of the stonewalling, the diversion, and the deception. They are demanding real action to stop gun violence. Let us act now.

THOUSANDS GATHER TO PROTEST GUN VIOLENCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HARPER). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, as we speak, thousands of young people from across the country are gathered outside to protest gun violence and to ask, to beseech, to demand that we take action.

Mr. Speaker, we know what to do. We know that we ought to amend the law to provide effective background checks before people can purchase guns—not just background checks when you purchase from a licensed dealer, but background checks when you purchase a gun anyplace.

We know that we ought to eliminate the 3-day limits so that, if they don't finish the background check within 3 days, you can't get your gun.

We know that we should renew the assault weapons ban that was in effect from 1994 to 2004 so you can't buy military killing machines in this country for civilian use.

We know we ought to ban the high-capacity magazines that can convert guns into killing machines for large numbers of people that have no other purpose. You don't hunt a deer with a high-capacity magazine.

We know we ought to ban bump stocks, and we know the other things we ought to do.

But we are, too many of us, cowards. We quell before the National Rifle Association.

We know the fact is that it is guns in the hands of people that kill people. Compared to every other country in the world, every other industrial country in the world, we stand out like a sore thumb.

If you look at other statistics, this country—Great Britain, 75 people killed by guns in a year; another country, 142. No country is in more than three digits except the United States at 33,000.

They tell it is mental health. The American people do not have mental health rates or lack of mental health 1,000 times or 10 times or 20 times or 40 times more than people in Western Europe or Japan or Australia. You cannot explain a difference of 75 or 150 to 33,000 by mental health.

They tell us we should arm teachers, but we know that trained police officers hit their targets about a third of the time when they fire a gun and, in a gunfight, when the adrenaline is running, 13 percent. If we arm the teachers, we will have more teachers and more students killed.

We have a President who has shown cowardice. He criticized Senator TOOMEY for being afraid of the NRA, and then he, after meeting with the NRA, backed down on everything he said he would do.

Mr. Speaker, as I said, we know what to do. We are the only country in the world with the kind of gun murder rates that we have.

The Republicans have opposed all the measures that we ought to take, but the Republicans have a choice. They can continue to be complicit in their repeated slaughter in our schools, in our churches, in our concert halls, and in our streets by continuing their cowardly subservience to the NRA, or they can act to protect us and our children. They know how to do it. They cannot have it both ways. Let's see what they do.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President.

□ 1100

IN SUPPORT OF GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, the NRA—the NRA—the NRA stands for ''No Republican Action.''

It has been a month since 17 children and their teachers were gunned down while at school in Parkland, Florida. It has been more than 5 years since 26 children and their teachers were slaughtered in Sandy Hook.

In both of these instances, the same weapon was used: an AR–15 semiautomatic assault rifle.

And Congress still has taken no action to end gun violence.

Mr. Speaker, there have been more than three dozen moments of silence related to gun violence since the Sandy Hook massacre. There have been zero moments of action.

As those of us who are married or have children know, the silent treatment doesn't work at home. Well, it surely isn't working in Congress. There are dozens of reasonable gun safety bills pending in this esteemed legislature, but the majority party is giving the American people the silent treatment.

NRA: No Republican action.

Meanwhile, between the moments of silence, around 7,000 children have been killed by guns since 2012.

NRA: No Republican action.

Let us take action on Mr. CICILLINE's assault weapon ban to end the flood of new semiautomatic assault weapons onto the streets.

Let us take action on Mr. THOMPSON's bill to strengthen the background checks.

What is the problem with making sure that we check each person's background? Does the NRA say that that is wrong, too?

There is no Republican action.

Let us take action on my Safer Neighborhoods Gun Buyback Act to encourage people to safely, freely make the economic decision to self-disarm and dispose of most of their violent weapons.

Mr. Speaker, the NRA spends tens of millions of dollars in our elections. I received a grade of F. It is the first F that I have ever gotten that I was proud of.

What do the American people get?

They get no Republican action. Let us end the silence of inaction.

GUN VIOLENCE SURVIVORS HELP CHANGE THE DIRECTION OF OUR COUNTRY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DEUTCH) for 5 minutes.

Mr. DEUTCH. Mr. Speaker, today marks 1 month since the shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida; 1 month since we lost 14 students and 3 teachers in yet another senseless act of gun violence; 1 month since the survivors inside those hallways have seen their lives changed forever.

The survivors and the grieving families are not just grieving their loss. They are helping to change the direction of this Congress and the direction of this country.

Mr. Speaker, I am leaving from here to go join the thousands of students who have descended upon the Capitol today, whose leadership will help guide the direction of this country, and who understand that 1 month after the horrific shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School—1 month in—and this Congress has failed to act.

There are thousands out there today. There will be hundreds of thousands and millions more in the weeks ahead.

The community that I represent, Mr. Speaker, will not be defined in the future by the tragedy that happened at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School. It will be defined by the leadership of the student survivors who are inspiring a nation and helping to take us to a place where children can feel safe going to school in the morning and parents can know that when they take their kids to school in the morning, they will be able to pick them up safely at the end of the day.

That is the result of this tragedy. That is what this is going to mean for our country. We are going to follow the lead of these student leaders. They are an inspiration to us. They are an inspiration to all of us, and I am off to join them now.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 6 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

Pastor Rodney David Cannon, Frostproof Church of God, Frostproof, Florida, offered the following prayer:

Creator God in Heaven, we thank You for this great Nation and for placing us in it for such a time as this. We humbly ask for Your wisdom and guidance in leading as we lay down our titles and take up the servant leader's towel. May we honor You by serving those across the aisle, across the street, and those around the world.

Protect those who are protecting us.

In the name of Your Son, Jesus, who taught us to pray by saying:

Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in Earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Texas (Mr. WILLIAMS) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. WILLIAMS led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

WELCOMING PASTOR RODNEY DAVID CANNON

The SPEAKER. Without objection, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SOTO) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, I would like to welcome Rodney David Cannon as our congressional guest chaplain today, not only one of our prominent pastors in the district, but also our mayor in Frostproof, Florida.

Born in Kansas, raised in Fort Meade, and having lived all over Polk County, Rodney settled down in his new hometown of Frostproof, where he lives with his wife, Lindsey, and their children.

As a child, Rodney lived in Highland City, Bartow, and eventually Fort Meade, where he graduated high school in 1995. After graduation, Rodney accepted a music scholarship and began his higher education journey. First he attended Brevard Community College, then transferred to Lee University in Cleveland, Tennessee.

Throughout their 15-year marriage, Rodney and Lindsey have lived in various places. Rodney served as a youth pastor in Fort Meade, Winter Haven, Lakeland, Tampa, and Englewood before planting a church in the Daytona area. After 2 years there, the opportunity came for Rodney to become a senior pastor in Frostproof.

It was also in 2015 that Rodney decided to run for city council. He won the seat that year by only 20 votes. In his first city council meeting, he was elected by his peers to serve as vice mayor. During that first year on the council, Rodney was able to save the city residents and businesses hundreds of thousands of dollars by working hard to keep the volunteer fire department open.

In 2016, he was elected to serve as mayor after only 1 year on the council, and the next year, reelected to serve another 1-year term as mayor.

Thank you, Pastor Cannon, for all you do for the Frostproof community.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FLORES). The Chair will entertain up to 15 further requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

HONORING ATHLETIC TRAINERS

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, March is National Athletic Training Month, and I rise today to honor these healthcare professionals who provide care for athletes and patients, soldiers, workers, and performers.

Athletic trainers are committed to providing compassionate care for all in work, life, and sport. Anyone who has been sidelined with an injury can tell you how important their athletic trainer has been in helping them make a full recovery.

Athletic trainers provide medical services to all types of patients, not just athletes participating in sports, and can work in a variety of job settings. They are instrumental in relieving widespread and future workforce shortages in primary care support and outpatient rehab professions, and they provide an unparalleled range of care for the patients. They also improve functional outcomes and specialize in patient education to prevent injury or reinjury.

As a former athlete, therapist, and rehabilitation services manager, I know just how valuable our athletic trainers are, and I thank them for the work they do to care for so many patients in various industries.

SCHOOL SHOOTING BILL

(Ms. GABBARD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. GABBARD. Mr. Speaker, it has been 1 month since the tragic shooting in Parkland, and today students in Hawaii and all across the country are joining hands and raising their voices to honor the 17 lives lost on that day and the 7,000 children whose lives have been lost since the 2012 shooting at Sandy Hook. They are walking out today to demand action that will help to prevent these horrific tragedies and improve the safety and security of our schools.

Later today, we are going to be voting on a bill that I have cosponsored, the STOP School Violence Act. This bill or any other single bill is not going to solve everything, but it will help prevent school violence by implementing measures developed after Sandy Hook that support training for teachers, students, school personnel, and local law enforcement to better identify early warning signs of violence and increase coordination between schools and local law enforcement.

In addition, we also need to take action on things like closing the gun show and online loopholes and requiring universal background checks for anyone seeking to purchase a gun. These are provisions that have overwhelming bipartisan support both here in Congress and across the country.

The time for action is long overdue. Let's bring these bills to the floor for a vote.

AUSTIN, TEXAS, IS THE NUMBER ONE PLACE TO LIVE IN AMERICA

(Mr. WILLIAMS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WILLIAMS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this time to recognize a city in Texas' 25th Congressional District for being named the number one place to live in all of America. That city would be none other than our great State's capital, Austin, Texas.

Cities from all over the Nation are scored based on their job market, their value, quality of life, desirability, and net migration. With a population of almost 2 million people and an additional 50 new residents every single day, Austin is one of the fastest growing cities. It is no wonder Austin secured the number one spot.

In addition to its unleashed economic potential, young families are relocating to central Texas for something they can't get anywhere else: the ability to experience living in a big city with a booming economy that also provides the warmth and friendliness of a small town is what makes Austin one of a kind.

Mom-and-pop shops down the road are able to open their doors, hire more Texans, and pay their employees more due to an overhaul of our Nation's Tax Code. The truth is Austin is just now seeing the fruits of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, and I am excited to watch Austin continue to thrive because of it.

Texas is the greatest State in America, and Austin is its leadoff hitter.

May God bless Texas. May God bless this great Nation.

IN APPRECIATION OF TERRY MICHALSKE, DIRECTOR OF THE SAVANNAH RIVER NATIONAL LABORATORY

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I greatly appreciate Dr. Terry Michalske, who is the Executive Vice President and Director of the Department of Energy's Savannah River National Laboratory, located at the Savannah River site in South Carolina's Second Congressional District.

Today is Dr. Michalske's last day as director. I am grateful to thank him for his leadership of this critical national laboratory.

The Savannah River National Laboratory conducts research and development, focusing on legacy waste cleanup, national security, and clean energy. Dr. Michalske has more than 30 years of experience in these fields. He holds seven patents, has authored 90 journal publications, and also collaborated on several books.

Dr. Michalske also coordinates with the Department of Energy to support the Savannah River site as a leading national laboratory and regional producer of jobs.

Also, congratulations to Dr. Vahid Majidi, who will succeed Dr. Michalske.

As a former staff member at the site myself, I am grateful for the opportunity to represent the Savannah River site in Congress.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Secretary Rex Tillerson for his service, and best wishes for continued success for Secretary of State designate Mike Pompeo.

RECOGNIZING MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS AWARENESS WEEK

(Ms. LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week, which is March 11 through 17.

Each year, activists, physicians, and policymakers come together to spread awareness about this disease and to salute the healthcare professionals and researchers who are dedicated to finding treatments and a cure for this debilitating disease.

Since 2008, I have introduced a bipartisan resolution recognizing the goals and ideals of MS Awareness Week. That is H. Res. 176.

MS is an unpredictable and incurable disease that my family and hundreds of thousands of families across our Nation experience every day.

My sister, Mildred, has lived with MS for more than 40 years. Her courage and the courage of 2 million people living with MS around the world inspire my efforts to bring more research for treatment and a cure.

As a member of the House Health and Human Services Appropriations Subcommittee, I promise to continue fighting for increased funding to find a cure, and I hope all of my colleagues, Democrats and Republicans, help us in this effort.

HONORING HEROISM DURING WORLD WAR II

(Mr. PALAZZO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PALAZZO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Granville Crane of Gulfport, Mississippi, and the rest of the crew onboard the USS *Indianapolis* for their acts of heroism during World War II.

The USS *Indianapolis* received secret orders in July of 1945 to proceed to Tinian Island, transiting the Pacific unaccompanied, carrying components of the Little Boy atomic bomb.

Leaving Tinian, a Japanese submarine spotted the *Indianapolis* steaming towards Guam and fired two torpedos, striking and sinking the *Indianapolis* within 12 minutes. Approximately 300 crewmen went down with the ship, and the rest spent the next 3½ days in the water. Of the 1,200 crewmen, there were only 317 survivors.

On behalf of Mr. Granville Crane and the rest of the USS *Indianapolis* crew, I encourage my fellow Members to support H.R. 4107, the USS Indianapolis Congressional Gold Medal Act, which honors the crew of the USS *Indianapolis* with Congressional Gold Medals for their important role and dedicated service to our country during World War II.

CALLING FOR ACTION ON GUN SAFETY

(Ms. SHEA-PORTER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I just returned from outside these doors where there are thousands of young people who are calling for action on gun safety.

I marched out with my Democratic colleagues, and I really wish that my Republican friends across the aisle had joined us in this, but I will describe what I saw.

I saw a lot of very, very upset young people who are begging this House and the Senate to make change to protect them. They no longer want to live under this threat.

There was one sign in particular that caught my eye. A young girl was standing there with a sign, quietly, and it said, ''Am I next?''

So, Mr. Speaker, we have to ask ourselves that question: Are we next?

They don't want another moment of silence. They want action. They want it now.

I congratulate them for their efforts.

When 18-year-olds are leading the country with moral courage, I think it is time for us to respond in kind.

□ 1215

ACTIVIST JUDGES ABUSE THEIR AUTHORITY

(Mr. SMITH of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, activist judges have joined liberal Democrats to stop President Trump's policies. Federal trial judges have abused their authority by issuing almost two dozen nationwide injunctions to block the Trump administration's actions. According to Attorney General Jeff Sessions, these injunctions have far exceeded their historic use. In fact, the number of injunctions surpasses all those approved in the past 200 years.

Nationwide injunctions encourage forum shopping by opponents of the President's policies who file claims in courts with liberal judges. These judges place their personal views and politics above the rule of law. They do a real disservice to the justice system.

It is time to rein in these activist judges. The people's respect for the law is at stake.

HONORING THE LIFE OF BALTASAR CORRADA DEL RIO

(Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN of Puerto Rico asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN of Puerto Rico. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize and honor the life of Baltasar Corrada del Rio, Puerto Rico's 13th Resident Commissioner in Congress who passed away this Sunday at 82 years old.

Mr. Corrada del Rio was born and raised in Puerto Rico and was a founding member of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus. He served in this body from 1977 to 1985. He also served as mayor of San Juan, secretary of State, and associate justice for the Puerto Rico Supreme Court.

Baltasar Corrada del Rio was a true statesman. His career exemplifies the qualities we all seek in our public servants: dedication, honesty, and love of our country. His life will be remembered for his unwavering support for American citizens of Puerto Rico and our quest for equality.

Mr. Speaker, I pledge to continue Baltasar Corrada del Rio's work during my time in Congress and ask the House to join me in expressing condolences to his family and our profound gratitude for his years of service to Puerto Rico and in this Congress.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4545, FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS EXAMINATION FAIRNESS AND REFORM ACT; PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1116, TAKING ACCOUNT OF INSTITUTIONS WITH LOW OPERATION RISK ACT OF 2017; AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4263, REGULATION AT IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2017

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 773 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 773

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 4545) to amend the Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council Act of 1978 to improve the examination of depository institutions, and for other purposes. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. The amendment printed in part A of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution shall be considered as adopted. The bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended, are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill, as amended, and on any further amendment thereto, to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Financial Services; (2) the further amendment printed in part B of the report of the Committee on Rules, if offered by the Member designated in the report, which shall be in order without intervention of any point of order, shall be considered as read, shall be separately debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question; and (3) one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

SEC. 2. Upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the

bill (H.R. 1116) to require the Federal financial institutions regulatory agencies to take risk profiles and business models of institutions into account when taking regulatory actions, and for other purposes. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. The amendment printed in part C of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution shall be considered as adopted. The bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended, are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill, as amended, and on any further amendment thereto, to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Financial Services; and (2) one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

SEC. 3. Upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 4263) to amend the Securities Act of 1933 with respect to small company capital formation, and for other purposes. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. The amendment printed in part D of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution shall be considered as adopted. The bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended, are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill, as amended, and on any further amendment thereto, to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Financial Services; and (2) one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Colorado is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. POLIS), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Colorado?

There was no objection.

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the rule and the underlying legislation. The rule makes in order three bills reported favorably by the Committee on Financial Services. All three bills were the subject of multiple hearings before the Committee on Financial Services. All three bills were reported favorably by a bipartisan majority without amendment. The rule ensures that each of these provisions are fully paid for and makes in order an amendment offered by the Democrat ranking member on the committee.

Mr. Speaker, I have the privilege of working with Chairman HENSARLING to bring many Financial Services Committee bills to the floor for debate. I will be here again tomorrow doing the same thing. I am always amazed at how bipartisan these votes are in the Financial Services Committee.

Once again, we have before us today components of the Financial CHOICE Act. As I have already noted, each of these bills received bipartisan support in the committee. I anticipate that these bills will receive a bipartisan vote on the House floor as well.

Mr. Speaker, it is encouraging to hear that the Senate is working hard toward their own bill overhauling Dodd-Frank. It is about time. The House has already done its work under the leadership of Chairman HENSARLING. We passed the Financial CHOICE Act nearly a year ago. But I certainly understand that the Senate has its own ideas about financial reform.

I would encourage the Senate to look at the roster of bills that we have passed unpacking the CHOICE Act, as they demonstrate a clear bipartisan roadmap to overhauling our financial regulatory reform effort. We continue to provide that roadmap today.

The first bill made in order by this rule is sponsored by my good friend, the gentleman from Colorado, Mr. TIPTON. H.R. 1116, the TAILOR Act, is commonsense legislation that I am pleased to cosponsor.

One of the biggest complaints I hear as I travel the Fourth Congressional District of Colorado is how the Federal Government stamps out cookie-cutter regulations without a thought as to how much variation occurs in industries from State to State. For example, how do Washington regulators take into consideration the unique business model of AMG National Trust headquartered in Colorado? Do they know better than my good friend Earl Wright, who cofounded the bank in 1972, about the banking needs of his customers? Are they able to differentiate between AMG's needs and the needs of a bank in another State or on Wall Street? Typically, the answer is no.

They do not model banking regulations to the particular differences from State to State. But even inside a State there is diversity within industries. The needs of AMG National Trust's customers vary from the needs of other community banks in my district; such as, the Bank of Burlington or Community State Bank, both of which are on the Eastern Plains.

The TAILOR Act solves this problem. It requires regulatory actions to take into account each particular institution's business model and risk profile. Mr. Speaker, this change would be an innovative regulatory reform. It would ensure that overarching goals of accountability to investors and depositors are maintained while providing flexibility in the application of the regulations to each institution.

Independent community banks and credit unions have been hit hard by Dodd-Frank's wrong-headed approach to financial services regulation. In 2016, former Federal Reserve Chair Janet Yellen said: '' . . . when it comes to bank regulation and supervision, one size does not fit all''—and—''rules and supervisory approaches should be tailored to different types of institutions such as community banks.''

The TAILOR Act will do just that. It will reorient our regulatory structure and free up our community lending institutions to increase their investments in our communities, creating jobs and opportunities for Americans.

This rule also makes in order H.R. 4263, the Regulation A+ Improvement Act. This regulation was the result of the JOBS Act passed by Congress in 2012. While Regulation A had been around for many years, it caused startups to enter into a cumbersome process for raising money from certain types of investors. The process is so inefficient that most startups avoided it altogether.

Regulation A+ revamped the regulation and raised the amount of money that entrepreneurs could raise in their startup fundraising round. Crucially, it also changed the type of investor who could invest in a startup. Prior to the JOBS Act, essentially only accredited investors could participate in the first fundraising round.

The problem is that, according to research done by Forbes magazine, accredited investors only made up 1 percent of the population, thereby excluding 99 percent of Americans. The JOBS Act changed the regulation to allow nonaccredited investors to participate in a startup's initial fundraising round. Expanding the pool of investors has proven to be a success, and the Regulation A+ Improvement Act continues reforming this area of investment regulation by further increasing the threshold investment amount. This bill will ensure greater access to capital for entrepreneurs seeking investors in their startup.

Finally, this rule makes in order H.R. 4545, the Financial Institutions Examination Fairness and Reform Act. This bill establishes deadlines by which certain regulatory decisions must be made and provides for a more transparent appeals process. Under current law, financial institutions may appeal regulatory determinations to an intra-agency appellate process. The Financial Services Committee found during hearings that the appeals process was not as impartial as it was intended to be.

This bill removes the appeals process from the original examining agency and creates an independent examination review director who is able to review regulatory determinations. To ensure timeliness of regulatory reviews, the bill requires the final reports from agencies are completed within 60 days.

The combination of a better appeals process and deadline for agency action gives community financial institutions certainty as a regulator evaluates their practices.

□ 1230

Certainty in the regulatory arena will ensure that lending institutions do not needlessly restrict capital investments due to the unpredictability of a regulatory agency's decisionmaking process.

These three bills continue to advance smart financial regulatory reforms that the Committee on Financial Services has been known for under Chairman HENSARLING. Washington's cookie-cutter approach to regulation hinders investments in Colorado and across the United States.

Mr. Speaker, I support these measures, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume. I thank the gentleman for yielding me the customary time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to this rule. This rule provides for the consideration of three bills out of the Financial Services Committee. Before I turn to the bills, I want to talk about the urgent issues that are not scheduled for floor time this week.

Why aren't we debating appropriations bills to keep the government funded through the end of this fiscal year?

Just 2 weeks away from another government shutdown, yet, instead of discussing how we can keep government open through the end of the year, we are debating unrelated bills.

We are halfway through the current fiscal year and we are forcing a month-after-month crisis of government funding. This is no way to run a government or a business. Agencies need certainty. Our constituents need to know that they can rely on government services and the security of our Nation. We should be discussing appropriation bills now.

In addition, there are over 800,000 DACA recipients, or Dreamers, that don't have any certainty, whose ability to work legally hinges upon a court decision that is on appeal.

In my home State of Colorado, there are over 15,000 Dreamers from countries far and wide, young, aspiring Americans who grew up in our country and know no other country, who are able to work legally today, but who risk the expiration at any moment by the whim of a court.

Every day, over 100 DACA recipients lose their protected status or it expires. We need to take up, in this body, a permanent solution for Dreamers, a pathway to citizenship so that they don't have to rely on the whims of the court system to protect them.

Many of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle have demanded that Speaker RYAN bring an immigration bill to the floor. In fact, in the past, he said he would do so—last week, the week before. Yet we still haven't brought forward the Dream Act, or the Hope Act, or any of the bills that I am proud to cosponsor, that are bipartisan, that would address the urgent issue of how we can ensure that Dreamers are able to work legally.

Even as we speak now, there are students on the Capitol lawn participating in an organized walkout in support of ending school gun violence. Students in Colorado are joining as well. I sent a letter to be read to the students who are doing that because I hope that we agree that no young person should have to fear going to school, nor should any parent have to fear sending their child to school.

I strongly support sending more resources to schools that create supportive environments, that foster emotional and mental health. And, yes, we need to do more on gun violence, including universal background checks.

So why aren't we discussing those bills here today?

In addition, the administration's budget eliminated title IV-A of the Every Student Succeeds Act, which is the very kind of support and enrichment grant that helps schools support health and mental health services and counseling. So in the administration's own budget, it would undermine our ability to keep schools safe.

School safety funding is not a replacement for gun safety measures, but it can help reduce violence by supporting our children in school and creating a safe learning environment.

Those are some of the pressing issues that we could be considering; I dare say that our constituents are demanding that we consider. I dare say our continued ignoring of these issues is one of the reasons that the congressional approval rating is so low. Nobody is calling my office asking for these obscure bills today on regulations of big banks.

I am getting calls from constituents about reducing gun violence in schools; finding a permanent solution for DACA recipients; keeping government open, and protecting the integrity of our elections from foreign interference.

My colleagues must have short memories because we just forget how hard the financial meltdown of 2008 was on the country's middle class. While Wall Street banks were getting taxpayer bailouts, nearly 7 million Americans lost their homes, workers lost thousands of dollars in retirement accounts, and our unemployment rate spiked to 10 percent.

Since Dodd-Frank was signed into law, we have avoided another major meltdown. The banking system is strong again because of the Dodd-Frank reforms, yet my Republican colleagues continue to bring bills to the floor that are aimed at crippling financial regulators to put banks ahead of the safety of the financial system, consumers, and the economy.

H.R. 1116, the TAILOR Act, would require that Federal regulators tailor any action to limit the burdens on financial institutions. What this bill does is force Federal regulators, those in charge of protecting consumers and our system from risk, to conduct a time-consuming re-analysis limiting what they look at to the burdens on financial institutions, the very protections that were put in place in Dodd-Frank and, instead, change those to financial institutions, not to ensure consumer protection, to reduce costs rather than ensure protection.

It is almost like you are giving such authority to the tailors that they cut up your whole suit, and that is not what we want. If there are adjustments that need to be made, we should make them through statute, not give broad authority to government regulators to shred consumer protections.

H.R. 4545, the Financial Institutions Examination Fairness and Reform Act, would establish a new Office of Independent Examination Review, yet more bureaucracy and paperwork, and have financial institutions appeal and postpone supervisory determinations, creating yet more Republican red tape, more big government committees that the Republicans seem so fond of at the cost to taxpayers.

This is, again, one of those bills that could have been easily tailored to provide targeted improvements to the exam process, but, instead, the Republicans want to set up more government committees and more red tape.

H.R. 4545 takes away the financial regulators' ability to supervise financial institutions, instead, creating new government panels that risk putting consumers at additional risk.

The last bill being considered under this rule is H.R. 4263, the Regulation A+ Improvement Act. This bill would increase the annual exemption threshold under the SEC's Regulation A+ for companies to sell initial public offerings while being exempt from registration and disclosure requirements.

The purpose of the JOBS Act, as my colleague from Colorado mentioned, is to help startups and small businesses access capital by easing some security regulations. Regulation A+, unlike these other two proposals, actually reduces regulations, so it is a good bill. I plan on supporting it. It would make it easier for smaller, nonpublic companies to access capital by allowing them to offer shares to the general public.

So two bills setting up new bureaucracies and new Republican red tape commissions that tie up government, and one that actually reduces regulation, which I think will have more Democratic support.

Currently, a company offering up to $50 million in securities is exempt from SEC registration requirements. This bill is very simple. It just raises the threshold from $50 million to $75 million. Compliance costs are very expensive. So for a company in that range, they are often prohibited from accessing capital markets.

The SEC has the authority to raise the offering limit, something that Congress gave the SEC the authority to do. The JOBS Act requires the SEC to review the limit every 2 years, and if they decide not to increase it, the SEC has to report to Congress.

According to the Kauffman Foundation, startup activity has increased steadily over the past 3 years. Startups are a major job creator in our communities. Reducing red tape and bureaucracy is a good idea. Startups create 3 million jobs annually, and we need to continue to find ways to support startups and entrepreneurs.

So, again, the biggest problem with all of these bills is that they have nothing to do with what the American people are demanding Congress act on. Two of them create more Republican red tape, bureaucracy, give more power to the Federal Government. One of them helps small businesses raise capital by reducing regulation.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Speaker, I have two other speakers. Neither of them are here at this point in time. I would be glad to listen to more of the things that the House should be doing, if Mr. POLIS would like to engage in that discussion. But at this point, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

President Trump's March 5 deadline ending DACA has come and gone, and all we got out of the White House was tweet after tweet, a stifling of bipartisan proposals in the Senate, and a continued failure to lead.

President Trump tweeted: ''Total inaction of DACA by Dems. Where are you? A deal can be made.''

Mr. Speaker, has the President forgotten that it was his decision to suddenly end the DACA program that has thrown the system into chaos?

Well, to answer his question, the Democrats are right here. My colleague is right here with a motion to solve DACA right now. Let's do it. Let's rumble. This is actually the 25th time that we have attempted to bring the bipartisan bill, the Dream Act, for a vote on the floor of the House, while it is Republican colleagues who have stood by ignoring the will of this House and the Nation and refusing to let us vote on a bill that would fix DACA.

The Democrats have been and are making our position clear. We want immigration policies that make America safer and that reflect the fact that we are a nation of laws and a nation of immigrants. It is time that President Trump and my colleagues on the other side work with us to ensure that.

Mr. Speaker, if we defeat the previous question, I will offer an amendment to the rule to bring up H.R. 3440, the Dream Act. This bipartisan, bicameral legislation would help hundreds of thousands of young people who are American in every way except for on paper.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of my amendment in the RECORD, along with extraneous material, immediately prior to the vote on the previous question.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Colorado?

There was no objection.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. CORREA) to discuss our proposal.

Mr. CORREA. Mr. Speaker, I stand on this floor to speak about our Dreamers.

Again, I must ask very simply: What happened?

For months, Washington refused to pass a budget. We had many continuing resolutions. Again, one of the issues was Dreamers.

After spending caps were raised for both military and nonmilitary expenditures, we got a budget and both Democrats and Republicans voted for that budget. Yet, still, no action for the Dreamers.

Eighty percent of the public wants a fix. We recognize that Dreamers are soldiers, teachers, police officers. They are our friends. They are our neighbors. The President has said he wants also a fix to the Dreamer issue, yet here we are again, one more time, and, again, the Dreamers face a very uncertain future.

Mr. Speaker, it is time to stop using Dreamers as pawns in a bigger political chess game. At the State of the Union Address here on this floor, my guest was a Dreamer, a young lady studying chemistry at one of my local universities. She wants to be a scientist, and I know she is going to be a very good scientist. That is what chemistry majors do.

You know, America is the land of immigrants, and we have many, many hardworking immigrants. That is what Dreamers are. They work hard. They study hard. They pay taxes. They follow the law. They have been fully vetted. Yet, today, again, we ask: What happened to the Dreamers?

I ask my colleagues, let's give Dreamers the opportunity to earn the American Dream. Let's give them the opportunity to earn citizenship. And let's not live with regrets. Let's not look back 20, 30 years from now and say what we could have, should have, would have. Now is the time to act.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to vote against the previous question so that we can immediately bring up the Dream Act to the floor and give relief to almost a million young people who want nothing but to earn the American Dream.

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. MACARTHUR), the sponsor of H.R. 4263.

Mr. MACARTHUR. Mr. Speaker, I thought we were here to debate a rule on the Regulation A+ Improvement Act. As much as I also want to do things regarding the Dreamers, the issue at hand is a bill that is meant to help those who are creating jobs.

I want to thank my cosponsors, Representatives Sinema and Gottheimer, for cosponsoring the bill. Any time we can do a bill together on a bipartisan basis, I think it is a better bill.

□ 1245

The purpose of this bill is pretty simple. Seven out of ten jobs in this country, new jobs, come from the 28 million small businesses. I used to run one of those businesses and grew it to be a larger national business, and I know from experience that you have to have capital to grow businesses.

If we help companies raise capital, then we help them create jobs. Biopharmaceutical companies in my State of New Jersey are perfect examples. These are growing companies. They are capital intensive. They need help. The government can't do everything, but the Federal Government can play a role in helping these companies access capital, and that is what this bill is about.

Regulation A+ of the 1933 Securities Act, the very first securities law in this country, Federal law, allowed companies to offer shares on public exchanges. It required that any company that engaged in interstate commerce had to register with the SEC.

They made two exceptions: Regulation A+, which was for Main Street investors, but it put a cap on the amount that could be offered; and Regulation D, which allowed an unlimited offering to companies that were only selling to accredited investors. It has been really helpful in creating jobs and giving companies access to capital.

This bill is a modest improvement. Over time, Regulation A+ has gone from a small limit to, most recently, a $50 million limit under the JOBS Act of a few years ago, and it is time to raise that limit again.

There is good precedent for this. The JOBS Act actually required that the SEC raise it within 2 years of 2015, when the JOBS Act took effect, or they had to explain to Congress why they didn't. Well, they haven't. They haven't raised it.

We have an interest in making sure that we help our companies in this country create new jobs, and so this bill would raise that limit from $50 million to $75 million and allow companies to make offerings to Main Street investors, everyday people trying to find good companies so they can build a future for their families.

Mr. Speaker, this bill has been through committee markup. It was open to amendments. It is a bipartisan bill. It has gone through the Rules Committee. It is in order for this bill to move to the floor, and I urge that the rule be passed.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, does the gentleman have any remaining speakers?

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Speaker, I have one remaining speaker.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time for our all-Colorado lineup.

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TIPTON), the sponsor of H.R. 1116 and H.R. 4545.

Mr. TIPTON. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. BUCK) for the time, and I appreciate consideration of the rule here today.

Mr. Speaker, both of the bills being considered under this rule amount to real relief for our Nation's community banks and credit unions.

H.R. 1116, the TAILOR Act, which passed out of committee with bipartisan support, will direct Federal financial regulators to tailor their regulations to the risk profile and business model of our institutions, meaning that regulation intended for the largest financial institutions will no longer burden the smallest of our institutions.

Our community banks and credit unions have long suffered the consequences and costs of complying with extensive heavyhanded and onerous regulations. They were created after the 2008 financial crisis. While many of these regulations are necessary for financial institutions of all sizes, many are not.

Complying with manifold regulations has significantly hampered the ability of our community institutions to offer credit to small businesses, help families get a mortgage, and extend loans to retirees and the recently employed. As one community banker wrote to me: ''We have seen time and again the impact of this regulatory environment consume many hours and resources of our compliance, credit, and audit teams despite the relatively simple business model we follow.''

By requiring financial regulators to consider the cost of compliance on smaller institutions as well as whether or not a regulation is necessary for an institution based on the size and risk profile of that institution, the TAILOR Act will go a long way to alleviate the burden of heavy regulation on our community banks. In turn, this will lead to renewed economic growth for our local communities that rely heavily on the presence of community banks and credit unions in their own hometowns.

The other bill being considered under this rule, H.R. 4545, which also came out of committee with bipartisan support, the Financial Institutions Examination Fairness and Reform Act, will provide certainty for community banks and credit unions that they will have independent recourse should a bank examination result in a determination that they disagree with.

If a bank or a credit union receives an examination decision that it finds unfavorable, the only recourse it has under the current structure is to appeal that decision directly to the same regulator that arrived at that decision in the first place. The Exam Fairness bill included in this rule will change that reality by creating a new Office of Independent Examination Review that will serve as an independent appeals office, providing banks and credit unions with uniform and predictable avenues to appeal examination determinations of significant consequence.

At this independent office, sober review of the agency's determination, transparency, and timeliness will be paramount, meaning that financial institutions will no longer have to wade through long delays in their appeals process and will no longer have to fear retaliation from a financial regulator because they appealed the examination results. Mr. Speaker, this amounts to new assurances to community banks and credit unions that they will have fair recourse in the examination process should they disagree with an examiner's findings.

I would like to thank the Speaker for advancing this rule.

I urge my colleagues to support the rule so that our community banks and credit unions can realize real relief.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Once again, Congress is spending our limited time here on the floor debating issues that are not being asked for by our constituents, creating new government commissions and Washington red tape that gets in the way of our economic growth and success.

We have spent countless hours debating bills that the Senate probably won't even take up instead of the items we need to do like appropriations bills, where we are 2 weeks from the expiration of government funding.

Apparently, these bills are rushed to the floor to score political points for special interests instead of dealing with the over 800,000 Dreamers whose ability to work legally hangs in the balance of a court decision.

We are considering legislation that creates new commissions and red tape instead of focusing on how to put more money in the pockets of the middle class.

I strongly urge my colleague to vote ''no'' on the rule and the previous question so we can bring the bipartisan Dream Act forward and finally show that, yes, the House of Representatives can do its job.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

It really is fairly simple. Washington's regulations tend to strangle economic growth. What usually starts as a do-good effort quickly devolves into a ''Washington knows best'' regulatory regime. Instead of recognizing the unique needs of businesses around this country, the Federal Government usually stamps out a cookie-cutter regulation that purports to be the solution to a problem but, in reality, almost always has unintended consequences that reduce the freedom of Americans and reduces economic activity in our communities.

The bills before us today take a balanced approach to regulation, maintaining overarching safeguards while making commonsense reforms that free our community banks and credit unions to increase investment in our communities.

I promised Coloradans that I would work to reduce the role of Federal Government in their lives. These three bills today do just that.

I thank my fellow Coloradan, Mr. TIPTON, for introducing two of these measures. I thank Chairman HENSARLING for bringing these bills to the floor.

I urge passage for the rule and the underlying rule.

The material previously referred to by Mr. POLIS is as follows:

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 773 OFFERED BY MR. POLIS

At the end of the resolution, add the following new sections:

SEC. 4. Immediately upon adoption of this resolution the Speaker shall, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3440) to authorize the cancellation of removal and adjustment of status of certain individuals who are long-term United States residents and who entered the United States as children and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions. If the Committee of the Whole rises and reports that it has come to no resolution on the bill, then on the next legislative day the House shall, immediately after the third daily order of business under clause 1 of rule XIV, resolve into the Committee of the Whole for further consideration of the bill.

SEC. 5. Clause 1(c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of H.R. 3440.

THE VOTE ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT IT REALLY MEANS

This vote, the vote on whether to order the previous question on a special rule, is not merely a procedural vote. A vote against ordering the previous question is a vote against the Republican majority agenda and a vote to allow the Democratic minority to offer an alternative plan. It is a vote about what the House should be debating.

Mr. Clarence Cannon's Precedents of the House of Representatives (VI, 308–311), describes the vote on the previous question on the rule as ''a motion to direct or control the consideration of the subject before the House being made by the Member in charge.'' To defeat the previous question is to give the opposition a chance to decide the subject before the House. Cannon cites the Speaker's ruling of January 13, 1920, to the effect that ''the refusal of the House to sustain the demand for the previous question passes the control of the resolution to the opposition'' in order to offer an amendment. On March 15, 1909, a member of the majority party offered a rule resolution. The House defeated the previous question and a member of the opposition rose to a parliamentary inquiry,

asking who was entitled to recognition. Speaker Joseph G. Cannon (R–Illinois) said: ''The previous question having been refused, the gentleman from New York, Mr. Fitzgerald, who had asked the gentleman to yield to him for an amendment, is entitled to the first recognition.''

The Republican majority may say ''the vote on the previous question is simply a vote on whether to proceed to an immediate vote on adopting the resolution . . . [and] has no substantive legislative or policy implications whatsoever.'' But that is not what they have always said. Listen to the Republican Leadership Manual on the Legislative Process in the United States House of Representatives, (6th edition, page 135). Here's how the Republicans describe the previous question vote in their own manual: ''Although it is generally not possible to amend the rule because the majority Member controlling the time will not yield for the purpose of offering an amendment, the same result may be achieved by voting down the previous question on the rule. . . . When the motion for the previous question is defeated, control of the time passes to the Member who led the opposition to ordering the previous question. That Member, because he then controls the time, may offer an amendment to the rule, or yield for the purpose of amendment.''

In Deschler's Procedure in the U.S. House of Representatives, the subchapter titled ''Amending Special Rules'' states: ''a refusal to order the previous question on such a rule [a special rule reported from the Committee on Rules] opens the resolution to amendment and further debate.'' (Chapter 21, section 21.2) Section 21.3 continues: ''Upon rejection of the motion for the previous question on a resolution reported from the Committee on Rules, control shifts to the Member leading the opposition to the previous question, who may offer a proper amendment or motion and who controls the time for debate thereon.''

Clearly, the vote on the previous question on a rule does have substantive policy implications. It is one of the only available tools for those who oppose the Republican majority's agenda and allows those with alternative views the opportunity to offer an alternative plan.

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or votes objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

The House will resume proceedings on postponed questions at a later time.

□ 1300

STUDENT, TEACHERS, AND OFFICERS PREVENTING SCHOOL VIOLENCE ACT OF 2018

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4909) to reauthorize the grant program for school security in the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4909

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Student, Teachers, and Officers Preventing School Violence Act of 2018'' or the ''STOP School Violence Act of 2018''.

SEC. 2. GRANT PROGRAM FOR SCHOOL SECURITY.

Part AA of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (34 U.S.C. 10551 et seq.) is amended—

(1) in section 2701 (34 U.S.C. 10551)—

(A) in subsection (a)—

(i) by striking ''Director of the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services'' and inserting ''Director of the Bureau of Justice Assistance''; and

(ii) by striking ''including the placement and use of metal detectors and other deterrent measures'' and inserting ''through evidence-based strategies and programs to prevent violence, which may include the use of appropriate technologies, including the placement and use of metal detectors and other deterrent measure and emergency notification and response technologies'';

(B) in subsection (b)—

(i) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by inserting after ''through'' the following: ''evidence-based school safety programs that may include''; and

(ii) by striking paragraphs (1) through (6) and inserting the following:

''(1) Training to prevent student violence against others and self, including training for local law enforcement officers, school personnel, and students.

''(2) The development and operation of anonymous reporting systems for threats of school violence, including mobile telephone applications, hotlines, and internet websites.

''(3) The development and operation of—

''(A) school threat assessment and intervention teams that may include coordination with law enforcement agencies and school personnel; and

''(B) specialized training for school officials in responding to mental health crises.

''(4) Coordination with local law enforcement.

''(5) Placement and use of metal detectors, locks, lighting, and other deterrent measures.

''(6) Security assessments.

''(7) Security training of personnel and students.

''(8) Subgrants to State or local law enforcement agencies, schools, school districts, nonprofit organizations, or Indian tribal organizations to implement grants awarded under this section.

''(9) Acquisition and installation of technology for expedited notification of local law enforcement during an emergency.

''(10) Any other measure that, in the determination of the Director, may provide a significant improvement in security.'';

(C) in subsection (c)—

(i) by striking ''and has'' and inserting ''has''; and

(ii) by inserting before the period at the end the following: '', and will use evidence-based strategies and programs, such as those identified by the Comprehensive School Safety Initiative of the Department of Justice''; and

(D) in subsection (d)(1), by striking ''50 percent'' and inserting ''75 percent'';

(2) in section 2702 (34 U.S.C. 10552)—

(A) in subsection (a)(2), in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking ''child psychologists'' and inserting ''mental health professionals''; and

(B) in subsection (b), by striking ''this part'' and inserting ''the STOP School Violence Act of 2018'';

(3) in section 2704(1) (34 U.S.C. 10554(1)), by striking ''a public'' and inserting ''an'';

(4) in section 2705, by striking ''$30,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2001 through 2009'' and inserting ''$75,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2019 through 2028, of which not less than $50,000,000 shall be available in each such fiscal year for grants for the activities described in paragraphs (1) and (4) of section 2701(b)''; and

(5) by adding at the end the following:

''SEC. 2706. RULES OF CONSTRUCTION.

''(a) NO FUNDS TO PROVIDE FIREARMS OR TRAINING.—No amounts provided as a grant under this part may be used for the provision to any person of a firearm or training in the use of a firearm.

''(b) NO EFFECT ON OTHER LAWS.—Nothing in this part may be construed to preclude or contradict any other provision of law authorizing the provision of firearms or training in the use of firearms.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. POE of Texas). Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 4909, currently under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Virginia?

There was no objection.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, today I rise in strong support of H.R. 4909, the STOP School Violence Act of 2018. Violence at our schools makes students feel vulnerable in a place where they should feel comfortable to learn, grow, and be happy.

To curb violence at our Nation's schools, the STOP School Violence Act provides a multilayered approach to identify threats and prevent violence from taking place on school grounds.

It provides much-needed resources to train students, teachers, and law enforcement officers on how to recognize and quickly respond to warning signs, and provides funding for technology to keep schools safe.

Eighty percent of school shooters told someone of their violent plans or exhibited warning signs. The bill before us today will ensure that students,

teachers, and law enforcement will learn how to identify at-risk behaviors, properly assess threats, and intervene appropriately before a tragedy strikes.

The STOP School Violence Act provides funding for training to prevent student violence against others and self, including training for local law enforcement officers, school personnel, and students.

Prevention training gives students and school personnel the ability to recognize and respond quickly to warning signs of school violence and includes active shooter training.

The bill provides funding for technology and equipment to improve school security and prevent attacks. This includes the development and operation of anonymous reporting systems, such as mobile apps, a hotline, and a website. Funding may also be used for metal detectors, locks, lighting, and other technologies to keep schools safe.

The bill also supports the acquisition and installation of technology for expedited notification of local law enforcement during an emergency.

The legislation also contains funding for school threat assessment and crisis intervention teams so that school personnel can respond to threats before they materialize.

Finally, the STOP School Violence Act provides funding to support law enforcement coordination efforts and, in particular, those officers who already staff schools.

The version of the bill before us today is the result of a collaborative effort of many of my colleagues who worked with Mr. RUTHERFORD to incorporate many of their ideas.

I would like to point out the important contributions of Representatives SUSAN BROOKS, COFFMAN, CHABOT, GRANGER, RODNEY DAVIS, MESSER, and BOST, including many key elements of legislation that they have introduced into this bill that have made the bill stronger.

Finally, I want to thank Mr. RUTHERFORD and the bipartisan group of cosponsors for their work on this important bill, and I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 4909.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 4909, the STOP School Violence Act, as amended. But I do so with serious concerns about some of its provisions, and mostly about what the bill fails to do.

H.R. 4909 would authorize $50 million annually for grants administered by the Department of Justice to fund various training and other initiatives intended to enhance school safety. It would authorize another $25 million annually to be used for other related purposes, including physical improvements, such as metal detectors, better locks, and systems for schools to notify law enforcement of emergencies.

The bill is fine as far as it goes, and we should certainly do more to make our schools safer, but it is shameful that we must do so because of our failure to reduce the threat of gun violence to children.

It should be unacceptable to all of us that we must take steps to train staff and students to protect themselves against these types of incidents instead of spending more money on actually educating our young people.

This bill does not include any provisions to strengthen our gun laws or to help keep guns out of the hands of those who should not possess them.

Evidence and experience tell us that we must establish universal background checks instead of the flawed system we now have.

We should encourage States to adopt laws providing for extreme risk protection orders, and we must ban assault weapons and high-capacity ammunition magazines. These steps would help prevent not only school shootings, but would reduce the daily toll of gun violence in our communities.

None of these critical provisions are included in this bill, which was never examined by the Judiciary Committee either through a hearing or a legislative markup session. Had we taken these steps, which we could have done quickly in the exactly 1 month since the tragic Parkland, Florida, shooting, we might have produced a much better bill for floor consideration.

The suspension version of the bill does include an explicit prohibition against the funds being used on firearms or firearms training. Because President Trump and others in the administration have indicated that they believe arming teachers is part of the solution to this problem, it was important to my colleagues and to me that we be assured that this program, at least, will not be used for such a purpose which would actually endanger students, not make them safer.

However, we should have addressed serious concerns that have come to our attention with respect to the anonymous tip reporting systems and threat assessment and intervention teams that would be funded by this bill. We want people to report information about someone who may present a danger to students, but the bill does not include requirements that these systems provide adequate due process protections for students against whom a report is made.

I have longstanding concerns about the increased use of law enforcement in schools. History tells us that, without proper training, use of such policies can have a disproportionate impact on students of color and students with disabilities.

In the decades since Columbine, when the Nation rushed to increase school-based law enforcement efforts, thousands of vulnerable students have entered the school-to-prison pipeline for conduct that should be treated as routine behavior violations.

I fear, therefore, that efforts to increase school-based law enforcement without guardrails to ensure it is done well and based on strong evidence may repeat the risks of the past. My concern is only heightened by the Trump administration's ongoing efforts to remove important tools to ensure States and school districts understand their civil rights obligations when disciplining students.

I urge Secretary DeVos and Attorney General Sessions to maintain current discipline and school resource officer guidance to ensure implementation of this bill does not exacerbate the school-to-prison pipeline.

We should have had the opportunity to address these important issues through consideration in committee, but we did not.

Like the sponsors of this bill, I want Congress to do more to make our schools safer. Therefore, I will support this bill today, not withstanding the serious concerns I have outlined, with the hope that we will address these concerns going forward.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. RUTHERFORD), a member of the Judiciary Committee and the chief sponsor of this legislation.

Mr. RUTHERFORD. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, today the House of Representatives has a chance to take an important first step towards keeping our students and our teachers safe by passing the STOP School Violence Act.

This bill is the result of bipartisan work of Representative HAL ROGERS, Representative TED DEUTCH, and also Representative KILMER. We also incorporated, as we mentioned earlier, excellent ideas and key elements from legislation by Chairwoman GRANGER, Representatives SUSAN BROOKS, CHABOT, RODNEY DAVIS, MESSER, and BOST. I want to thank all of them for their work and commitment to this very important issue.

I would also like to recognize in a very special way the dedication and passion of the parents and members of Sandy Hook Promise, who have been integral to us moving this bill forward. I really cannot say enough about that organization.

As a career law enforcement officer and sheriff for 12 years in my hometown of Jacksonville, Florida, I know firsthand the importance of communities working together to spot early warning signs of violence.

This is why this bill invests in early intervention and prevention programs in our local schools, so that our communities and law enforcement can be partners in preventing these horrific acts from occurring.

We need to give students, teachers, and law enforcement the tools and training they need to identify warning signs and to know who to contact, and

provide them an anonymous tip source to provide that information.

Now, I should point out here that those receiving the tips, the agencies that are charged with providing due process, are the ones who should provide due process here, not the tipster, not the child who may be calling in to talk about an issue that he thinks is important to law enforcement.

□ 1315

That is their responsibility to provide due process to the individuals involved.

This bill also gives funding for physical enhancements to help harden the target on our school campuses. I know from my law enforcement experience that security does require a multi-layered approach. Our bill supports one very important layer of security for our schools. There is still much more work to be done, but the best way to keep our students and teachers safe is to give them the tools and the training to recognize those warning signs to prevent violence from ever entering our school grounds. This bill aims to do just that, Mr. Speaker.

As I used to tell my community in northeast Florida when I was sheriff, I do not want to be the best first responder to an active shooter event. I want to prevent that occurrence before it happens, and that is the goal of the STOP School Violence Act.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SCHNEIDER).

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 4909, the STOP School Violence Act.

Mr. Speaker, we have a fundamental responsibility to protect our young people from violence, and this package of school security improvements is an important step. In particular, this bill includes a bipartisan provision that I introduced with my friend and colleague from Illinois, Congressman MIKE BOST, to help schools acquire and install panic buttons in classrooms for use in emergency situations.

Mr. BOST and I first introduced the Securing Our Schools Act in January, and I am proud of the support we have built from both sides of the aisle which helped get this provision included in today's school safety package.

This technology will ensure students and teachers have a more immediate method of notifying law enforcement and first responders in case of a medical emergency, active school shooter incident, or natural disaster. All congressional offices have similar emergency buttons. If this technology is good enough for Members of Congress, we should be doing the same to keep our young people safe where they learn.

While this bill represents progress, it is far from an adequate solution to the threat of gun violence. We now need to build on this bipartisan momentum for other urgent solutions to improve gun safety and reduce gun violence. This includes universal background checks; restrictions on the sale of bump stocks, assault weapons, and high-capacity magazines; and research into the causes of gun violence.

Here in this Congress, we have the ability to save lives with commonsense legislation. We must act, and I urge my colleagues to support this legislation. It is a good start.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. ROGERS), who is a cosponsor of this legislation and former chairman of the House Appropriations Committee.

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the STOP School Violence Act. I want to congratulate Sheriff RUTHERFORD, the original sponsor of the bill, for his dedicated work on this project, among others.

In the immediate wake of last month's tragedy in Parkland, more than 15 students in my home district in eastern Kentucky were arrested. Thankfully, our students and local law enforcement acted swiftly to prevent a copycat event in our own schools. As our Nation battles this epidemic of school violence, it is imperative that we utilize our available resources to stop tragic events before they occur. But, unfortunately, too many students and officials don't have the tools they need to successfully act under similar situations.

This bill takes necessary and commonsense steps to prevent school bullying, suicide, and violence, providing grant funding to States to implement proven and evidence-based trainings that detect threats before they come to fruition. In most cases of school suicides and shootings, at least one other person knew of the plan and failed to report it. So these appalling events are avoidable, but we must give our schools the tools and resources they need, and this bill would do just that.

Enhancing early detection, prevention, and coordination with law enforcement will save lives. There may not be one single answer to preventing all future violence in schools, but this effort is very much a part of the solution.

Mr. Speaker, I was proud to join my colleagues in introducing this bipartisan legislation, and I urge my colleagues to vote for it.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. ESTY).

Ms. ESTY of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the STOP School Violence Act. Mark Barden and Nicole Hockley each had a child killed in the first grade classroom at Sandy Hook Elementary School in the district where I live 5 years ago. They and other parents took their grief and formed a group called the Sandy Hook Promise. That group has been working tirelessly for over 5 years now, and the bill we address here today is largely a testament to the hard work that they have put in working with mental health professionals, school officials, and law enforcement to come up with real steps that will help save lives.

The STOP School Violence Act will not save every life threatened by gun violence, but it will save some, and we need to do what we can. But let me be very clear. This needs to be the first step of many steps we can and should be taking in this House to address the scourge of gun violence. We have enormous support for bipartisan comprehensive background checks, for a Fix NICS bill, and for banning of bump stocks. This needs to be the first of a long line of steps that this Congress owes to the American people and owes to the students gathered on the lawn of the Capitol today and in every classroom throughout America.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. CHABOT), who is a member of the Judiciary Committee and chairman of the Small Business Committee.

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman GOODLATTE, Majority Leader MCCARTHY, and Congressman RUTHERFORD for their leadership on this important legislation.

Over the years, our Nation's schools have become soft targets for any would-be killer who has gotten access to a gun. We need to do a better job of protecting both students and faculty from these increasingly frequent threats.

This legislation combines school safety provisions included in two bills, one originally introduced by Mr. RUTHERFORD, and the other by me. Together this proposal represents a collection of commonsense solutions to better help protect our students, our teachers, and other faculty in our schools.

H.R. 4909 reauthorizes the COPS Secure Our Schools grant program and more than doubles its annual budget from $30 million to $75 million annually. Of that $75 million, not less than $50 million per year will be made available for evidence-based strategies and programs to prevent violence in public or private schools over the next decade.

Among the security measures for which these grants may be used include additional training to ensure the health and well-being of students, the development of more robust threat reporting systems, and investments in more advanced security technologies.

Additionally, the COPS Secure Our Schools grants can be used in conjunction with the COPS Hiring Program to ensure that our schools have both the security measures and personnel in place to prevent future violence. On Monday, U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions announced that the Department of Justice will use the COPS Hiring Program to increase the number of school resource officers nationwide. The legislation we are considering

today could help that effort by allowing schools to hire retired police officers to provide security if the Department of Justice determines that such plans would provide a significant improvement in school security.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Dan Hils, president of the Cincinnati FOP, for actively engaging on the issue of school safety and for bringing these types of forward-thinking solutions to my attention. He has been a tremendous resource throughout this process.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleague to support this measure.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DEUTCH), who is a sponsor of this legislation.

Mr. DEUTCH. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend from New York.

Mr. Speaker, the trauma that my community in Parkland, Florida, experienced was not unique. Gun violence tears apart American communities on a daily basis. So, no, what happened on February 14 when 14 students and three teachers were hunted in their schools with an AR–15 assault rifle by a former student, that wasn't unique.

But the problem of gun violence in America is a uniquely American problem. It is an epidemic. It is a complex problem. There are many facets. But we know what we need to do, and I am committed to taking any step to getting any new policy across the finish line that will make our kids safer.

This bill, the STOP School Violence Act, is a good bill. It will not solve our gun problem. It won't ban bump stocks or require Americans to be 21 to buy a gun, fix our broken background check system, or get weapons of war—the weapons of choice for mass shooters—off our streets and out of our communities. But it will help troubled students who need help get help, and it will help teachers and law enforcement identify potential threats before it is too late.

Before we vote, I would like to make a few things clear. First, this isn't a response to the tragedy at Marjory Stoneman Douglas. In fact, Congressman RUTHERFORD and I introduced this bill a week before the shooting. The programs in this bill are based on rigorous, evidence-based evaluation. They are proven to help reduce isolation and identify kids who need help.

We had no idea at the time that we wouldn't be able to move fast enough to stop this tragedy. We had no idea that we would have an urgent need to help get more American schools access to these programs. But since Congress has failed the American people by ignoring the deadly scourge of gun violence, since we failed the families of Stoneman Douglas just like we failed the families of Sandy Hook, Columbine, and so many others, we owe it to students and teachers across this country to at least give them tools to help identify dangerous behavior.

The failure of Congress to take action in response to gun violence has left the American gun violence debate in a ridiculous place. Armed teachers in every hallway? Is that what we want education to be in America? No. I am glad this bill includes a specific prohibition against the use of grant dollars to arm school personnel, including teachers, or to train school personnel to use firearms.

Since Congress has failed the American people by ignoring the scourge of gun violence and failed the families of Stoneman Douglas, the failure of Congress to take action has left us in this position of debating gun violence where we are hesitant to even take small steps. This is a small and important step.

I have heard civil rights concerns related to racial profiling and discrimination associated with threat assessments in anonymous reporting, and I am sensitive to those. Congress should never be in a position to make this serious problem worse with new programs to expand the discrimination already entrenched in our school system and society as a whole.

I know the evidence shows that discriminatory discipline in schools can have dramatic, long-term effects on academic performance and wide-ranging impact. But this bill, Mr. Speaker, does not perpetuate discriminatory policies. Zero tolerance and other questionable discipline policies are not evidence based, and, as such, would not be considered a proper use of grant funds.

STOP School Violence program grants are not intended to be used to discipline students. Instead, threat assessment intervention protects potential victims and addresses the underlying problems to make schools safe for everyone. Finally, studies on evidence-based school threat assessment intervention practices have shown that these programs actually decrease racial profiling, bullying, suicides, and suspensions.

I am proud of the bipartisan work that has gone into this bill, and once we have taken this step—this astonishingly modest yet important first step—we must finally do our jobs and work together to make meaningful changes toward stopping the epidemic of gun violence in this country. I know that this does not go far enough in terms of what we need to do. I understand that. I believe it deeply. But it is an important, bipartisan step that we should take today.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. COMER).

Mr. COMER. Mr. Speaker, earlier this year, I joined my colleagues from the Kentucky delegation here on the House floor to lead a moment of silence for the victims of a tragic school shooting at Marshall County High School in my district in Kentucky on January 23.

Today I am proud to rise in support of the STOP School Violence Act, which I believe will be a critical step forward in preventing future school shootings like the tragedies we witnessed in Marshall County, Kentucky, and, of course, at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida.

□ 1330

In the wake of the Marshall County shooting, I heard from the families of victims and other members of the community that their top priority was enhancing physical security, whether that means installing metal detectors, hiring school resource officers, or making other evidence-based improvements to prevent and mitigate school violence.

This bill will provide resources to schools so that they can do just that while also supporting training for students, teachers, and local law enforcement to identify and prevent violence in our schools.

The Marshall County community is resilient. As we continue to mourn the loss of two young lives in our community along with those in Parkland, we will also fight to protect our students, educators, and communities. I believe the STOP School Violence Act will help defend our schools from those who wish to inflict harm on others, and I urge my colleagues to support this important and bipartisan bill.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire how much time is remaining on each side.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Virginia has 8 minutes remaining. The gentleman from New York has 9 minutes remaining.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BOST).

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 4909, the STOP School Violence Act, which includes my bipartisan legislation to increase access to emergency panic buttons in the classroom.

I want to thank Mr. RUTHERFORD for his bill before us today, and my friend from Illinois (Mr. SCHNEIDER) for partnering with me on the school safety language we had included in this bill.

As a father and a grandfather, I know firsthand how important it is that our Nation's children have a safe environment to grow and learn. As a former first responder, I know that response time is vitally important during any emergency situation. This bill makes it much easier for schools to increase their security and provide lifesaving technology to contact first responders immediately when violence or any other emergency occurs.

We already have panic buttons to protect our investments at our banks. Well, there is no greater investment in the country than our children. We should be doing the best to protect them, too, and this legislation is a step in the right direction.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE), the ranking member of the Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations Subcommittee.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished ranking member, the chairman of the committee, and the proponents of this bill. I acknowledge their commitment and certainly their sincerity.

Mr. Speaker, I joined the thousands of young people today on the west side of the Capitol as they came from schools throughout this region to stand for 17 minutes to acknowledge those who lost their lives in Florida at a high school.

That should not have been their destiny. It should not have been their destiny to die in a bloody massacre in their school. It should not have been the destiny of those in the Pulse nightclub, Sutherland Springs, Columbine, Las Vegas, Texas Tech, the streets of Houston in my district, Chicago, or any other place.

This bill is not about preventing the unsafe use of guns. Guns kill. The young people today made it very clear that they will not stop until we have real gun safety legislation barring the AR–15 and we have universal background checks.

At the same time, I believe these bills of our colleagues are important legislative initiatives. So, in tribute to these individuals who have passed, but also the Members, I believe the STOP School Violence Act of 2017 is a ready response to aspects of school safety and security that are very important.

One of the unique aspects of this bill that I think should be noted is the language in the bill itself that indicates it is through evidence-based strategies and programs to prevent violence, which may include the use of appropriate technologies. The bill readily acknowledges many aspects of school safety.

The AFT and the National School Boards Association are two of the supporters of this legislation. But it does not answer totally the question of the parent who said: ''I didn't get a chance that morning to say good-bye to my daughter.''

We must address the question of gun violence. I believe it is important that we put a stop to children evacuating schools, like this one, and for us to be able to address a real, nonpartisan, bipartisan response to the proliferation of guns, whether it means enforcing gun laws, lifting the age to 21, or banning bump stocks, all points we thought the President was supporting but, unfortunately, he is not.

I do want to raise the point of the tip line. I think it is extremely important, as long as it is guided by teachers, counselors, and mental health experts. We must be very sure that we do not have racial disparities where the largest percentage of individuals impacted by the tip line may be African-American youth, Hispanic youth, or Muslim youth.

We know that racial disparities are real because the largest percentage of those who are sent to detention or juvenile centers happen to be African-American children, young boys and girls, which I really believe is something that has to stop.

In addition, it is important that we comply with civil rights law. I think the advocates of civil rights organizations like the Legal Defense Fund are absolutely right. There must be a standard where the civil rights of these children are not violated on this tip line and that due process is provided for them.

We must make a statement here today that, as we support this legislation, we do not intend to support legislation that we skew to be biased toward these young people. These young people in impoverished neighborhoods and schools, Mr. Speaker, deserve to learn as well. But we want safe schools. Those safe schools can be had with the beginning of this infrastructure.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman from Texas has expired.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentlewoman from Texas an additional 30 seconds.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. We can begin with this question of school safety and a tip line and best evidence and best practices. We can begin with grants to ensure the safety of our schools. We can allow schools to make choices about what will make them more safe.

At the same time, we must safeguard our children and their rights. We must answer the cry of the children. We will not finish our task until we have real gun safety legislation.

Enough is enough. It is time to act now. I need my Republican brothers and sisters to work with me.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a letter from the Legal Defense and Education Fund and a news article published in the New York on March 13, 2018.

NAACP LEGAL DEFENSE AND EDUCATIONAL FUND, INC.,
Washington, DC, March 12, 2018.

Re H.R. 4909, the STOP School Violence Act of 2018.

Hon. PAUL RYAN,
Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.
Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Minority Leader, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER RYAN AND LEADER PELOSI: On behalf of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF), we write to express our concerns with H.R. 4909, the Student, Teachers, and Officers Preventing School Violence Act of 2018 (the STOP School Violence Act or Act). This bill will fail to achieve its goal of improving school safety and will instead create more dangerous conditions for students, especially students of color.

Founded in 1940 by Thurgood Marshall, LDF is the nation's oldest civil rights law organization. For almost 80 years, LDF has relied on the Constitution and federal and state civil rights laws to pursue equality and justice for African Americans and other people of color. Since the historic U.S. Supreme Court decision in Brown v. Board of Education, which LDF litigated and won, we have continued to represent students of color to ensure they receive quality and equitable educational opportunities.

Unfortunately, we all have too much experience dealing with the aftermath of school shootings. After the incidents in Columbine, CO and Sandy Hook, CT, families, school districts, and lawmakers took a variety of actions intended to prevent future tragedies. In studying these actions and their consequences, we can see which efforts work, and which do not. The STOP School Violence Act does not do enough to ensure that effective methods that protect all students are used by our nation's schools and risks furthering racial disparities in education.

The U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Secret Service have published a guide (the ED/SS Guide) to maintaining safe schools, recommending the following steps:

1. Systematically surveying students, teachers, and other stakeholders about the emotional climate of a school to be able to continuously assess and improve school climate;
2. Encouraging students and teachers to respectfully listen to each other;
3. Ensuring that students feel comfortable speaking with adults in the school community;
4. Preventing and addressing bullying through promotion of pro-social behaviors;
5. Involving students and staff in the maintenance of a culture of safety and respect;
6. Ensuring all students have a trusting relationship with at least one adult at school; and
7. Creating mechanisms for developing and maintaining safe school climates.

The ED/SS guide emphasizes that safe and secure school environments are created only through focusing on maintaining a respectful and supportive school environment where students' emotional and academic needs are met, with things like effective threat assessment only a small part. These recommendations are supported by other experts.

To effectively make schools safer, the STOP Schools Act should provide grants to states and districts to help cultivate these positive environments. To do this, the Act should focus on expanding resources, such as school counselors, mental health services, social workers, and proven programs, such as Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and restorative practices, and prohibit assigning law enforcement to schools. Instead, the Act provides grants to states and school districts to improve school security by providing training to prevent student violence, including for law enforcement officers, school personnel, and students; developing and operating anonymous reporting systems for threats of school violence; developing and operating school threat assessment and intervention teams that may include coordination with law enforcement agencies and school personnel, and specialized training for school officials in responding to mental health crises; coordinating with law enforcement; using metal detectors, locks, lighting, and other deterrent measures; implementing security assessments and training; installing technology for expedited notification of law enforcement during an emergency; and taking ''any other measures that . . . may provide a significant improvement in security.'' These provisions are only a small part of the strategy that experts recommend for maintaining safe school environments, and as written,

the provisions have a high risk of exacerbating race-based disparities in how students are treated by school police and staff.

The Act's language regarding coordination with law enforcement and allowing any measures that ''may'' provide more security will allow school districts to use the grant funding to increase law enforcement presence rather than on evidence-based interventions. Research has shown that having more police in schools does not make schools safer, but, results in an increasing number of students being led from schools to the justice system. Although Black and Latinx students do not misbehave more than White students, students of color make up over 58% of school-based arrests, but only 40% of public school enrollment. Black students are more than twice as likely as their White peers to be referred to law enforcement or arrested at school. Additionally, research shows that police officers perceive Black youth as older and more culpable than they do similarly-situated White youth, and this bias leads to the over-criminalization of Black students. Furthermore, the presence of police in schools makes Black students and students who have been victims feel less safe, which would negatively affect school climate.

To address these disparities, a clause should be added to the Act requiring that data be collected on any activities undertaken with grant funding to determine whether they are disproportionately affecting students of color or other at-risk groups. Any districts that are discriminating against students should not receive federal funding.

Moreover, the Act's anonymous reporting system does not have prescribed due process or civil rights protections and could lead to more racial disparities in how students are treated at school. As the ED/SS Guide cautions, anonymous systems could lead to individuals reporting false and malicious information. It will be an easy vehicle for students or staff who hold implicit or explicit biases against students of color to report those students as being a danger to themselves or others based on discriminatory reasons. In order to protect students, the tip system should be implemented as recommended in the guide: it should be housed within a wider system of trust amongst students and staff so that all feel comfortable filing reports and providing any required additional information in assessing threats. In addition, the communications should be tracked and data disaggregated and assessed for racial disparities in threat reporting.

Finally, the STOP Violence Act does not restrict its funding to public schools and does not state that all recipients of funds must comply with existing civil rights laws. The Act should include a statement that any school receiving funds under this Act complies with all federal law, including civil rights laws protecting students on the bases of race, color, national origin; sex; disability; and age.

All students deserve to attend safe and welcoming schools, and we encourage you to provide states and districts with additional resources to achieve this goal. Unfortunately, the STOP School Violence Act as currently written will not improve school safety and will risk further harm to students who are already disserved by the system. Thank you for considering this letter. If you have any questions, please contact us.

Respectfully submitted,

TODD A. COX,
Director of Policy.
MONIQUE L. DIXON,
Deputy Director of Policy.
NICOLE DOOLEY,
Policy Counsel.

[From the New York Times, Mar. 13, 2018]

TRUMP FINDS UNLIKELY CULPRIT IN SCHOOL SHOOTINGS: OBAMA DISCIPLINE POLICIES

(By Erica L. Green)

WASHINGTON.—After a gunman marauded through Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School last month, conservative commentators—looking for a culprit—seized on an unlikely target: an Obama-era guidance document that sought to rein in the suspensions and expulsions of minority students.

Black students have never been the perpetrators of the mass shootings that have shocked the nation's conscience nor have minority schools been the targets. But the argument went that any relaxation of disciplinary efforts could let a killer slip through the cracks.

And this week, President Trump made the connection, announcing that Education Secretary Betsy DeVos will lead a school safety commission charged in part with examining the ''repeal of the Obama administration's 'Rethink School Discipline' policies.''

To civil rights groups, connecting an action to help minority students with mass killings in suburban schools smacked of burdening black children with a largely white scourge.

''Yet again, the Trump administration, faced with a domestic crisis, has responded by creating a commission to study an unrelated issue in order to ultimately advance a discriminatory and partisan goal,'' said Sherrilyn Ifill, the president and director-counsel at NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund Inc.

''School shootings are a grave and preventable problem, but rescinding the school discipline guidance is not the answer,'' she said. ''Repealing the guidance will not stop the next school shooter, but it will ensure that thousands more students of color are unnecessarily ushered into the school-to-prison pipeline.''

The issue of the Obama-era discipline guidance was raised formally by Senator Marco Rubio, Republican of Florida, who, after seeing a flurry of conservative news media reports, wrote a letter to Ms. DeVos and Attorney General Jeff Sessions questioning whether the guidance allowed the shooting suspect, Nikolas Cruz, to evade law enforcement and carry out the massacre at Stoneman Douglas High.

It was, on its face, an odd point: Mr. Cruz is white, and far from evading school disciplinary procedures, he had been expelled from Stoneman Douglas.

''The overarching goals of the 2014 directive to mitigate the school-to-prison pipeline, reduce suspensions and expulsions, and to prevent racially biased discipline are laudable and should be explored,'' Mr. Rubio wrote, asking that the guidance be revised. ''However, any policy seeking to achieve these goals requires basic common sense and an understanding that failure to report troubled students, like Cruz, to law enforcement can have dangerous repercussions.''

Broward County educators and advocates saw Mr. Rubio's letter as an indictment of a program called Promise, which the county instituted in 2013—one year before the Obama guidance was issued—and has guided its discipline reforms to reduce student-based arrests in Broward County, where Stoneman Douglas is.

The N.A.A.C.P. said that Mr. Rubio ''notably backs away from raising the purchase age for assault-style rifles and restricting magazine capacity,'' and instead focuses on a system that once sent one million minority students to Florida jails for ''simple and routine discipline issues ranging from talking back to teachers to schoolyard scuffles.''

The program was praised by former Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, and echoes the goals of the 2014 Obama guidance in discouraging schools from using law enforcement as a first line of defense for low-level offenses.

In the days before making his request, Mr. Rubio released a proposal that he said would remedy lapses in the Promise program and the 2014 guidance.

In a tweet on Tuesday, Mr. Rubio noted that the gunman was not in the Promise program, but had displayed violent and threatening behavior.

''The more we learn, the more it appears the problem is not the program or the DOE guidance itself, but the way it is being applied,'' Mr. Rubio said, referring to the Education Department. ''It may have created a culture discourages referral to law enforcement even in egregious cases like the #Parkland shooter.''

Long before the attack in Parkland, Fla., the 2014 discipline guidelines, which encouraged schools to examine their discipline disparities and to take stock of discriminatory policies, were already on Ms. DeVos's radar—but not because they were seen as a possible culprit in the next school shooting. Conservatives were using the Trump administration's effort to rein in federal overreach to reverse policies designed to protect against what the Obama administration had seen as discriminatory practices.

The ''Rethink Discipline,'' package that Mr. Trump's commission will examine includes guidance that the Obama administration issued on the legal limitations on the use of restraints and seclusion, corporal punishment and equity for special education students.

In recent months, educators and policy experts from across the country have traveled to Washington to voice support for and opposition to the disciplinary guidance, in private meetings with officials at the Education Department and in a series of public forums.

At a briefing hosted by the United States Commission on Civil Rights, dozens of policy experts, researchers, educators and parents sounded off on the Obama-era discipline policy in a meeting that became so racially charged that some black attendees walked out.

Since the discipline guidelines were issued, conservatives have blamed the document for creating unsafe educational environments by pressuring schools to keep suspension numbers down to meet racial quotas, even if it meant ignoring troubling and criminal behavior. Teachers who sought suspensions or expulsions of minority students were painted as racists, conservatives maintained.

''Evidence is mounting that efforts to fight the school-to-prison pipeline is creating a school climate catastrophe and has if anything put at-risk students at greater risk,'' said Max Eden, a senior fellow at the conservative Manhattan Institute, who argued that teacher bias was not the driving force behind school discipline.

But proponents argued that racial bias was well documented.

When the guidance was issued, federal data found that African-American students without disabilities were more than three times as likely as their white peers without disabilities to be expelled or suspended, and that more than 50 percent of students who were involved in school-related arrests or who were referred to law enforcement were Hispanic or African-American.

''Children's safety also includes protection from oppression and bigotry and injustice,'' Daniel J. Losen, director of the Center for Civil Rights Remedies at the University of California at Los Angeles's Civil Rights Project, wrote in testimony to the Civil Rights Commission. ''Fear-mongering and rhetoric that criminalizes youth of color,

children from poor families and children with disabilities should not be tolerated.''

The Education and Justice Departments wrote in a 2014 Dear Colleague letter that discipline disparities could be caused by a range of factors, but the statistics in the federal data ''are not explained by more frequent or more serious misbehavior by students of color.'' The departments also noted that several civil rights investigations had verified that minority students were disciplined more harshly than their white peers for the same infractions.

''In short, racial discrimination in school discipline is a real problem,'' the guidance said.

In recent months, Ms. DeVos has said change will be coming. She has already moved to rescind a regulation that protects against racial disparities in special education placements. Her goal, she said last month, was to be ''sensitive to all of the parties involved.''

In a bruising interview on ''60 Minutes'' on Sunday, Ms. DeVos said that the disproportionate discipline issue ''comes down to individual kids.'' She declined to say whether she believed that black students disciplined more harshly for the same infraction were the victims of institutional racism.

''We're studying it carefully and are committed to making sure students have opportunity to learn in safe and nurturing environments,'' she said.

Ms. DeVos's office for civil rights also announced that it would scale back the scope of investigations, reversing an approach taken under the Obama administration to conduct exhaustive reviews of school districts' practices and data when a discrimination complaint was filed.

But Ms. DeVos's own administration has continued to find racial disparities. In November, the Education Department found that the Loleta Union Elementary School District in California doled out harsher treatment to Native American students than their white peers. For example, a Native American student received a one-day out-of-school suspension for slapping another student on the way to the bus, in what was that student's first disciplinary referral of the year. A white student received lunch detention for slapping two students on the same day—the student's fifth and sixth referrals that year.

While Mr. Cruz was repeatedly kicked out of class and ultimately expelled, it is unclear whether he was ever referred to the police for his behavior in school. However, Mr. Cruz was known to law enforcement, which never found cause to arrest him, and a report of troublesome behavior to the F.B.I. went unheeded.

The Broward County superintendent, Robert Runcie, said that Mr. Rubio's effort to connect the district's discipline policies to the Stoneman Douglas shooting was misguided.

''We're not going to dismantle a program that's been successful in the district because of false information that someone has put out there,'' Mr. Runcie said on Twitter. ''We will neither manage nor lead by rumors.''

Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak on H.R. 4909, the ''STOP School Violence Act of 2017.''

This important bipartisan legislation comes before us today on the one month anniversary of a senseless and tragic school massacre, which claimed 17 lives.

On February 14, 2018 our world lost Alyssa Alhadeff, Martin Duque, Nicholas Dworet, Jaime Guttenberg, Luke Hoyer, Cara Loughran, Gina Montalto, Joaquin Oliver, Alaina Petty, Meadow Pollack, Helena Ramsay, Alex Schachter, Carmen Schentrup, and Peter Wang.

Also lost, were three coaches: Chris Hixon, Aaron Feis, and Scott Beigel, who was also a biology teacher.

Today, in their honor, you, the students organized a nationwide school walkout for gun violence prevention. Parkland wants to go down in history as more than just survivors. We in Congress can help make that happen.

I was proud to stand in solidarity with you all this morning, hand-in-hand as you were armed with passion and vision; unapologetic about your stance on these issues as you continue to display your advocacy as bold, relentless and engaged leaders of our future.

Mr. Speaker, they want universal background checks, and sensible legislation that will curtail gun violence, thereby, keeping guns out of their schools and out of the hands of those that threaten to take lives and wreak havoc in our churches, theatres, concerts and schools.

"When will it all stop," they asked. We too in Congress must evaluate ourselves and ask: when will we respond adequately?

My heart goes out to students and parents all across America who find themselves routinely faced with these tragic incidents of great proportion; from Columbine to Virginia Tech, Sandy Hook, and Parkland; and our cities like Chicago, Baltimore and the rest of America.

These are the faces of our children as they were leaving Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Fla., after the Valentine's Day deadly shooting.

"I didn't get a chance that morning to say goodbye to my daughter, but I'm here today to make sure that I'm one of the last fathers that ever has to bury their daughter or son or loved one from a senseless act of violence in a school," said Ryan Petty, whose daughter Alaina Petty was among the 17 killed.

Mr. Petty, I hear you. I agree with my colleagues, that school safety is paramount and that is why I signed onto this bill following the Parkland school shooting.

This bill is not perfect and I will address my concerns. But it is a good first step.

As Ranking Member of the Judiciary Crime Subcommittee, I caution any measure that could adversely impact our constitutional rights.

Had this bill went through regular order, I would have amended it with a clause that would prescribe due process or civil rights protections in the anonymous reporting system. This would allow the accused with notice and an opportunity to respond with representation.

As written, this bill is amenable to abuse where false and malicious information can be reported by any staff or student who may have a bias against the accused but alarmingly, the accused has no avenue for a remedy in defending him/herself.

I want to ensure that the current race-based disparities in how students are treated by school police and staff are not further exacerbated by this bill as written.

H.R. 4909 provides that there be coordination with law enforcement in providing security, which will increase law enforcement presence in schools rather than use evidence-based interventions.

I would like to add to this bill, a clause requiring that data be collected of any activities undertaken with grant funding to determine whether they are disproportionately affecting students of color or other at-risk groups.

Research has shown, when law enforcement engage minority students, there is a high likelihood of increasing the 'schoolhouse to jailhouse' track.

Students of color make up over 58% of school-based arrests, but only % of public school enrollment. A judicious approach is therefore warranted in implementing this bill.

Finally, any recipient of federal grants should be required to comply with all federal laws, including civil rights laws protecting students based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability and age.

In our quest for school safety we must always exercise due care in balancing a benefit against the backdrop of our civil liberties so that we do not repeat incidents like North Carolina, where a young girl was grabbed around the neck with one arm, by school resources officer gripping her arm with his other hand and flipping her backward out of her chair.

I stand firm with students everywhere because they "all" are the future of America. And standing with them all no matter where they are from is a net positive for us all.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. RODNEY DAVIS).

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I know I am not supposed to be able to recognize people in the gallery because it is a breach of the House rules, so I won't mention to the viewers that there are a lot of students in the gallery today seeing the political process at work.

This is an opportunity for everyone to get to understand what it means to affect public policy in this great country. We are glad. We want to hear more from students throughout this Nation about what they think our government can do to make this country better.

I just want to come here to talk about today being exactly a month since a parent's worst nightmare came true for many in Parkland, Florida: the school they send their kids to was attacked.

This issue is personal for me, as a parent and also as somebody who has experienced gun violence on a baseball field less than a year ago. I think about the same fear, the same smells, sounds, and now the same healing process that those survivors will be going through. But I can only imagine how processing those things as a teenager feels or the pain that their parents, especially those who lost a child that day, are feeling right now.

I believe the only reason all of us on that baseball field are still here today is because we had someone there who was protecting us and firing back. Boy, did David Bailey, Crystal Griner, and the Alexandria Police fire back.

That doesn't mean I believe all schools need the same kind of security measures, but I do believe all of our schools need to look closely at their security protocols and policies, and Congress should help them make the changes that they deem necessary.

There wasn't just one failure on February 14, and as such, there can't be just one solution. This bill is one part of addressing this issue, and it is something we can and should do right now.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. This week, I met with Central A&M High School in my district to discuss school safety and what they need to make schools more secure. Following the tragedy at Parkland, they sent a letter to parents and students. It had a line that stood out to me, ''Safety is everybody's responsibility.''

They are right. Let's pass the STOP School Violence Act. It is only part of the solution. There are other issues we still need to address. But if you believe in helping to make our schools safer, you should vote for this bipartisan bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are advised not to refer to occupants of the gallery, under the House rules.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, in the course of my coming over to the floor, we heard a comment, which I intend to check, of an accidental discharge of a firearm by a resource officer in a school in Virginia. The gun went off.

I just want to conclude by saying that we have brought people together in that nothing in this bill will allow for Federal funds to be used in these grants for the arming of teachers. I think the AFT has evidenced their support for that.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I have one speaker remaining, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, today, young people across the country are taking a stand and calling upon this Congress to do something about the scourge of gun violence that has terrorized our schools and streets for too long. This bill fails to do so, and it should not and cannot be our only response to these demands.

We must make schools safer. But the best way to do that is to do more to prevent gun violence from occurring in the first place. Congress must do more to stop gun violence. Congress should pass an assault weapons ban. Congress should pass an effective background check. Congress should ban high-capacity magazines.

Congress should do a lot more. It is not enough to say that staff and students must do more to protect themselves. Mr. Speaker, it is time to take decisive action to stop gun violence in our communities.

You are faced with a simple choice, Mr. Speaker: Will you stand with these young people who are demanding action or will you stand with the NRA and be complicit in the continuing violence in our schools and in our streets?

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield the balance of my time to the gentlewoman from Indiana (Mrs. BROOKS).

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for his leadership, and I thank the Members who have come before us today to speak about their experiences, like my colleague who suffered from a horrific act of gun violence last year.

I also want to speak on behalf of the thousands of students who stood up all around the country. They have asked us to take action to address gun violence.

Our children do deserve to be safe while they are at school, to feel safe and to be safe. I am the mother of a teacher, sister of a teacher, and daughter of a new teacher. We want our schools to be safe.

We in this country have focused on violence in our communities for a very long time. When I was deputy mayor of Indianapolis in the late nineties, we were very focused on reducing gun violence and homicides of all kinds in the city of Indianapolis.

□ 1345

Later, as U.S. attorney in the southern district of Indiana, I led what was called Project Safe Neighborhoods, which I understand that Attorney General Sessions is reinvigorating to reduce the gun violence in all of our communities, which includes our schools.

As our colleague from Florida just said, this is a very complex problem. This is something that we have been paying attention to for many years and, in fact, decades. It is going to take complex solutions, but this bill is a very important part of the solution.

In fact, last year, my colleagues on the Energy and Commerce Committee worked to enact 21st Century Cures Act, which included a number of mental health provisions. One of those reforms ensured that State and local governments can use grant funding from the Department of Justice to develop and operate school-based mental health crisis intervention teams. Today we will reauthorize that Department of Justice program for another 10 years with this bill.

I read this morning in The Indianapolis Star, the new movement about walk up, not just walk out. It is important for students and everybody to walk up to those people who they have concerns about in their schools or those people who are lonely, and those people who need help or who just need a friend.

The STOP School Violence Act authorizes $75 million in annual funding to support increased security and training and increase the use of anonymous reporting systems. In one school in my district, over 100 tips were sent into that school system with the anonymous reporting on the night of the Parkland shooting, and teachers worked around the clock on shifts all night to run down all of those tips. That is what is critically important, that people continue to report and that law enforcement working with school officials continue to investigate.

These tips come from outside the school. They come from inside the school. This is critically important. They come from social media. They come from conversations. It is important to share. This bill increases the amount of funding that can go to schools for anonymous reporting systems. That is just one of the things it does.

This bill will add more resources. It is not enough. I am not saying that it is enough. It is one of the many steps. In fact, in this appropriations bill, I want to encourage my colleagues on the Appropriations Committee to continue to increase funding for school safety and mental health programs in the omnibus bill and in budgets going forward.

We know this bill is one important step. I want to applaud one of my colleagues, Sheriff Rutherford, a Member from Florida. He and another Member from Florida introduced this bill 1 week before the shooting. They, along with many colleagues, have focused on school security for many years. We do have to do more. This is an important step. It is a critical step. And when men like Sheriff Rutherford have devoted his life to protecting and serving his community and his schools in his community, we need to listen to him.

This is a very important step. I urge my colleagues to vote ''yes.'' We will not stop. We have heard the young people. We have heard their families. We are going to continue to listen. We will continue to fight for safety in schools in our communities.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4909, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. RUTHERFORD. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 1 o'clock and 48 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1416

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro

tempore (Mr. POE of Texas) at 2 o'clock and 16 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on questions previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

Ordering the previous question on House Resolution 773;

Adopting House Resolution 773, if ordered; and

Suspending the rules and passing H.R. 4909.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Remaining electronic votes will be conducted as 5-minute votes.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4545, FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS EXAMINATION FAIRNESS AND REFORM ACT; PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1116, TAKING ACCOUNT OF INSTITUTIONS WITH LOW OPERATION RISK ACT OF 2017; AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4263, REGULATION A+ IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2017

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on ordering the previous question on the resolution (H. Res. 773) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4545) to amend the Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council Act of 1978 to improve the examination of depository institutions, and for other purposes; providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1116) to require the Federal financial institutions regulatory agencies to take risk profiles and business models of institutions into account when taking regulatory actions, and for other purposes; and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4263) to amend the Securities Act of 1933 with respect to small company capital formation, and for other purposes, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 234, nays 183, not voting 13, as follows:

[Roll No. 104]

YEAS—234

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Arrington
Babin
Bacon
Banks (IN)
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Bergman
Biggs
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Budd
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Cheney
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comer
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Curtis
Davidson
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Dunn
Emmer
Estes (KS)
Farenthold
Faso
Ferguson
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Flores
Fortenberry
Foxx
Frelinghuysen
Gaetz
Gallagher
Garrett
Gianforte
Gibbs
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guthrie
Handel
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Higgins (LA)
Hill
Holding
Hollingsworth
Hudson
Huizenga
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (LA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Jordan
Joyce (OH)
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger
Knight
Kustoff (TN)
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
Lewis (MN)
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Marshall
Massie
Mast
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mitchell
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Newhouse
Noem
Norman
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Pittenger
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Posey
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Rice (SC)
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney, Francis
Rooney, Thomas J.
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce (CA)
Russell
Rutherford
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smucker
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Taylor
Tenney
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Zeldin

NAYS—183

Adams
Aguilar
Barragán
Bass
Beatty
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (MD)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capuano
Carbajal
Cárdenas
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Cooper
Correa
Costa
Courtney
Crist
Crowley
Cuellar
Davis (CA)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Demings
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Espaillat
Esty (CT)
Evans
Foster
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Gomez
Gonzalez (TX)
Gottheimer
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hanabusa
Hastings
Heck
Higgins (NY)
Himes
Hoyer
Huffman
Jackson Lee
Jayapal
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Khanna
Kihuen
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster (NH)
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lawson (FL)
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham, M.
Luján, Ben Ray
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn B.
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McEachin
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Halleran
O'Rourke
Pallone
Panetta
Pascrell
Payne
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Raskin
Richmond
Rosen
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Smith (WA)
Soto
Speier
Suozzi
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—13

Cummings
Davis, Danny
Frankel (FL)
Katko
Kennedy
Lieu, Ted
Pelosi
Rice (NY)
Ros-Lehtinen
Slaughter
Smith (MO)
Tsongas
Wilson (FL)

□ 1443

Mrs. BLACK changed her vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So the previous question was ordered.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee). The question is on the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 235, noes 182, not voting 13, as follows:

[Roll No. 105]

AYES—235

Abraham
Aderholt
Amash
Amodei
Arrington
Babin
Bacon
Banks (IN)
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Bergman
Biggs
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Budd
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Cheney
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comer
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Curtis
Davidson
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Dunn
Emmer
Estes (KS)
Farenthold
Faso
Ferguson
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Flores
Fortenberry
Foxx
Frelinghuysen
Gaetz
Gallagher
Garrett
Gianforte
Gibbs
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gottheimer
Gowdy
Granger

Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Griffith
Grothman
Guthrie
Handel
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Higgins (LA)
Hill
Holding
Hollingsworth
Hudson
Huizenga
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (LA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Jordan
Joyce (OH)
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger
Knight
Kustoff (TN)
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
Lewis (MN)
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Marshall
Massie
Mast
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mitchell
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Murphy (FL)
Newhouse
Noem
Norman
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Pittenger
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Posey
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Rice (SC)
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney, Francis
Rooney, Thomas J.
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce (CA)
Russell
Rutherford
Sanford
Scalise
Schneider
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smucker
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Taylor
Tenney
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Zeldin

NOES—182

Adams
Aguilar
Barragán
Bass
Beatty
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (MD)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capuano
Carbajal
Cárdenas
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Cooper
Correa
Costa
Courtney
Crist
Crowley
Cuellar
Davis (CA)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Demings
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Espaillat
Esty (CT)
Evans
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Gomez
Gonzalez (TX)
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hanabusa
Hastings
Heck
Higgins (NY)
Himes
Hoyer
Huffman
Jackson Lee
Jayapal
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Khanna
Kihuen
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster (NH)
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lawson (FL)
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham, M.
Luján, Ben Ray
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn B.
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McEachin
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Halleran
O'Rourke
Pallone
Panetta
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Raskin
Richmond
Rosen
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Smith (WA)
Soto
Speier
Suozzi
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—13

Allen
Cummings
Davis, Danny
Graves (MO)
Katko
Kennedy
Lieu, Ted
Rice (NY)
Ros-Lehtinen
Slaughter
Smith (MO)
Tsongas
Wilson (FL)

□ 1451

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

HONORING MARCY KAPTUR AS THE LONGEST SERVING WOMAN IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

(Ms. PELOSI asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, today, we in Congress have the honor of recognizing an outstanding leader and an esteemed colleague, Congresswoman MARCY KAPTUR. We have the esteemed honor of recognizing MARCY KAPTUR as she becomes the longest serving woman in the history of the House of Representatives. And it is not just about the longevity of her service, but the quality of her leadership in the House of Representatives in so many ways.

It is fitting that we should recognize her outstanding leadership during Women's History Month. Thank you for giving us the privilege of doing that.

I know that the people of Ohio and our colleagues from Ohio here take great pride in their association with MARCY KAPTUR, as with the rest of us, and are honored to call her ''colleague.''

She has left her mark in so many ways. She is the first woman ever to be assigned to serve on the Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense. In addition to protecting the American people, honoring our first responsibility to protect and defend, she is the champion for the World War II Memorial and a determined defender of all who served there and their legacy.

Thank you, MARCY KAPTUR, for that.

MARCY KAPTUR has taken great pride, serving as a constant, unwavering voice for the American heartland in the U.S. Congress.

Her faith is important to her: her faith in God, her faith in her community, and her faith in our country. As a leader on the Joint Select Committee on Solvency of Multiemployer Pension Plans, for example, she is a strong champion for retirees and their endangered pensions.

The list goes on and on. From childhood to pensions, MARCY has been there in the lead on the Appropriations Committee.

By the way, she is the longest serving woman on the Appropriations Committee, as well.

Later today, at a reception to which you are all invited in the Rayburn Room, I will read a letter of congratulations from Barbara Mikulski, the longest serving woman in the Congress and MARCY in the House.

It is really important to know the impact that MARCY has had on all of us. She is a person of the greatest integrity and sincerity. She knows her purpose. She knows her subjects. Her judgment is respected, and she always has a plan. Therefore, as I have said so many times, if you want to save yourself some time, just do what MARCY asks you to do the first time around.

As a granddaughter of Polish immigrants, she takes great pride in her heritage, and as with most families taking pride in their heritage, she is fiercely patriotic and loves America and works every day for all families pursuing economic opportunity and the American Dream.

MARCY, thank you for your outstanding leadership on behalf of Ohioans for sure, for all Americans, and on behalf of women, girls, and families across the country and across the world. It is an honor to serve with you, a privilege to call you ''colleague,'' and a joy to call you ''friend.'' Thank you, MARCY KAPTUR.

HONORING MARCY KAPTUR AS THE LONGEST SERVING WOMAN IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

(Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker. I rise to wholeheartedly agree with the Democratic leader. I am not sure I have ever said that before. Look, this is truly an impressive milestone.

I have got to say, MARCY, the lawmaker that you are surpassing, Edith Nourse Rogers, famously summed up her time in office by saying this: ''The first 30 years are the hardest. . . . You start it, and you like the work and you just keep on.''

MARCY, you have certainly kept on. The leader mentioned it, the World War II Memorial. This started in 1987 as an exchange that you had with a veteran at a fish fry back in Jerusalem Township in your district. I mean, it took, what, 6 years to get a bill into law, then another 11 years to get the memorial built? That certainly is what it looks like when you are keeping on.

Now, MARCY and I served together on the Budget Committee. What serving together on the Budget Committee

means is, between the two of us, we pretty much disagreed on everything we talked about on the Budget Committee.

But I have got to say, I have always had great respect for how you engage in the battle of ideas and how you stay true to your principles, and you do it in such an uplifting way.

Passion is not hard to find in our politics today. There are no two ways about that. But passion sustained over a long time, over the long haul, without fail, takes an enormous amount of commitment.

No matter which side of the aisle we are on, we can all take something from your example. You have been a tireless advocate for your principles, your point of view, and you have done it with honor and distinction. And that is a phenomenal example for all of us.

It is truly fitting that this is happening during Women's History Month as well. But this milestone, I would say, is not so much about days served; it is a testament to the endless possibilities that are in front of us.

I think of my own daughter, Liza, who was elected vice president of her class last year, which goes to show that at least somebody in our family can get elected to vice president.

Her generation is just so fortunate to have all these pioneers to look up to, to have stories to hear from and to learn from; whether it is MARCY KAPTUR or NANCY PELOSI, our first woman Speaker of the House; or CATHY MCMORRIS RODGERS, the longest-serving conference chair since my mentor Jack Kemp; or ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, the first Hispanic woman ever elected to Congress; or ELISE STEFANIK, the youngest woman ever elected to this Congress. Every day we get to work with leaders who are making history and inspiring generations now and to come.

So, MARCY, thank you for keeping on for all 12,858 of these days. Thank you for your service. Congratulations on this great distinction and honor.

STUDENT, TEACHERS, AND OFFICERS PREVENTING SCHOOL VIOLENCE ACT OF 2018

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, 5-minute voting will continue.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4909) to reauthorize the grant program for school security in the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 407, nays 10, not voting 13, as follows:

[Roll No. 106]

YEAS—407

Abraham
Adams
Aderholt
Aguilar
Allen
Amodei
Arrington
Babin
Bacon
Banks (IN)
Barletta
Barr
Barragán
Barton
Beatty
Bera
Bergman
Beyer
Biggs
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Blumenauer
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Bost
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Brown (MD)
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Budd
Burgess
Bustos
Butterfield
Byrne
Calvert
Capuano
Carbajal
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chabot
Cheney
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coffman
Cohen
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comer
Comstock
Conaway
Connolly
Cook
Cooper
Correa
Costa
Costello (PA)
Courtney
Cramer
Crawford
Crist
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Curtis
Davidson
Davis (CA)
Davis, Rodney
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Demings
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DeSaulnier
DesJarlais
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Doggett
Donovan
Doyle, Michael F.
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Dunn
Ellison
Emmer
Engel
Eshoo
Espaillat
Estes (KS)
Esty (CT)
Evans
Farenthold
Faso
Ferguson
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Flores
Fortenberry
Foster
Foxx
Frankel (FL)
Frelinghuysen
Fudge
Gabbard
Gaetz
Gallagher
Gallego
Garamendi
Garrett
Gianforte
Gibbs
Gohmert
Gomez
Gonzalez (TX)
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gottheimer
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Griffith
Grijalva
Grothman
Guthrie
Gutiérrez
Hanabusa
Handel
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings
Heck
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Higgins (LA)
Higgins (NY)
Hill
Himes
Holding
Hollingsworth
Hoyer
Hudson
Huffman
Huizenga
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd
Issa
Jackson Lee
Jayapal
Jeffries
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (LA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Joyce (OH)
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
Kennedy
Khanna
Kihuen
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger
Knight
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster (NH)
Kustoff (TN)
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latta
Lawrence
Lawson (FL)
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lewis (MN)
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham, M.
Luján, Ben Ray
Lynch
MacArthur
Maloney, Carolyn B.
Maloney, Sean
Marchant
Marino
Marshall
Mast
Matsui
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McCollum
McEachin
McGovern
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Meeks
Meng
Messer
Mitchell
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Moore
Moulton
Mullin
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Newhouse
Noem
Norcross
Norman
Nunes
O'Halleran
O'Rourke
Olson
Palazzo
Pallone
Palmer
Panetta
Pascrell
Paulsen
Payne
Pearce
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Perry
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pittenger
Pocan
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Polis
Posey
Price (NC)
Quigley
Raskin
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Rice (SC)
Richmond
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney, Francis
Rooney, Thomas J.
Rosen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Roybal-Allard
Royce (CA)
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Russell
Rutherford
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Sires
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Smucker
Soto
Speier
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Suozzi
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Taylor
Tenney
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tipton
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Welch
Wenstrup
Westerman
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yarmuth
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Zeldin

NAYS—10

Amash
Cárdenas
Johnson (GA)
Jones
Jordan
Lee
Massie
Nolan
Sanford
Watson Coleman

NOT VOTING—13

Bass
Carson (IN)
Cummings
Davis, Danny
Katko
Lieu, Ted
Rice (NY)
Ros-Lehtinen
Rush
Slaughter
Smith (MO)
Tsongas
Wilson (FL)

□ 1510

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERMISSION FOR MEMBER TO BE CONSIDERED AS FIRST SPONSOR OF H. CON. RES. 79

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that I may hereafter be considered to be the first sponsor of H. Con. Res. 79, a bill originally introduced by Representative Conyers of Michigan, for the purposes of adding cosponsors and requesting reprintings pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

PERMISSION FOR MEMBER TO BE CONSIDERED AS FIRST SPONSOR OF H.R. 137

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that I may hereafter be considered to be the first sponsor of H.R. 137, a bill originally introduced by Representative Conyers of Michigan, for the purposes of adding cosponsors and requesting reprintings pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Rhode Island?

There was no objection.

PROTECTING ACCESS TO THE COURTS FOR TAXPAYERS ACT

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3996) to amend title 28, United States Code, to permit other courts to transfer certain cases to United States Tax Court.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3996

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Protecting Access to the Courts for Taxpayers Act''.

SEC. 2. TRANSFER OF CERTAIN CASES.

Section 1631 of title 28, United States Code, is amended by inserting ''(or, for cases within the jurisdiction of the United States Tax Court, to that court)'' after ''any other such court''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA) and the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 3996, currently under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, American taxpayers fighting the Internal Revenue Service deserve their day in court. Not every taxpayer who thinks the IRS is wrong is right, but not every time the IRS brings a case are they right.

The Tax Court is a unique creation of Congress. It is, in fact, an article 1 court specifically created and dedicated to tax issues.

The Tax Court has the expertise necessary to hear complex or, in some cases, simple tax cases. Any situation in which a taxpayer is unable to contest an IRS action, therefore, would be simply unacceptable.

□ 1515

Unfortunately, the problem today is that, due to an oversight in the Federal law, you can find yourself in a situation, by filing in good faith, not to be able to use a Tax Court. Unlike the IRS, not all taxpayers know about the requirement to file tax disputes in the Tax Court. Some taxpayers, in good faith, file in their local district court, which is wrong, and by the time it is discovered, their opportunity to file in Tax Court has expired.

Today, when a Federal Tax Court judge recognizes the improper venue, under current law he is prevented from simply transferring the case to Tax Court, where it rightfully belongs. By the time this happens, the taxpayer usually has lost their day in court since they only have a short time in which to ask for the Tax Court.

Because of this oversight in the Federal law, I, along with the ranking member of the full Judiciary Committee, introduced the Protecting Access to the Courts for Taxpayers Act. The legislation, quite simply, fixes this error that impacts dozens and dozens of Americans repeatedly every year. It is supported by advocates in the Judicial Conference and the Tax Courts.

It just makes sense, Mr. Speaker, that, in fact, getting your day in court should not be nullified by an actual petition to a court erroneously not recognized in time. In any other case in which you file in Federal court, if the court determines it is not an appropriate venue, the case is transferred. This is a lone exception.

I want to thank my colleague from Georgia for his support in this legislation and for his help in making sure it was drafted accurately.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 3996, the Protecting Access to the Courts for Taxpayers Act. This bipartisan legislation would ensure that taxpayers who mistakenly file certain claims in the wrong venue will still have their day in court.

Under current law, when a Federal court does not have jurisdiction over a case, it typically may transfer that case to the appropriate Federal court that does have proper jurisdiction. However, due to a quirk in the law, the United States Tax Court is not authorized to have misfiled cases transferred to it, even when the Tax Court is the proper—and, in many cases, the only—court with jurisdiction to hear the case.

This legislation will remedy that flaw in the law and enable Federal courts to transfer cases directly to the Tax Court when appropriate. The need for this bill is not simply a matter of judicial efficiency; it is fundamentally one of access to justice.

The Tax Court was established to resolve disputes between taxpayers and the Internal Revenue Service, and many taxpayers choose to represent themselves in Tax Court proceedings. Unfortunately, these litigants—lacking legal representation—make procedural errors, including filing in the wrong court.

In most instances, by the time a taxpayer's claim is dismissed for lack of jurisdiction, the strict guidelines and deadlines for filing in the Tax Court—generally 90 days or fewer—have long passed, and the taxpayer is then barred from filing a claim altogether.

By allowing these cases to be transferred directly to the Tax Court, H.R. 3996 ensures that the case will retain its original filing date and the taxpayer will be able to preserve his or her claim. As a result of this modest but significant amendment to current law, this bill will protect the right of taxpayers to be heard in court.

I appreciate the efforts of the various Tax Court representatives who are bringing this issue to our attention and for their guidance in helping us to develop the legislation.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I would like to acknowledge H.R. 3996's author, my friend, Representative DARRELL ISSA, whose leadership on this issue is to be commended. Accordingly, I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I am with my friend, and would like to associate all of my further comments with his. So, again, I urge support for this bipartisan legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3996.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PREVENTING CRIMES AGAINST VETERANS ACT OF 2017

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 506) to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide an additional tool to prevent certain frauds against veterans, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 506

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Preventing Crimes Against Veterans Act of 2017''.

SEC. 2. ADDITIONAL TOOL TO PREVENT CERTAIN FRAUDS AGAINST VETERANS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 63 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''§ 1352. Fraud regarding veterans' benefits

''(a) Whoever knowingly executes, or attempts to execute, any scheme or artifice to defraud an

individual of veterans' benefits, or in connection with obtaining veteran's benefits for that individual, shall be fined under this title, imprisoned not more than five years, or both.

''(b) In this section—

''(1) the term 'veteran' has the meaning given that term in section 101 of title 38; and

''(2) the term 'veterans' benefits' means any benefit provided by Federal law for a veteran or a dependent or survivor of a veteran.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 63 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new item:

''1352. Fraud regarding veterans' benefits.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA) and the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 506, currently under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the Preventing Crimes Against Veterans Act of 2017 closes a small but significant loophole in Federal law and, in so doing, gives Federal prosecutors an additional mechanism to protect veterans from criminals who seek to defraud them.

In recent years, we have heard distressing and infuriating stories about particularly elderly veterans being swindled out of their veterans' benefits. Some of these veterans, including those in low-income housing, have been deceived by fraudsters who, in fact, have preyed on their age and infirmity.

Helping veterans in this case certainly should be a priority in this Congress.

This is particularly insidious in that, in some cases, the criminal will claim to get a veteran's benefits approved in record time, will charge outrageous fees to file, and, ultimately, will provide the veteran with little or no assistance. They will just pocket the money that rightfully belongs to the elderly veteran.

Mr. Speaker, this change in the law is critical. I want to thank Mr. TOM ROONEY, the author of the bill. I want to urge that we consider it quickly, close this loophole, and provide prosecutors with the kind of ability to protect our aging veterans in a way that is currently not available.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the Preventing Crimes Against Veterans Act of 2017 would make it a crime to knowingly engage in any scheme to defraud a veteran or his or her dependents of veterans' benefits. This legislation provides an important, additional tool for Federal prosecutors to use to combat veterans' benefits fraud.

Because we honor the service of our brave men and women, and because of the sacrifices our veterans have made for us, it is particularly important that we protect them from fraud and ensure the integrity of the benefit system we provide.

According to a 2016 AARP study of investment fraud victims, it shows that while veterans are less than 10 percent of the U.S. population, they were one-third, 33 percent, of the victims of investment fraud because their money is certain. A recent Federal Trade Commission's Consumer Sentinel program reveals that the number of complaints filed by military veterans each year has increased by 63 percent over the past 5 years.

Recently, my State of Texas highlighted these issues in an article which reported that several disabled veterans were unable to receive their benefits via direct deposit. Investigation revealed a number of veterans did not receive their VA disability compensation checks due to the theft that occurred by way of perpetrators rerouting veterans' benefits to virtual banks.

Veterans are the targets of many of the same types of fraudulent activities as the rest of society, including mail, telephone, and online fraud. They are more victimized by fraud than nonveterans, and have lost money to scams 16 percent more than nonveterans during the past 5 years.

Nearly 78 percent of veterans report having been a target of veteran-specific scams, such as approving a VA loan, taking advantage of little-known government programs for vets, or paying for a back, knee, or arm brace because of one's military service. Nearly 22 percent of veterans report receiving 10 or more suspicious phone calls per week. Nearly all veterans, 97 percent, have received at least one scam attempt in the past 5 years.

We hope we can stop this.

Currently, there are about 21 million veterans—and more upcoming—of the United States military. These are men and women who selflessly served our Nation and in the theaters of war, from the Second World War, Korea, and Vietnam, to more recent conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. As I indicated, our veterans will continue to grow and be vulnerable to scams.

Unfortunately, many of our veterans, as a result of their service, have physical and mental scars. There are well over 1 million American veterans with service-connected disabilities. It was my privilege to institute a PTSD center in my own district supported by the late Congressman Murtha.

In addition, veterans are more likely than nonveterans to become homeless. They comprise 17 percent of our homeless population, even though many of them are eligible for veterans' benefits. On any given night, an estimated 50,000 veterans are sleeping on America's streets.

In recognition of the extreme sacrifice by our veterans and the hardships many of them continue to face after their military service, it is our duty to provide, to the best of our ability, an appropriate measure of compensation for them, particularly those in need.

For instance, we provide disability payments to those with service-connected disabilities, pensions for veterans with limited incomes, education and training under the GI Bill, and also various life insurance benefits.

This is the least we can do, and it is still not enough. There continues to be issues with the medical care we provide our veterans and problems about some benefits never being processed and paid because of the loss of claims by the Veterans Benefits Administration.

That is why we must prohibit any schemes to defraud a veteran of his or her veteran's benefits. Anyone convicted of such crime could be fined, imprisoned, or be subject to both penalties. Those who defraud veterans or their surviving spouses or dependents endanger our system of veterans' benefits not only by harming the victims, but also by diminishing resources required to pay the claims and fund the programs that are needed to help those who have served their country have a decent quality of life.

Accordingly, I support H.R. 506. I commend the bill's sponsors, Representative TOM ROONEY and Representative TED DEUTCH, for their work on this important issue.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to support H.R. 506, the ''Preventing Crimes Against Veterans Act of 2017,'' which would make it a crime to knowingly engage in any scheme to defraud a veteran or his dependents of veteran's benefits. This legislation provides an important, additional tool for federal prosecutors to use to combat veterans' benefits fraud.

Because we honor the service of our brave men and women, and because of the sacrifices our veterans have made for us, it is particularly important that we protect them from fraud and ensure the integrity of the benefit system we provide.

According to a 2016 AARP study of investment fraud victims, it showed that while veterans are less than 10% of the U.S. population, they were one third (33%) of the victims of investment fraud. A recent Federal Trade Commission's Consumer Sentinel program reveals that the number of complaints filed by military veterans each year has increased by 63% over the past five years.

Recently, my state of Texas highlighted these issues in an article, which reported that several disabled veterans were unable to receive their benefits via direct deposit. Investigation revealed that a number of veterans did not receive their VA disability compensation checks, due to the theft that occurred by way of perpetrators re-routing veterans' benefits to virtual banks.

Veterans are the targets of many of the same types of fraudulent activities as the rest of society, including mail, telephone and online

fraud. They are more victimized by fraud than nonveterans and have lost money to scams (16%) than nonveterans during the past five years.

Nearly (78%) of veterans report having been a target of veteran-specific scams, such as improving a VA loan, taking advantage of little-known government programs for vets or paying for a back, knee or arm brace because of one's military service. Nearly (22%) of veterans report receiving 10 or more suspicious phone calls per week. Nearly all veterans (97%) have received at least one scam attempt in the past five years.

Currently, there are about 21 million veterans of the United States military—men and women who selflessly served our Nation and in theaters of war, from the Second World War, Korea, and Vietnam to more recent conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Unfortunately, many of our veterans—as a result of their service—have physical and mental scars. There are well over 1 million American veterans with service-connected disabilities.

In addition, veterans are more likely than non-veterans to become homeless. They comprise 17% of our homeless population. On any given night, an estimated 50,000 veterans are sleeping on America's streets.

In recognition of the extreme sacrifice by our veterans and the hardships many of them continue to face after their military service, it is our duty to provide, to the best of our ability, an appropriate measure of compensation for them, particularly for those in need.

For instance, we provide disability payments to those with service-connected disabilities, pensions for veterans with limited incomes, education and training under the GI Bill, and also various life insurance benefits.

This is the least we can do and it is still not enough. There continue to be issues with the medical care we provide our veterans, and problems about some benefits never being processed and paid because of the loss of claims by the Veterans Benefits Administration.

That is why we must prohibit any schemes to defraud a veteran of his or her veteran's benefits. Anyone convicted of such crime could be fined, imprisoned, or be subject to both penalties.

Those who defraud veterans, or their surviving spouses or dependents, endanger our system of veterans' benefits not only by harming the victims, but also by diminishing resources required to pay the claims and fund the programs that are needed to help those who have served their country.

Accordingly, I support H.R. 506 and I commend the bill's sponsors, Representative TOM ROONEY and Representative TED DEUTCH, for their work on this important issue.

Mr. Speaker, we must do everything we can to protect our Veterans who have given so much of themselves to keep us all safe. We must ensure that the benefits they have earned are safeguarded against criminal acts.

We ask our veterans to lay their lives on the line so that we can enjoy the freedom, which is at the heart of this great country. We owe them much. Surely we can and should repay our gratitude whenever we can.

Protecting their veterans' benefits is one way of expressing our appreciation, and it is the right and just thing to do.

For reasons, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. THOMAS J. ROONEY), who is the author of the bill.

Mr. THOMAS J. ROONEY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, my district is home to over 75,000 veterans, and I am proud to represent an area that has one of the highest concentrations of veterans in the country.

With that distinction comes a duty to fight on their behalf to ensure that the VA is functioning and funded at levels deserving of their sacrifice. As a member of the Committee on Appropriations Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies, I am proud that we have secured increases in funding for VA programs that are important to my constituents.

On a daily basis, my staff and Members of Congress' staff across this country try to help veterans navigate the VA bureaucracy. It is no secret that the claims process at the VA is far too slow, so we all try to help veterans with their claims and expedite the process when possible. We have won countless battles against the system, and we have helped constituents far and wide to get the care and benefits they deserve.

One of our responsibilities as Members of Congress is to listen to these veterans when they tell us there is still more work to be done to help fix the system. In 2016, a group of veterans brought a disturbing problem to my attention concerning individuals who were deliberately stealing money from veterans and the VA without fear of criminal punishment. I started to hear story after story about people advertising their so-called services to veterans, claiming that, for a fee, they can help veterans obtain certain VA benefits or expedite existing claims with the VA.

□ 1530

There are two problems with this. Number one, it is illegal for anyone who isn't approved by the VA to charge fees for helping veterans with their claims or appeals; and two, often times these promises of assistance are empty and never followed through with. Unfortunately, there are no penalties for breaking this law.

One local VSO explained to me at length how these scammers specifically target senior veterans in low-income housing communities, almost as a rule, because they consider those veterans to be the most vulnerable and most likely to fall victim to their schemes. I have heard countless accounts of these con artists going into assisted living facilities, rounding up all the veterans and coercing them all to apply for benefits they don't even qualify for.

When I hear people are taking advantage of these heroes and making a quick buck off of them, it makes me sick, as I am sure it makes all of us sick, because it is wrong and it needs to stop.

The reality is that this isn't just happening in my backyard. It is happening in every one of our districts. These con artists are getting away with it. I refuse to let this fraudulent scheme against some of the most respectable people in our Nation continue.

Without a Federal criminal penalty, we have been unable to prevent these financial predators from preying on our veterans and defrauding the VA.

My friend and fellow Congressman, Democrat TED DEUTCH from south Florida, joined me in introducing this bipartisan bill to penalize these scammers who make their living stealing from our veterans. Our bill would give prosecutors and law enforcement the tools they need to appropriately penalize these predators by imposing a hefty fine, imprisoning them for up to 5 years, or both.

I urge my colleagues to join me in support of this commonsense, bipartisan bill, and I hope that the Senate will act quickly to send it to the President's desk.

These criminals need to pay the price for these actions. Our veterans have done everything to protect us and our way of life. Now it is our duty in Congress to make sure that they are protected as well.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Florida (Mr. DEUTCH), the coauthor of this legislation.

Mr. DEUTCH. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend from Texas for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, many veterans face extraordinary obstacles when they return home, especially in retirement.

Too often, one of the obstacles to a safe and secure retirement for our veterans are so-called pension poachers. These are people who create high-pressure sales pitches that directly target older veterans. They make big promises, knowing they have no intention of ever delivering on them.

These are criminals who not only prey on our veterans, they prey on every American taxpayer who wants to do right by those who have served our country. They prey on the fact that we try to take good care of our veterans. They try to do it for financial gain. It is despicable, and we need to take action to stop it and make them pay for it. It is our job to ensure that they can't get away with it.

That is why I am proud to have partnered with my colleague, fellow Floridian, a veteran and my friend, Mr. ROONEY, to draft the Preventing Crimes Against Veterans Act. This bill will give Federal prosecutors the tools they need to target criminals who actively work to avoid current mail and wire fraud statutes, all while targeting our veterans. It is time to crack down on pension poachers and fraudsters.

I am thankful for Chairman GOODLATTE, Ranking Member NADLER, and my Judiciary colleagues for their support in helping to get this bill to the

floor. I thank every Member of this House who voted unanimously to pass this legislation in the last Congress.

Finally, I would like to thank Veterans Service Officer Greg Dover from Palm Beach County, Florida, who has helped to alert my office of these schemes and has worked tirelessly on behalf of our veterans to stand up for their rights and the benefits they deserve.

I ask all of my colleagues to support our veterans and to vote ''yes'' on the Preventing Crimes Against Veterans Act.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 506 creates a new section, 1352, in chapter 63, title 18, to penalize fraudsters that knowingly execute or attempt to execute a scheme or artifice to defraud a veteran of his or her benefits—that is a dastardly act—or in connection with obtaining that veteran's benefits by imposing a fine, imprisonment of up to 5 years, or both.

Under current law, you can be an agent or attorney and meet certain standards and you can help a veteran. But there are many who were not licensed, not connected, or had the approval of various States or local governments, and they were fraudulently taking precious resources from our veterans. There was no criminal or financial penalty for breaking the law.

So, H.R. 506 provides that penalty because, in recent years, financial predators across the country have targeted easy targets, who are veterans. Many, as we have said, have been physically or mentally maimed in their service to this Nation. Many of them are also elderly and live in low-income housing.

This bill is long in coming. I thank Mr. ROONEY and Mr. DEUTCH, working with the members of the Judiciary Committee, for moving this legislation forward.

We ask our veterans to lay their lives on the line so that we can enjoy freedom, which is at the heart of this great country. We owe them much. Surely, we can repay our gratitude whenever we can. Protecting their veterans' benefits is one way of expressing our appreciation, and it is the right and just thing to do.

Mr. Speaker, for these reasons, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, our Nation's veterans have sacrificed. They have given us so much. They have protected us.

In his second inaugural address, President Lincoln reminded us of our solemn duty ''to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow, and his orphan.''

By doing this today, we keep that promise of so long ago: the promise to give back, as appropriate, and to protect that by giving back to the widows, the orphans, and the veterans themselves, because our values don't just say we write a check. We also protect to make sure that check gets to the true beneficiary. This enforcement will do just that.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to, on a bipartisan basis, which this bill has been from day one, support it and to move it to the Senate.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 506, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Lasky, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed with an amendment in which the concurrence of the House is requested, a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 1207. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 306 River Street in Tilden, Texas, as the ''Tilden Veterans Post Office''.

The message also announced that the Senate has passed a bill of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 2286. An act to amend the Peace Corps Act to provide greater protection and services for Peace Corps volunteers, and for other purposes.

PROJECT SAFE NEIGHBORHOODS GRANT PROGRAM AUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2017

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3249) to authorize the Project Safe Neighborhoods Grant Program, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3249

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Project Safe Neighborhoods Grant Program Authorization Act of 2017''.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

For the purposes of this Act—

(1) the term ''criminal street gangs'' has the meaning given such term in section 521 of title 18, United States Code;

(2) the term ''gang crime'' means a felony or misdemeanor crime, under State or Federal law, committed by one or more persons who are a member of, or directly affiliated with, a criminal street gang;

(3) the term ''transnational organized crime group'' has the meaning given such term in section 36(k)(6) of the State Department Basic Authorities Act of 1956 (22 U.S.C. 2708(k)(6));

(4) the term ''transnational organized crime'' has the meaning given such term in section 36(k)(5) of the State Department Basic Authorities Act of 1956 (22 U.S.C. 2708(k)(5)); and

(5) the term ''firearms offenses'' means an offense under section 922 or 924 of title 18, United States Code.

SEC. 3. ESTABLISHMENT.

The Attorney General of the United States is authorized to establish and carry out a program, to be known as the ''Project Safe Neighborhoods Block Grant Program'' or, in this Act, as the ''Program'', within the Office of Justice Programs at the Department of Justice.

SEC. 4. PURPOSE.

The purpose of the Project Safe Neighborhoods Block Grant Program is to foster and improve existing partnerships between Federal, State, and local agencies, including the United States Attorney in each Federal judicial district, to create safer neighborhoods through sustained reductions in violent crimes by—

(1) developing and executing strategic plans to assist law enforcement agencies in combating gang crimes, including the enforcement of gun laws and drug interdiction; and

(2) developing intervention and prevention initiatives, including juvenile justice projects and activities which may include street-level outreach, conflict mediation, and the changing of community norms, in order to reduce violence.

SEC. 5. RULES AND REGULATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Attorney General shall, not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act, make rules to create, carry out, and administer the Program in accordance with this section.

(b) FUNDS TO BE DIRECTED TO LOCAL CONTROL.—Amounts made available as grants under the Program shall be, to the greatest extent practicable, locally controlled to address problems that are identified locally

(c) REGIONAL GANG TASK FORCES.—30 percent of the amounts made available as grants under the Program each fiscal year shall be granted to established Regional Gang Task Forces in regions experiencing a significant or increased presence of, or high levels of activity from, transnational organized crime groups posing threats to community safety in terms of violent crime, firearms offenses, human trafficking, trafficking and distribution of illegal opioids and heroin, and other crimes.

SEC. 6. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS; CONSOLIDATION OF PROGRAMS.

(a) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated for the Program under this Act $50,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2019 through 2021.

(b) CONSOLIDATION OF PROGRAMS.—For each of fiscal years 2019 through 2023, no funds are authorized to be separately appropriated to the Department of Justice Office of Justice Programs for—

(1) competitive and evidence-based programs to reduce gun crime and gang violence;

(2) an Edward Byrne Memorial criminal justice innovation program;

(3) community-based violence prevention initiatives; or

(4) gang and youth violence education, prevention and intervention, and related activities.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA) and the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 3249, currently under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Virginia (Mrs. COMSTOCK), the author of the bill.

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of my bill, H.R. 3249, the Project Safe Neighborhoods Grant Program Authorization Act of 2017.

I would like to thank Chairman GOODLATTE and the entire Judiciary Committee for their efforts on this legislation and working through the process to bring this to the floor.

I wanted to set out some recent headlines from the in-depth reporting by The Washington Post on the rise of the MS–13 gang problem in the Washington metropolitan area, which includes Maryland, D.C., and Virginia, and why this legislation is needed.

''MS–13 is 'taking over the school,' one teen warned before she was killed.''

''She told the girl she'd see her in hell before stabbing her. Now, she's guilty of an MS–13 murder.''

'''People here live in fear': MS–13 menaces a community 7 miles from the White House.''

''Police: MS–13 members in Maryland stab man more than 100 times and decapitate him.''

This is from my local paper, the Loudoun-Times Mirror:

''MS–13 gang members convicted in gruesome murder of a Leesburg teenager.''

In this particular case in Leesburg, Virginia, the teenage boy, Carlos Otero-Henriquez, was stabbed over 50 times and his body was dumped in a quarry miles away in West Virginia.

The Acting U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia, Tracy Doherty-McCormick, had this to say after the murderers were convicted: ''The hallmark of MS–13 is extreme violence. This brutal kidnapping and murder is a tragic reminder of the impact MS–13 has on communities here in northern Virginia. My hope is that our efforts to investigate and prosecute this case will send a clear message: Violence will be aggressively prosecuted.''

This, and many of these other cases, are why we need the Project Safe Neighborhoods Grant Program Authorization Act, which authorizes $50 million, but targets 30 percent being directed toward already-established regional gang task forces.

As we know, MS–13 is a transnational gang that has been found not only here in the Washington metropolitan region, but in Los Angeles, Long Island, Houston, and other cities throughout the country.

The Washington Post has highlighted how the 2014 border surge contributed to the MS–13 gang problem writing: ''The violent street gang is on the rise in the United States, fueled, in part, by the surge in unaccompanied minors.''

The unaccompanied minors, who often fled their native country to get away from the gangs, arrive here only to find themselves targeted by those very same gang members they were fleeing.

MS–13 preys upon these youngsters in their own community—and let me emphasize, it is their own community that they are victimizing—who may not have much of a family structure, and, in effect, MS–13 tries to become their family or threaten them with death if they don't.

Last summer, when I went on a ride-along with our Northern Virginia Regional Task Force, I was able to see their good work right in front of us. There was a young man on the sidewalk of Sterling Boulevard in Sterling, Virginia, just miles from here. The gang task force noticed him and turned around and decided to stop him and see what he was up to. With years of experience, the officers knew the MS–13 indicators.

The boy looked about 16 years old, from what I could tell, but it turned out he was actually a 22-year-old gang member. He was covered in MS–13 gang tattoos. When he lifted up his shirt when they asked him to do so, he showed all of the particular signs of MS–13, from his head to all over his feet.

It turns out he had been jailed in El Salvador for murder when he was 16 and had been deported from the United States twice for engaging in violent crime.

As it turns out now, when they come to the border, we don't have the law to be able to stop them. Fortunately, this House did pass a law back in the fall, on a bipartisan basis—it is over in the Senate now—to be able to stop these gang members from getting in the country in the first place and being able to deport them quicker. But in the meantime, we need to increase the work and the support for these regional gang task forces.

□ 1545

We also saw the technology they use. They can use something along the lines of an iPad or an iPhone where they put this gang member's fingerprint on there and immediately it comes to light, as shown in the international records, that he was a murderer and that he had been in jail. But they need more of those resources. They only had two of those that they were able to use, and they said every one of their cars needs that kind of resource.

That same night that we were on the ride-along, three other suspected MS–13 gang members were also picked up. This isn't an aberration.

At a town festival in Herndon, Virginia, in my district, the Northern Virginia Regional Gang Task Force told us that they had identified an estimated 200 to 300 suspected gang members who were milling about while our children were getting popcorn, getting on the rides, and there were people coming together to have a hotdog or a hamburger in a community festival.

According to the Northern Virginia Regional Gang Task Force, an MS–13 gang member put a hit out on his own brother because he refused to join the organization. Fortunately, because of the good, intensive work of the Northern Virginia Regional Gang Task Force, they spared this young man from being killed by his own brother.

That is why we need to have these resources that we are voting on today. We need to help on a Federal level.

The community policing involved with the Northern Virginia Regional Gang Task Force includes officers who speak Spanish, understand the gang culture, and help get the kids out of this. They get involved in the education, getting them into the schools. They understand where they are trying to target these young people, and they are familiar with their communities and have developed very good relationships with these communities.

ICE officials complement these efforts by removing the dangerous gang members once identified and allowing the task force to work in our highest risk schools and communities to prevent gang violence.

The Project Safe Neighborhoods Grant Program Authorization Act would direct this additional Federal funding toward these gang task forces so that our gang task forces—which are comprised in my area of 13 local, State, and Federal law enforcement agencies—can really make the best antigang efforts in this three-pronged approach that they engage in: education, intervention and prevention, and enforcement.

Mr. Speaker, I have seen firsthand the good work these gang task forces can do to remove these gang threats from our community, so I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I thank you for the opportunity to speak to this.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, to the distinguished manager and to the author of this legislation, there is certainly room for legislation that speaks to the needs of our children and speaks to those who obviously have joined vicious and violent gangs even though of young ages.

I will always, however, reemphasize the message that, as we look at these efforts, as I speak about my Juvenile Block Grant Antibullying and Prevention Act, legislation that I would like to see go through the Judiciary Committee, we must be reminded that, in order to continue to be safe, this Congress cannot ignore debate and passage of gun safety legislation.

Guns kill. AR–15s kill. The lack of raising the age from 18 to 21 for guns

hurts our children. Not having universal background checks hurts our children. But at the same time, we must find ways to stem the tide of gangs, and there are many gangs throughout the Nation.

Just speaking with my law enforcement, the gang names that came to me were not just MS–13. We will find gangs in our particular jurisdictions that have many names. But whatever their names, their behavior is dastardly and it is injurious, and if we can find ways to keep our neighborhood safe, as H.R. 3249 intends to do, the Project Safe Neighborhoods Grant Program Authorization Act of 2017, which would provide additional resources to help local jurisdictions prevent and fight crime in their communities, then we should stand together to do so.

The bill would authorize the Attorney General to establish and implement a program to be known as the Project Safe Neighborhoods Block Program within the Office of Justice Programs at the Department of Justice, thereby providing a formal authorization for the Project Safe Neighborhoods program currently implemented by DOJ. A portion of the funding awards under the program would be allocated to fighting gang-related crime.

While I support authorizing this program, I would like to highlight two concerns. The first is the Juvenile Block Grant Antibullying and Prevention Act, which would have reauthorized the juvenile block grants which would go to communities for a variety of reasons. That has been stalled in the Judiciary Committee under the pretense of not having an offset. And I see that this particular legislation does have, seemingly, a $70 million a year authorization without an offset.

So I think we should work together, and as I support this legislation, I think we should support other legislative initiatives that can really intervene. It is clear that the perpetrator in Florida, there is some evidence, some newspaper reporting, that this individual was bullied and had a very difficult life. We see that that is certainly a reason that young people become gang members.

So as we look to supporting this legislation, I think that we should look to broaden our support and work on the whole idea of steering our children away from the idea of gangs, guns, and violence.

I would hope, first, a substantial portion of the funding of this bill will be dedicated to antigang task forces. I support preventing and fighting crime no matter who the perpetrator may be. But I also want to make sure that we look holistically at dealing with young people and that we have alternatives for them, which block-granting does in giving alternatives to communities to direct young people in other directions other than gangs.

We must be vigilant in conducting oversight, also, of the use of program funds and in protecting those program funds so that they can be utilized for authorization of other efforts to help our young people.

Let me also indicate that this program should be one facet of working with young people. The program will be one facet of DOJ's efforts to address gun and gang violence at the local, State, and Tribal levels.

The Juvenile Accountability Block Grants, which provide other funds for a myriad of activities in our local communities, we should view it from the holistic perspective and as an effort to supplement but not supplant alternatives that may employ different but yet still effective approaches, which I am speaking of through the Juvenile Accountability Block Grants program. None of the funding prohibitions would serve the interest of public safety.

For instance, the bill would eliminate the Byrne Criminal Justice Innovation Program, which, when implemented, helps local governments develop crime reduction strategies to address crime in hotspots that generate a significant amount of crime within larger communities or jurisdictions.

The Byrne Criminal Justice Innovation Program is a community-based strategy that aims to prevent and control violent crime, drug abuse, and gang activity in high-crime neighborhoods by providing funding to support partnerships between law enforcement agencies and community-based organizations that balance targeted enforcement with prevention, intervention, and neighborhood restoration services. If you ask your local police, many of them will tout the Byrne program as being very successful.

In the past, OJP has coordinated the efforts of this program with related efforts to promote neighborhood revitalization by the Department of Housing and Urban Development and Department of Education. We see no reason to eliminate the possibility of funding for this program which is very helpful.

So along with the Juvenile Accountability Block Grants program and many others, I believe this legislation can be enhanced. I hope that as we make our way through the legislative process, we will not only work with H.R. 3249, but we will also work with other legislation that will holistically help the crime situation in our Nation and secure young people as they desire to be secured and, particularly, work on gun violence, which is severe in many of our communities.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to close. I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

In closing, again, I want to acknowledge the author of H.R. 3249 for an important statement regarding gangs, and I would hope that we could continue to work on these issues. For instance, the bill would eliminate the Byrne Criminal Justice Innovation Program, and I hope that we can restore that.

As well, I hope that we can work very closely on other legislative initiatives that are going through the Judiciary Committee. A holistic approach is the best approach. And then I hope that we can restore the funding that is necessary for some of the programs that have been eliminated because of this legislation. Good as it may be, it is important to do a combination of efforts to deal with protecting children and steering children away from these vile actions.

Mr. Speaker, I truly believe that there are programs dealing with bullying and prevention of bullying that can complement the work that is being done here and the Byrne program that has been utilized by the Department of Housing and Urban Development, cleaning neighborhoods, making neighborhoods safe. I can see it in my congressional district and I can see it in other congressional districts, to come in and combine with those resources. And then, of course, are the resources that uplift our young people, steer them in the right direction and provide alternative support systems for them.

As many people know, in years gone by, something that many people found humorous was midnight basketball. Today I hear law enforcement officers say: You know, that midnight basketball really worked so many years ago.

We need to look at a collective approach to getting kids off the street, making sure our children are safe, and that they don't find, as their only relief, gangs, but they can also find clean, safe neighborhoods and neighborhoods that are free of guns as the only tool to settle their disputes.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the gentlewoman from Texas is quite right. This bill's pay-for comes through consolidation of similar programs, and I think it is important to briefly go over that.

Working with the Attorney General's Office, the author, Mrs. COMSTOCK, went to great lengths to find programs that are essentially doing much the same thing in which, by consolidating, you pick up efficiencies. I particularly note that item two in the bill, the pay-for, the Edward Byrne Memorial criminal justice innovation program, is but a small part of the overall so-called Byrne program.

Many of the things the gentlewoman from Texas cited are good and are not being consolidated but, rather, a small amount. This targeted approach with our limited funds allows those funds to go further; and particularly as we look at community outreach, these funds, by being consolidated, are part of a community outreach and will be used in similar ways to the programs that they are taking from, but taking from it, in this case, in a consolidated way.

So I want to thank a former staff member of the Oversight and Government Reform Committee, the committee that deals with efficiency in government, for looking through the details of these appropriated funds and finding a way to bring them together to give both flexibility and efficiency that I believe this will adhere to. It is the reason that this is a bipartisan bill.

The reason that it is so widely accepted is that it has been narrowly targeted. And although I share with the gentlewoman from Texas, my friend from Houston, that in a perfect world we would be plussing-up funds, if we are not able to do that at this time, I would support and work with the gentlewoman any time to try to do something similar for some of the areas of her concern.

Mr. Speaker, I urge passage, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CRAWFORD). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3249, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□ 1600

TAKING ACCOUNT OF INSTITUTIONS WITH LOW OPERATION RISK ACT OF 2017

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 773, I call up the bill (H.R. 1116) to require the Federal financial institutions regulatory agencies to take risk profiles and business models of institutions into account when taking regulatory actions, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 773, the amendment printed in part C of House Report 115–595 is adopted, and the bill, as amended, is considered read.

The text of the bill, as amended, is as follows:

H.R. 1116

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Taking Account of Institutions with Low Operation Risk Act of 2017'' or the ''TAILOR Act of 2017''.

SEC. 2. REGULATIONS APPROPRIATE TO BUSINESS MODELS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—For any regulatory action occurring after the date of the enactment of this Act, each Federal financial institutions regulatory agency shall—

(1) take into consideration the risk profile and business models of each type of institution or class of institutions subject to the regulatory action;

(2) determine the necessity, appropriateness, and impact of applying such regulatory action to such institutions or classes of institutions; and

(3) tailor such regulatory action in a manner that limits the regulatory compliance impact, cost, liability risk, and other burdens, as appropriate, for the risk profile and business model of the institution or class of institutions involved.

(b) OTHER CONSIDERATIONS.—In carrying out the requirements of subsection (a), each Federal financial institutions regulatory agency shall consider—

(1) the impact that such regulatory action, both by itself and in conjunction with the aggregate effect of other regulations, has on the ability of the applicable institution or class of institutions to serve evolving and diverse customer needs;

(2) the potential impact of examination manuals, regulatory actions taken with respect to third-party service providers, or other regulatory directives that may be in conflict or inconsistent with the tailoring of such regulatory action described in subsection (a)(3); and

(3) the underlying policy objectives of the regulatory action and statutory scheme involved.

(c) NOTICE OF PROPOSED AND FINAL RULEMAKING.—Each Federal financial institutions regulatory agency shall disclose in every notice of proposed rulemaking and in any final rulemaking for a regulatory action how the agency has applied subsections (a) and (b).

(d) REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—

(1) INDIVIDUAL AGENCY REPORTS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act and annually thereafter, each Federal financial institutions regulatory agency shall report to the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate on the specific actions taken to tailor the regulatory actions of the agency pursuant to the requirements of this Act.

(B) APPEARANCE BEFORE THE COMMITTEES.—The head of each Federal financial institution regulatory agency shall appear before the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate after each report is made pursuant to subparagraph (A) to testify on the contents of such report.

(2) FIEC REPORTS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 3 months after each report is submitted under paragraph (1), the Financial Institutions Examination Council shall report to the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate on—

(i) the extent to which regulatory actions tailored pursuant to this Act result in different treatment of similarly situated institutions of diverse charter types; and

(ii) the reasons for such differential treatment.

(B) APPEARANCE BEFORE THE COMMITTEES.—The Chairman of the Financial Institutions Examination Council shall appear before the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate after each report is made pursuant to subparagraph (A) to testify on the contents of such report.

(e) LIMITED LOOK-BACK APPLICATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Each Federal financial institutions regulatory agency shall conduct a review of all regulations adopted during the period beginning on the date that is seven years before the date of the introduction of this Act in the House of Representatives and ending on the date of the enactment of this Act, and apply the requirements of this Act to such regulations.

(2) REVISION.—If the application of the requirements of this Act to any such regulation requires such regulation to be revised, the applicable Federal financial institutions regulatory agency shall revise such regulation within 3 years of the enactment of this Act.

(f) DEFINITIONS.—In this Act, the following definitions shall apply:

(1) FEDERAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS REGULATORY AGENCIES.—The term ''Federal financial institutions regulatory agencies'' means the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, the National Credit Union Administration, and the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection.

(2) REGULATORY ACTION.—The term ''regulatory action'' means any proposed, interim, or final rule or regulation, guidance, or published interpretation.

SEC. 3. REDUCTION OF SURPLUS FUNDS OF FEDERAL RESERVE BANKS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 7(a)(3)(A) of the Federal Reserve Act (12 U.S.C. 289(a)(3)(A)) is amended by striking ''$7,500,000,000'' and inserting ''$7,385,714,000''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Subsection (a) shall take effect on June 1, 2018.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The bill, as amended, shall be debatable for 1 hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Financial Services.

The gentleman from Texas (Mr. HENSARLING) and the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MAXINE WATERS) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and submit extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, we were told many, many years ago that Dodd-Frank was passed to deal with the big Wall Street banks, that somehow our community banks and our credit unions would be held harmless because, Mr. Speaker, they didn't cause the crisis.

Now, we can have the discussion of what did—that is a whole different discussion for a different day—but unfortunately, regardless of whatever good intentions there might have been at the time, and I don't offer an opinion as to those intentions, the facts are that, since Dodd-Frank was passed, the big banks are bigger and the small banks and credit unions are fewer. We are losing, on average, a community bank or credit union every other day in America.

And as we lose them, Mr. Speaker, so do we lose the hopes and dreams and desires of our constituents, of so many

hardworking Americans who deserve to buy that car, who deserve to be able to own their own home, who deserve, after working so many years on the assembly line, to finally capitalize their own small business. But none of this is going to happen unless we actually tailor this regulatory burden to the size and complexity of the financial institution, something that, in many respects, was promised by Dodd-Frank but not delivered by Dodd-Frank.

So I am very, very happy that, today, we have yet another bipartisan bill from the Financial Services Committee that is aimed to promote economic growth, to help hardworking Americans, again, achieve their American Dream, because half of this country is living from paycheck to paycheck, and we need to ease that economic anxiety, and so we have got to make sure that the lifeblood of credit, that capital, is flowing through the system.

It is our community banks in particular that fund our small businesses. Unfortunately, up until the advent of the new administration, Mr. Speaker, small business lending by banks was at a 25-year low, entrepreneurship was at a generational low.

Now, thanks to the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, we have turned that corner, but we have so much further to go. So a particularly hardworking member of the House Financial Services Committee, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TIPTON), has come to us today with H.R. 1116, the Taking Account of Institutions with Low Operation Risk Act, yes, Mr. Speaker, the TAILOR Act.

Simply put, what this bill does is simply directs the Federal financial regulators to, again, simply tailor their regulations to entities based upon their size, their risk profile, their complexity. It also demands that they have some transparency in this process by requiring that the regulators report to Congress, report to the representatives of ''we the people'' how they have actually tailored the regulations—again, something that was implied, something that was promised in Dodd-Frank but did not actually occur.

Again, Mr. Speaker, every single day we hear from our community financial institutions. I heard from one in New Mexico that said:

> You know, we are a $300 million community bank in an area with high unemployment. Thirty-seven percent of our employees are active in community organizations, Little League, charities, and many serve in leadership positions in these organizations, and we also make tens of thousands of dollars in charitable contributions every year; but if our bank can't survive, you take away the local leadership, you take away the economic engine of our community.

This banker was clearly talking about the regulatory burden.

I heard from one in Iowa:

> I am a mortgage consumer lender and also the compliance officer of a small community bank in rural Iowa. I have been in banking for over 30 years and always enjoyed my job until the last 5 years. The new rules that will be implemented are ridiculous, and at that time, we may discontinue to offer in-house mortgage loans.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, my mailbox runneth over.

As our small banks and credit unions go, so goes the American Dream.

At a bare minimum, let's tailor the rules and regulations to the size and complexity of the institution so our credit unions, so our banks can thrive and, thus, our constituents can thrive and meet their economic goals and responsibilities.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.R. 1116, the so-called Taking Account of Institutions with Low Operation Risk Act of 2017, or the TAILOR Act.

This bill would weaken important safeguards established since the financial crisis by requiring agencies on the Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council—composed of the Federal Reserve Board, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, National Credit Union Administration, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, and Office of the Comptroller of the Currency—to perform a biased analysis that favors lessening the costs for industry over protecting consumers and the economy.

It was 10 years ago today that Bear Stearns collapsed and the Federal Reserve used taxpayer funding to arrange a shotgun wedding to J.P. Morgan to avoid a catastrophe. We now know that much, much worse was to come, when AIG, Lehman Brothers, the money market fund industry, and hundreds of banks, including all of the largest ones, would need a bailout. And this says nothing of the tremendous damage inflicted on the millions of Americans whose homes were lost to foreclosure, the millions who lost their jobs, and the trillions of dollars of wealth that evaporated.

Congress took decisive action to ensure that we were never caught unaware again when it passed the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act.

Although some claim that the measure that is now before us is aimed at helping community banks, that is not the case. If enacted, this bill would provide all financial institutions, including the largest banks, with opportunities to challenge any and every regulation in court if they felt it was not, so-called, uniquely tailored to their business needs.

This bill would ignore the mandates and requirements of all other laws passed by Congress and override decades of well-established administrative law requirements by subjecting all new financial rules to a vague, if not impossible, standard to meet. This includes an undefined standard of appropriateness and a vague standard of the ability to serve evolving and diverse customer needs; and, importantly, the legislation includes no similar mandate that regulators consider the benefits of Federal regulations, including the promotion of our Nation's financial stability or the protection of our consumers.

Let us not forget that the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau is the centerpiece of this Dodd-Frank reform. Prior to Dodd-Frank, our consumers had nobody looking out for them. They were left and they were taken advantage of, and so that is why we have Dodd-Frank reform.

But it seems that my friends on the opposite side of the aisle have forgotten about all of this. This set of standards that they are promoting not only applies to all future guidance and rulemaking, but retroactively to all of the rulemakings in the past 7 years, which, conveniently for the industry, covers all rules under the Dodd-Frank Act.

But financial regulators already have to go through extensive look-back reviews to refine and improve rules that make sense. In fact, under the Economic Growth and Regulatory Paperwork Reduction Act, or EGRPRA, which my colleagues on the other side of the aisle were just last week calling the gold standard for how regulators should review regulations, the Federal Reserve, OCC, and FDIC are already required to review their rules once every 10 years.

During this review, the regulators must identify whether regulations are outdated, unnecessary, or unduly burdensome and consider how to reduce regulatory burdens on insured depository institutions while, at the same time, ensuring safety and soundness.

The Consumer Bureau engages in a similar look-back review 5 years after a significant rule takes effect.

Make no mistake: I support tiered and tailored regulations for community banks and credit unions, but week after week, we have been on this House floor debating deregulatory gifts to Wall Street instead of moving legislation that actually benefits community banks and credit unions.

I know my colleagues on the other side of the aisle and I have differences about Dodd-Frank, but something we worked hard to do in crafting those critical reforms was to make sure that the law did not impose a one-size-fits-all approach on every financial institution. So, as you can see, the toughest rules focus on the largest and most complex financial firms that, as we saw in the crisis, can destabilize the financial system and inflict lasting damage to the economy and constituents we serve.

We have monitored Dodd-Frank's implementation carefully and pushed regulators to tailor rules to reduce unnecessary compliance burdens while maintaining appropriate protections and safeguards for consumers, investors, and taxpayers.

We must continue to take this type of targeted approach instead of advancing measures like H.R. 1116, this bill

that we are talking about right now, which would force the regulators to prioritize costs to Wall Street over benefits to consumers and the economy and expose rulemaking to needless litigation because of the nebulous standards in the bill.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TIPTON), the sponsor of the TAILOR Act, who also serves as the vice chairman of the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations of our Financial Services Committee, a very, very hardworking member of the committee and a real leader to help preserve and maintain our community banks and credit unions.

Mr. TIPTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman HENSARLING for his leadership on this issue, as well, and for considering this bipartisan legislation today.

Mr. Speaker, the ever-growing burden and complexity of financial regulations is creating an environment of difficult choices for community banks and credit unions. Often, they must choose to incur the costs of complying with a regulation or cease to offer the financial product the regulation modifies. Whatever choice these community institutions make, it is the local consumer and the local economy that loses.

Burdensome regulations drive up the costs of financial products and limit choices for consumers, which decreases a community's access to financial products and services that help their families to be able to buy their first home, to help small businesses grow.

In districts like mine in Colorado, that amounts to real economic impact, especially in towns where the community bank or credit union on the corner is the only true access to credit that the community has.

□ 1615

When smaller institutions are unable to absorb the costs of additional compliance, it is the small towns across America that are disproportionately affected.

As one banker from Colorado recently wrote me: We have seen time and again the impact of this regulatory environment consume many hours and resources of our compliance, credit, and audit teams despite the relatively simple business model that we follow.

Mr. Speaker, that is why the bipartisan TAILOR Act's consideration on the floor today is so important. The TAILOR Act directs the Federal financial regulators to take into account the risk profile and business model of institutions as they develop new regulations, making them more targeted, more deliberate. The TAILOR Act also instructs regulators to weigh the impact that new regulatory burdens will have on smaller institutions, meaning real relief from compliance burdens for banks and credit unions.

To put the impact of regulations into perspective, the Dodd-Frank Act alone created 400 new rules and came with 30,000 pages of explanation. In my travels across Colorado, I have heard far too often that community institutions have been forced to stop making home loans or loans to small businesses because they can't afford to hire more employees to manage the added compliance paperwork.

The TAILOR Act would make sure that the compliance burdens are considered when new regulations are made so that community financial institutions won't have to choose between the needs of their communities and complying with regulations out of Washington, D.C. Community banks and credit unions need to be able to prioritize their customers and the needs of their communities instead of prioritizing compliance with heavy-handed regulations.

One community banker from Colorado brought this into focus when he wrote me saying: Providing a real-time view of risk and continual review of such a risk applicable to each financial institution allows regulators to direct their attention to developing issues that could have the most damaging effect. With the number of financial institutions declining to historically low levels, the redeployment of focus based on complexity makes sense.

Mr. Speaker, in Colorado, mortgages haven't been made, loans to expand small businesses have been denied, retirees and recently employed workers have been turned away, and relationships between community bankers and their neighbors have been discarded. The one-size-fits-all approach to regulating the financial services industry has resulted in decreased access to much-needed credit.

America is now in a position to be able to address this. The trickle-down effect of regulation intended to respond to the culpable actions of the big banks after the 2008 financial crisis is harming Main Street and the ability of everyday Americans to be able to realize their financial goals. Directing the regulators to refocus their regulations will help Americans start achieving their goals once again.

Once more, the regulators themselves have acknowledged the need for tailored regulations. Both Treasury Secretary Mnuchin and Federal Reserve Chairman Powell have acknowledged the significant need for a return to common sense in the financial regulatory landscape. Mr. Speaker, the TAILOR Act, which passed out of the Financial Services Committee with broad bipartisan support, does just that.

Mr. Speaker, I would again like to thank Chairman HENSARLING for considering this measure here today.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ), a member of the Financial Services Committee, ranking member of the Small Business Committee, and a senior member, of course, of our Committee on Financial Services.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, let me take this opportunity to thank the gentlewoman, MAXINE WATERS, for her leadership.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.R. 1116, the TAILOR Act. This bill requires regulators on the FFIEC to reduce the scale and scope of their regulations based on the size and profile of a financial institution or class of institutions.

Let me be clear: Like many of the bill's supporters, I strongly believe that we should not take a one-size-fits-all approach to financial regulation. Financial regulation must be appropriately adjusted according to the size and complexity of an institution or class of institutions. That is why Democrats worked so hard to create these flexibilities in Dodd-Frank and regulators are already required to adjust their rules accordingly. For example, the CFPB has exempted community banks from many of the requirements under the qualified mortgage rule, and the Federal Reserve has developed different capital standards for banks based on size.

Moreover, we already have laws like the Economic Growth and Regulatory Paperwork Reduction Act that instructs Federal financial regulators to go through extensive look-back reviews to update and improve their regulations. So while I agree that it is necessary to review and update our regulatory framework from time to time, particularly for our smaller institutions, I oppose H.R. 1116 because the reviews required under the bill tilt too far in the industry's favor and fail to provide sufficient protection to the public's or the consumer's interest.

If enacted, this bill will provide our Nation's largest financial institutions with the opportunity to challenge any revised rulemaking in court if they felt a regulation was not uniquely tailored to meet their business needs. The bill also requires regulators to ignore the requirements of Dodd-Frank and other laws and subjects any future financial regulation to vague and impossible standards like appropriateness and necessity. These standards are undefined in the bill, making it very easy for a financial institution to challenge them in court.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 1 minute to the gentlewoman.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Perhaps most importantly, the bill makes no mention of regulators also considering the protection a current or future regulation has for consumers or the benefit it provides to our Nation's financial stability.

Instead of developing sweeping rollbacks of financial regulation, we should instead spend our time working to improve our regulatory framework

in order to ensure it maintains appropriate protections and safeguards for consumers, investors, and taxpayers.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' on this ill-advised bill.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. LUETKEMEYER), the chairman of the Financial Services Subcommittee on Financial Institutions and Consumer Credit and a real leader on our committee for proper regulation.

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for his hard work and leadership on our committee.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Colorado, Mr. TIPTON, for being such a champion for this initiative and others to bring about a more responsible, effective regulatory regime. For years, Members on both sides of the aisle have advocated for a more tailored, commonsense approach to Federal banking regulation. We have all said, time and time again, that rules designed for large institutions shouldn't apply to community banks and smaller credit unions.

We pressed the Federal financial regulators to take into consideration the risk profile and business models of institutions. In their appearances before the Financial Services Committee and in response to congressional letters and calls, the regulators tell us they are tailoring regulations and supervisory requirements based on individual institutions. They tell us what we want to hear, that one size fits all; but, Mr. Speaker, these institutions have yet to see this relief that they really need.

We lose a community bank or a credit union every day in this country. Today we have an opportunity to work together in an effort to change that, to make sure that our constituents continue to have access to the services they need and to achieve financial independence. We are doing a disservice to our communities and the people we represent if we continue to allow rules intended for the largest firms to be forced upon our small financial institutions.

Mr. Speaker, I have got a couple of 6-year-old grandsons. When they come over to the house and they want to play basketball, they can't hit a 10-foot goal, so we need to lower the goal in order for them to be able to play. Otherwise, they are going to quit; they get tired, frustrated; and they go away.

This is what is happening with our smaller institutions. They are saddled with rules and regulations that are for the larger institutions, yet they have to play that same game and experience the same costs. As a result, they are going out of business at the rate of one a day.

This bipartisan bill is straightforward and one that every Member of this body should be able to support. Mr. TIPTON's legislation simply requires the Federal financial regulators to actually consider the risk profile and business model of a financial institution and to tailor regulatory actions accordingly.

Mr. Speaker, I again want to thank the gentleman from Colorado for his outstanding work on this legislation and ask my colleagues for the support of the TAILOR Act.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I am always amazed at the deregulatory bills that are produced by the opposite side of the aisle, and I keep wondering why there are so many attempts to provide the banks and the financial institutions, the largest banks in this country, opportunities to make even more money.

According to an estimate from Goldman Sachs, the Republicans' tax scam bill represents a giant windfall for Wall Street megabanks. So we are here with another bill to deregulate, basically to talk about tailoring. Let me just redefine this tailoring. It just means changing, modifying, coming up with ways that the banks can basically complain about their costs and their burdens. But my friends continue to basically support them in whatever efforts they want in order to make more money.

This report that I just referred to estimates that all of the largest banks, eight of the largest banks, will receive $15 billion windfalls on their 2018 tax bill. This includes $3.7 billion for Wells Fargo, $3.5 billion for Bank of America, $3.3 billion for JPMorgan, $1.4 billion for Citigroup, and $1 billion for Goldman Sachs.

What more do they want? How much more can you give them? What is the next deregulatory bill that you will come with on this floor?

It is interesting to note that the Financial Services Committee is responsible for over 50 percent, or at least 50 percent, of all of the bills coming through the Rules Committee that come to the floor, which means that my friends on the opposite side of the aisle have spent an inordinate amount of time coming up with legislation dealing with deregulation of these big banks.

Now, we have a lot of things that we could be doing to protect consumers, working people, and families in that committee. I wish we would spend a lot more time on HUD. The homeless population in this country is expanding. It is exploding all over the country. In New York and California, in the Midwest—you name it—people are on the streets.

Do you think we have been able to have a hearing on homelessness in this committee? No, because all of this time is spent on supporting the biggest banks in America and deregulating in ways that will cause them to be able to make more and more money.

How much more do they want? How much more do they need? How much time is this Congress going to spend on trying to undo Dodd-Frank and kill the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau?

I don't know the answers to these questions, Mr. Speaker. And I wish they would answer me, but no, I know they are not going to. They are simply going to come and talk about tailoring. Well, tailoring just means changing, fixing in a way that will benefit the biggest banks.

Mr. Speaker, I will let them continue with their deregulatory efforts.

I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1630

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. WAGNER), the chairman of the Financial Services Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations.

Mrs. WAGNER. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman HENSARLING for yielding. My hat is off to the vice chair of the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee, my good friend, Congressman TIPTON, for this fine piece of legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 1116, the TAILOR Act, and I urge its immediate passage.

According to the most recent estimates, the 147 new regulations created under the Dodd-Frank Act have resulted in $40 billion in additional regulatory costs. Unfortunately, this one-size-fits-all approach trickles down to consumers and small businesses in my home State of Missouri, who, for years, have struggled to keep up with these unnecessary burdens.

I would like to take a moment to share how those burdens have had a real impact on the constituents of Missouri's Second Congressional District.

Due to new regulatory burdens imposed under the Dodd-Frank Act, a local credit union in my district contacted my office to tell us how they were forced to redirect their efforts away from helping their customers and into bureaucratic studies of how the new rules affected the credit union. Third-party costs skyrocketed, as the credit union was forced to spend more money on outside vendors and lawyers for guidance. Instead of providing their customers with new products or decreased costs, employees shifted their focus toward compliance efforts.

Congressman TIPTON's bill, which enjoys bipartisan support, is yet another example of Congress getting it right. This legislation will focus on the institutions model and risk profile, which will, in turn, allow financial institutions like the one I previously mentioned to focus their time and resources on the communities that they serve.

Again, I am proud to support my good friend from Colorado, Congressman TIPTON. I urge all Members to support his bill.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. BARR), who is the chairman of our Monetary Policy and Trade Subcommittee.

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1116, the Taking Account of Institutions with Low Operation Risk Act of 2017, which directs the Federal financial regulatory agencies to tailor their rulemakings in consideration of the risk profiles and business models of the financial institutions that are subject to such rules.

It also directs the agencies to annually report to Congress regarding the specific actions that those agencies have taken to tailor their regulatory actions.

I would just like to thank the ranking member of our committee for actually making the argument in favor of this legislation. She is concerned about big banks, or big banks getting benefits, or big banks not getting enough scrutiny. This bill makes sure that regulatory agencies are focused on the systemic institutions and not overwhelmed by responsibilities of regulating nonsystemically important institutions, our community banks, our regulatory-challenged institutions in our communities; not focus so much attention on imposing compliance burdens on small credit unions.

That is why I support my good friend from Colorado, Representative TIPTON's bill, because it gives the regulators more focus on what they should be doing instead of heaping an avalanche of red tape on nonsystemic, small community banks, which are withering on the vine under Dodd-Frank.

Mr. Speaker, since 2010, the Dodd-Frank financial control law has been a disaster for small institutions, those small community banks and credit unions across our country. That law generally applied one-size-fits-all rules and regulations on financial institutions, regardless of the fact that many businesses in the same industry are substantially different.

This is in recognition of the ranking member's argument that big banks are different than small banks. For the life of me, I don't know why she wouldn't be fully supportive of the bill.

As a direct result of Dodd-Frank, which applies this one-size-fits-all approach, the Commonwealth of Kentucky has lost about 20 percent of its banks and credit unions, with more bank closures anticipated in the future.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 1 minute to the gentleman from Kentucky.

Mr. BARR. This is particularly concerning because our State-chartered banks provide about 75 percent of the lending in rural America and about half of all the U.S. lending nationwide. As you can see, with fewer community financial institutions due to Dodd-Frank's 28,000 new restrictions, Americans will have less access to the capital they need to buy a home, purchase a car, and start a business.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman, Mr. TIPTON, for his leadership on the TAILOR Act. I urge my colleagues, especially the ranking member, to vote in favor of the TAILOR Act, to do exactly what she has been urging, which is allow regulators to focus on big banks, not small community banks. I applaud Mr. TIPTON for fulfilling that objective.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I am perplexed and somewhat amused by the statement that the community banks are just withering on the vine.

Well, let me just talk about what is happening in the banking community. Dodd-Frank is not hampering the banking sector at all. In 2016, the industry made record profits of $171 billion, and community banks are outperforming their larger peers. At the end of 2016, lending was up 8.3 percent for community banks and 4.8 percent for larger banks. Credit unions are expanding, and they have increased their membership by more than 16 million since 2010, an increase of 18 percent.

We oftentimes talk about what we are doing to the community banks. But we always—you, rather, always have a way of making sure that big banks are attached to this deregulation that you say you want to do for community banks. All you have to do is amend this bill and make it apply only to community banks.

Would the gentleman who is talking about what the ranking member should understand and should be thinking about be willing to amend the bill so that it only applies to community banks?

That is rhetorical, and I won't ask for an answer.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ROTHFUS), the vice chairman of the Financial Institutions and Consumer Credit Subcommittee.

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my support for the TAILOR Act. As the vice chairman of the Financial Institutions and Consumer Credit Subcommittee, and a cosponsor of this bipartisan bill, I also want to thank my colleague, Representative TIPTON, for his work on this measure.

I emphasize bipartisan. I listened to the other side of the aisle, and it sounds like there would be no support for this legislation, but there is support for this legislation. I wonder if the ranking member has been having some of the conversations with some of her members, because, over the past few years, we have learned that one-size-fits-all, those rules, are a recipe for a more concentrated and less dynamic financial system.

I spend a lot of time talking with community bankers, credit unions, and their customers. They complain about skyrocketing compliance costs and regulatory burdens that force them to take attention away from their core businesses when they continue to add staff not to serve customers but to work on compliance issues.

Consumers complained about higher prices, fewer choices, and less access to important financial products. Small- and mid-sized institutions play an important role in financing the dreams and aspirations of Main Street businesses and middle class families.

Unfortunately, these institutions are disproportionately affected by the one-size-fits-all rules coming out of Washington, D.C. Banks and credit unions are merging or closing altogether, and new banks are not forming to take their place. Storied institutions with multigenerational relationships in their communities are being forced to close their doors and abandon the cities and towns they once served.

It is very sad, Mr. Speaker, to see a small town with a shuttered bank. We see it across western Pennsylvania and we are seeing it across the country.

This has an unmistakable impact on our economy. I remind the other side about the studies where, because of the overregulation over the last 10 years, that 650,000 fewer small businesses have been created; 6.5 million fewer jobs, that is 6.5 million fewer people paying Social Security tax, 6.5 million people fewer paying Medicare tax; critical, critical jobs that have not been created.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Speaker, small businesses can't get the loans that they need. Families can't get the mortgage or pay for college. All of this means that the American Dream is getting harder and harder for people across the country.

Again, as I often remind my colleagues, the solution isn't deregulation. It is right regulation. The TAILOR Act achieves this. By enacting the TAILOR Act, we can focus regulatory energy and resources where they are most needed and help reinvigorate our community financial institutions.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I was just reviewing this bill somewhat and it has come to my attention that this so-called tailoring, which really means modifying, changing, doing something different, is for each individual bank.

So each individual bank could say: We do things this way, so we want a rule that is tailored especially for us.

Another bank could say: We do things another way, and we want some separate rules just for us.

And on and on for every bank.

Is this what this is all about? Is this what this so-called tailoring is about? This tailoring, which is modifying,

changing, basically deregulating in the interest of the big banks to make sure they can reduce their costs and get rid of what they would call their burdens?

Are you really talking about having our regulators look at each bank and say: You do business a little bit different, so we are going to change the rules just to fit your bank?

Well, Mr. Speaker, it doesn't seem to me as if this is plausible. This does not make good sense. I don't understand why my friends on the opposite side of the aisle, in their deregulatory efforts, would even try this one. This one doesn't work.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LUCAS), a senior member of the Financial Services Committee, and the former chairman of the House Agriculture Committee, who knows how important our community banks are to the world of agriculture.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased today to speak on Mr. TIPTON's bill, the TAILOR Act.

But first I would note, as always, in participating in these kind of debates, any time you have a discussion led by Chairman HENSARLING and by Ranking Member WATERS, it is always an exciting, stimulating debate, and the intensity and the focus is always there.

But, today, we are focused on what I think is a very important piece of legislation because too often we think of financial institutions as the big guys, the truly massive entities. The truth is, however, that institutions that accept deposits from Americans come in all shapes and sizes. Thus, it is important that the regulators consider those many shapes and sizes when requiring compliance. The TAILOR Act would require that consideration by regulators.

My colleagues have already discussed that this provision has passed the House and is supported by the administration, as well as several industry groups. But I will note that for anyone in this body who represents a rural area, I guarantee banks and credit unions in your district are devoting a large portion of their budget to compliance. That is money that could easily go toward providing credit to the many Americans who need it.

Shouldn't the regulators consider the small institutions when forming these regulations?

This bill will free up some ability for those institutions to lend money to typical Americans and local businesses. I know my district would see the benefits of this bill, and I would guess that many districts nationwide would also benefit in the same ways.

I want to thank the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TIPTON) for working so diligently on this bill and bringing it through the committee process, bringing it to the floor today, and giving us the opportunity to vote for it. I urge that vote. I advocate support.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased that my colleague on the opposite side of the aisle, Congressman LUCAS, enjoys engaging in these discussions also. I watched very closely his countenance, and I see that he is enjoining it even more than I ever dreamed he would. So let us continue with this very lively debate where we can at least lift the spirits of each other as we go through our daily work.

Having said that, the chairman likes to say that we lose a community bank a day. However, last year, only eight banks failed.

□ 1645

The other 230 banks merged with others, and I would like the chairman to even acknowledge that long before Dodd-Frank, we were losing a bank a day, and that trend had been going on for 30 years. So I do not wish us to think that something new and extraordinary is happening, that somehow we have come to a point in time in the banking world where banks are being lost on a daily basis in a way that they have not been lost before.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. EMMER), a very hardworking member of the House Financial Services Committee.

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for the time.

Mr. Speaker, on countless occasions, my colleagues on the House Financial Services Committee have called out the challenges faced by our family-owned community banks and credit unions created by the one-size-fits-all regulatory approach of this Federal Government. We keep repeating this message because this is what all of us, Republicans and Democrats, are hearing from our constituents on Main Street U.S.A.

As a direct result of the overly burdensome and unnecessary Federal regulation, members of the Ideal Credit Union in Minnesota pay an additional $225, and it now takes over 44 days to close a home mortgage. Ideal told me that, if the credit union could return to a more normal, reasonable processing time, their members would be better served and the process would be more efficient.

My colleague from Colorado has heard similar examples from his constituents, too. That is why he introduced the TAILOR Act, to change the way agencies regulate our small town financial institutions that are telling us time and time again they need relief.

Representative TIPTON's legislation will direct the Federal regulatory agencies responsible for regulating our local Main Street financial institutions to consider a few factors when they are regulating, such as the impact their actions have on the ability of banks and credit unions to serve their customers, the risk profile and business models of the institutions they regulate, and the necessity and appropriateness of the regulations they are imposing.

Tailored regulations are smart regulations and will help to limit the regulatory burden our community banks and credit unions continue to face.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentleman from Minnesota.

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues on both sides of aisle to listen to the stories of their constituents and support the relief they are asking for. I urge my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on H.R. 1116, the TAILOR Act.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I keep hearing my colleagues talk about one size does not fit all and they keep trying to make a case for the community banks, but they always tie the community banks to these deregulatory efforts so that the big banks can benefit from it.

When I take a look at the Dodd-Frank requirements and how they target the largest banks, let's take a look at those banks that are less than $10 billion in assets. They don't have to comply with all of these regulations.

If they are a little bit bigger, they are between $10 billion and $50 billion, they have to comply with just a few more, but not as many as the large banks. If they are $50 billion to $250 billion, yes, we have a few more requirements for them. And then the big boys, the big banks, yes, we have more oversight and more requirements.

Do you know why? Because they put this entire economy at risk if they fail.

When we talk about doing all of the stress-testing, we are stress-testing on these banks because we know that, in the event of an economic downfall, if they don't have the capital, if they don't have the kinds of things that would keep them safe, they could trigger another recession.

So stop saying that one size does not fit all and trying to make people believe that somehow we are requiring the same thing of the small community bank as we are requiring of the big bank. It is absolutely not true.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LOUDERMILK), someone who knows that one size does not fit all.

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Mr. Speaker, again, I appreciate the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HENSARLING) for allowing me this time to speak in strong support of the TAILOR Act and for my colleague, Mr. TIPTON, for bringing this legislation forward.

I am an original cosponsor of this bill, Mr. Speaker, not just because it is just one of these bills that you want your name on. It is because I really believe in the concept that right-sizing

regulation of our community banks and credit unions is what they need to be able to survive and succeed.

Now, I want to make something clear. The other side has argued that if one bank wants a regulation one way and another one wants a regulation another way, it is almost impossible. It is the regulators that are doing the tailoring. It is the regulators, not the banks, that would tailor the rules. And if the minority side does not trust the regulators enough, they should not have extended all this power to them through Dodd-Frank.

The truth is, Mr. Speaker, every time I meet with community banks and credit unions in my district, they tell me about the excessive regulatory compliance burdens that this one-size-fits-all regulatory scheme has on them, and they describe it as a death by 1,000 cuts. In other words, it is not one single regulation that makes it difficult to do business; it is the combination of many under this one-size-fits-all scheme. That is why this TAILOR Act is so important for the small guy.

Since the financial crisis, our Nation has lost one community bank or credit union a day.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Mr. Speaker, in Georgia, we have lost more banks than any other State in the Nation, and, today, 52 of Georgia's 159 counties do not have a community bank headquartered there, and we have three counties that have no bank at all.

The TAILOR Act is simple. It is a commonsense idea, and I stand in full support. I encourage my colleagues to join me in supporting this commonsense act to right-size regulations for our small banks and credit unions.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, may I ask how much time I have left.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FORTENBERRY). The gentlewoman from California has 10 minutes remaining.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, Members, and to my colleagues on the opposite side of the aisle, I am going to take a couple of minutes to bore you. I am going to bore you with all of the groups who are opposed to your legislation.

I heard one of your Members say that you have tremendous support. I didn't hear where that support is coming from, but I do believe that probably the biggest banks in America are supporting your legislation. So please allow me to share with you who is opposing your legislation.

Allied Progress; the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees; Americans for Financial Reform; the Arkansans Against Abusive Payday Lending; Center for American Progress; Center for Economic Integrity; Center for Justice and Democracy; Center for Responsible Lending; Consumer Action; Consumer Federation of America; Consumers for Auto Reliability and Safety; Consumers Union; Demos; the Florida Alliance for Consumer Protection; Indivisible; Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility; Jacksonville Area Legal Aid Incorporated; the Kentucky Equal Justice Center; the NAACP; the National Association of Consumer Advocates; the National Association of Consumer Bankruptcy Attorneys; the National Center for Law and Economic Justice; the National Coalition for the Homeless; the National Consumer Law Center, on behalf of its low-income clients; the National Consumers League; the National Fair Housing Alliance; the National Urban League; the People's Action Institute; PolicyLink; Progressive Congress Action Fund; Prosperity Now; Public Citizen; Public Justice Center; Reinvestment Partners; Statewide Poverty Action Network; Tennessee Citizen Action; U.S. PIRG; West Virginia Center on Budget and Policy; the Woodstock Institute; and the World Privacy Forum.

If you have time, I would like you to share with me who is supporting your legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to direct their remarks to the Chair.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I don't have any further speakers, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I am prepared to close, so I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, the majority is continuing to move to roll back important financial regulations at a furious pace. Week after week, the majority pushes harmful bills through the House. This bill is just the latest example.

In recent months, this deregulatory frenzy has included House passage of bills that, among other things, allow payday lenders to evade State interest cap rates, decrease operational risk capital requirements and roll back enhanced prudential standards for the Nation's largest banks, weaken consumer protections for mortgages, undermine efforts to combat discriminatory and predatory lending, reduce consumer privacy protections, and threaten the stability of our financial system and economy.

Last week, Republicans pushed through H.R. 4607, another bill that is designed to weaken rules considered inconvenient by the financial services industry, despite the harm that could result for consumers and the economy.

As we have discussed, the bill we are debating today, H.R. 1116, would allow large financial institutions to challenge financial regulations in court if they believe them not to be uniquely tailored to their business needs. It includes a provision that would allow these challenges for all of the financial regulations put in place following the financial crisis, making all of the important Dodd-Frank reforms targets.

Of course, the legislation is totally silent on the need for regulators to consider the interest of consumers and to ensure the stability of our economy as they conduct rulemakings.

Ultimately, this bill would serve to put consumers and the financial system at risk by subjecting important regulations to endless litigation. It is designed to block and bog down important rules that were put in place following the financial crisis to protect consumers, investors, and our economy.

I would simply urge Members to oppose H.R. 1116, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, may I ask how much time I have left.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas has 4½ minutes remaining.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TIPTON) for his leadership. Again, whether it be through failure, whether it be through merger or acquisition, we still, on average, are losing a community bank or credit union a day in America. And when we listen to them, Mr. Speaker, what we know is it is the regulatory burden.

I know that the ranking member speaks frequently of the Wall Street megabanks. They have done quite fine under Dodd-Frank. The ranking member likes to allude to their profitability. Listen, I hope every business in America can find some way to be profitable, but that is not the question.

The real question is the profitability of our constituents, half of whom are living paycheck to paycheck. And it is those constituents who we care about when we lose an opportunity for them to capitalize their American Dream.

When I hear from Colton in Terrell, Texas, in the Fifth District that I proudly represent, who says:

> You know what? Me and my wife have been unable to get a mortgage due to credit. We are 25 to 30 years old. We have good credit, but we are getting denied.

That is everything to do with the regulatory burden, Mr. Speaker.

I heard from Sara in Eustace in my district. She writes:

> I would like to refinance with a cashout option to fix some storm damage to my property and home, but I found out that it is not an option for me because the government doesn't believe I should be able to do this.

I heard from Alan, in Kaufman, Texas, who said:

> However, as a small-business owner, I offer owner financing for real estate to people with little or no credit, but the overregulation of Dodd-Frank has caused my cost of business to rise. I am forced to pass that cost on to the consumer. Regulations cost the consumer, not the business.

So the ranking member wants to know who is for this bill. Well, I can

tell you what, Colton is for this bill, Sara is for this bill, Al is for this bill, and, oh, by the way, so is the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HECK), Democratic member of our committee; so is the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. GOTTHEIMER), Democratic member of our committee; so is the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GONZALEZ), Democrat member of our committee; so is the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. SCOTT), Democratic member of our committee.

Again, there is lots of great bipartisan work that goes on at the House Financial Services Committee. Regrettably, very little of it takes place with the participation of the ranking member.

□ 1700

Again, this is a very simple bill. It just says tailor the regulation. Tailor the regulation to the size and complexity.

Mr. Speaker, I don't believe in too-big-to-fail banks. I don't believe any financial institution is too big to fail in America. I am not going to vote to bail them out with taxpayer funds; maybe the ranking member will.

But if I did, if I believed in too-big-to-fail banks, it would be limited to about eight or nine. Using the ranking member's favorite phrase, the Wall Street megabanks. Then, fine. Then why don't we see an amendment from her that limits the entirety of Dodd-Frank to the so-called Wall Street megabanks? I am still waiting for that amendment. I have yet to see it.

Why don't we release the rest of the banking and credit union world to help finance the American Dream, to help finance the cars, to help finance the small businesses, to help finance the homes?

Again, it is a simple amendment. It is a bipartisan amendment. And, by the way, it happens to be one of the most important amendments supported by the trade associations for the credit unions and for our community banks. So they believe in it, Mr. Speaker.

So I encourage every Member of this body to vote for the TAILOR Act and save our community banks and credit unions to finance the American Dream.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

Pursuant to House Resolution 773, the previous question is ordered on the bill, as amended.

The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

MOTION TO RECOMMIT

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion to recommit at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentleman opposed to the bill?

Mr. CONNOLLY. I am in its present form.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. Connolly moves to recommit the bill H.R. 1116 to the Committee on Financial Services with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith with the following amendment:

Page 3, line 22, insert '', unless such tailoring is done at the request of and for the personal gain of the President, his or her immediate family members, or senior Executive Branch officials who are required to file annual financial disclosure forms, or is otherwise determined inappropriate by the appropriate Federal financial regulator'' before the period at the end.

Mr. CONNOLLY (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that further reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Virginia?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Virginia is recognized for 5 minutes in support of his motion.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, this is the final amendment to this bill, which will not kill the bill or send it back to the committee.

If adopted, the bill will immediately proceed to final passage, as amended, and you are going to love it.

My amendment would prohibit Federal agencies that regulate financial institutions from tailoring their regulation of the financial industry at the request of and the personal gain of the President, the President's family members, or senior executive branch officials; something that ought to concern us in light of recent headlines.

This is a simple prohibition that in any other era would pass for common sense. Unfortunately, we have become inured to the daily outrages emanating from this White House, and we are learning how much our democracy depends on the morality and ethical behavior of individuals in the absence of institutional restraints.

When the President calls his friend to tip him off, if that is what happened, to a major announcement about steel tariffs, and that friend dumps affected stocks, there is no mechanism to prevent that from happening.

It just shouldn't happen. Morality and ethics dictate as much.

When a senior White House employee repeatedly violates the Hatch Act, allegedly, we depend on the President to punish and rein in that kind of behavior. If he doesn't, nothing happens, and the message to the rest of the Federal Government is that the politicalization of government institutions is okay as long as it is the President who approves your motives.

Now, of course, this institution, a coequal branch of government under our Constitution, could create consequences, but, of course, we won't.

Instead, we will continue to turn a blind eye to activities and behavior that are dangerous to our democracy, Mr. Speaker. Behavior that should concern any patriotic American.

In predicting inaction by this body, I am not engaging in idle speculation. This Congress has a proven track record of shirking its institutional responsibilities for basic oversight of the executive branch, irrespective of who is in the White House.

Take the President's tax returns. That which was once a norm, Presidents releasing their tax returns as a credential to be examined for Presidency, was overturned by the simple refusal to do so by this President.

We depended for so long on candidates and Presidents to self-govern, to self-report, that we didn't anticipate the scenario in which a President, so devoid of any sense of transparency and accountability, would simply say: No, I won't do that. And not so much as a whimper from the Congress.

A year ago, one might have said Congress would never pass the President's tax plan without insisting on first seeing the President's tax returns and how he might stand to benefit or not from the actions we took.

Well, we did just that. And in the process, we exploded the deficit by close to $2 trillion for good measure.

This should go without saying, but the corruption that is emanating in this time, in this administration, is not normal. It is not how the government should be run.

Neither President Trump, Jared Kushner, nor Ivanka Trump has divested entirely from their personal businesses. And our appreciation for divestiture as an anticorruption measure only grows in its absence.

The President's son-in-law and senior White House official, Jared Kushner, has been freelancing meetings with foreign governments while also seeking financing from those countries for his distressed property at 666 Fifth Avenue in Manhattan. He is taking meetings with financial institutions in his official capacity, apparently, and then turning around and securing, apparently, hundreds of millions of dollars in loans for his family business from those same institutions. This is not normal. It is not how government should be run.

We should not be selling our foreign and domestic policies to the highest bidder at a real estate auction. This Congress could hold hearings, could issue subpoenas, could create real consequence for these actions, but we see and hear no evil.

The Oversight and Government Reform Committee, on which I sit, is missing in action. We have requested multiple subpoenas for information from the White House on everything from General Flynn's activity while serving as National Security Advisor to Jared Kushner's conflicts of interest, or apparent conflicts of interest, and inability to obtain a security clearance.

Not a single subpoena request has been granted by the majority. The majority won't even give us a vote on those requests. It may seem tedious

and repetitive, but we need to get back to the basics of government oversight.

Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of this simple, commonsense amendment to return us to regular order and to return to our duty as Members of Congress to provide vigorous oversight.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I rise to claim time in opposition.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I listened very carefully to my friend from Virginia, and he is my friend, but I also must say that rarely in the history of the House have I ever seen a motion to recommit that has less to do with the underlying bill than this one.

I know that my friends on the other side of the aisle, over a year later, still cannot accept the outcome of the election, which, unfortunately, is a complete slap in the face of democracy.

I know there is an element that works full time on the other side of the aisle to impeach the President. This is their full-time avocation. Meanwhile, on this side of the aisle, Mr. Speaker, we continue to work in order to try to improve the lot in lives of the common working man and woman.

So we were very proud to work with the President on the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act that has brought us the lowest unemployment rate in America in 17 years.

Under their economic policies, Mr. Speaker, what we saw were high levels of unemployment. What we saw were stagnant wages. What we saw was 1.6 percent GDP growth when in the postwar era we have averaged 3 percent economic growth. What we saw under their economic policies was that people couldn't make ends meet. Too many were still living paycheck to paycheck.

And now I hear from my constituents. I heard from one the other day who said: Guess what? They just announced at my husband's business everybody is getting a 5 percent pay increase.

I just heard from Michael in Terrell, who is a doctor, and he said: Thanks to President Trump—who they are trying to impeach—thanks to President Trump and the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, now I can afford to buy a new ultrasound machine for my rural practice, and I am going to actually hire an additional ultrasound technician.

All due to the President, again, they are trying to impeach.

I heard from Charles in Winnsboro who said: You know what? The new tax reforms will drop my tax bracket by 17 percent, and this will allow me to rebuild my shop that had been destroyed.

And then I look at the employers in my hometown of Dallas, Texas: American Airlines, Southwest Airlines, AT&T, Comerica. So many of them, Mr. Speaker, are offering $1,000 bonuses. Many are offering increases in minimum wages. Many have increased 401(k) plans. All, again, due to the activities of the Republicans, because not one single Democrat supported the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act.

So I understand how my friends on the other side of the aisle wish to attempt to change the subject because they are probably now embarrassed they didn't support it, because they have seen how much good it has done, how much of a difference it makes.

So if they want to waste the House's time by once again trying to find ways to undermine the President, impeach the President, I know it is a full-time job for many, but on this side of the aisle, we are going to continue to make sure that the lot of the common man and woman is improved. We are going to make sure that our community banks and credit unions can lend to them. We are going to ensure that there is great economic growth so that we can continue to fund the American Dream. That is what we are going to do on this side of the aisle.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage all of my colleagues to reject the motion to recommit and to support the underlying TAILOR Act.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, the Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the minimum time for any electronic vote on the question of passage of the bill.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 182, nays 232, not voting 16, as follows:

[Roll No. 107]

YEAS—182

Adams
Aguilar
Barragán
Bass
Beatty
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (MD)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capuano
Carbajal
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Cooper
Correa
Costa
Courtney
Crist
Crowley
Cuellar
Davis (CA)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Demings
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Espaillat
Esty (CT)
Evans
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Gomez
Gonzalez (TX)
Gottheimer
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hanabusa
Hastings
Heck
Higgins (NY)
Himes
Hoyer
Huffman
Jackson Lee
Jayapal
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Khanna
Kihuen
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster (NH)
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lawson (FL)
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham, M.
Luján, Ben Ray
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn B.
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McEachin
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Halleran
O'Rourke
Pallone
Panetta
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Raskin
Richmond
Rosen
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Smith (WA)
Soto
Suozzi
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Yarmuth

NAYS—232

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Arrington
Babin
Bacon
Banks (IN)
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Bergman
Biggs
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Budd
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Cheney
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comer
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Curtis
Davidson
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Dunn
Emmer
Estes (KS)
Farenthold
Faso
Ferguson
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Flores
Fortenberry
Foxx
Frelinghuysen
Gaetz
Gallagher
Garrett
Gianforte
Gibbs
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guthrie
Handel
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Higgins (LA)
Hill
Holding
Hollingsworth
Hudson
Huizenga
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (LA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jordan
Joyce (OH)
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger
Knight
Kustoff (TN)
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
Lewis (MN)
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Marshall
Massie
Mast
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mitchell
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Newhouse
Noem
Norman
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Pittenger
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Posey
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Rice (SC)
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney, Thomas J.
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce (CA)
Russell
Rutherford

Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smucker
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Taylor
Tenney
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Zeldin

NOT VOTING—16

Cárdenas
Cummings
Davis, Danny
Katko
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Moore
Rice (NY)
Rooney, Francis
Ros-Lehtinen
Slaughter
Smith (MO)
Speier
Tsongas
Walz
Wilson (FL)

□ 1737

Messrs. ROKITA, MITCHELL, Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER, Messrs. STEWART, THOMAS J. ROONEY of Florida, BUCK, and GRAVES of Georgia changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

Messrs. RASKIN, NEAL, DOGGETT, LOWENTHAL, and SCHRADER changed their vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated for:

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall No. 107.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 247, nays 169, not voting 14, as follows:

[Roll No. 108]

YEAS—247

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Arrington
Babin
Bacon
Banks (IN)
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Bergman
Biggs
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Budd
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Cheney
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comer
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Cooper
Correa
Costa
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Cuellar
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Curtis
Davidson
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Dunn
Emmer
Estes (KS)
Farenthold
Faso
Ferguson
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Flores
Fortenberry
Foxx
Frelinghuysen
Gaetz
Gallagher
Garrett
Gianforte
Gibbs
Gohmert
Gonzalez (TX)
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gottheimer
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guthrie
Handel
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Higgins (LA)
Hill
Holding
Hollingsworth
Hudson
Huizenga
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (LA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jordan
Joyce (OH)
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger
Knight
Kustoff (TN)
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
Lewis (MN)
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
MacArthur
Maloney, Sean
Marchant
Marino
Marshall
Massie
Mast
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mitchell
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Murphy (FL)
Newhouse
Noem
Norman
Nunes
O'Halleran
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perlmutter
Perry
Peterson
Pittenger
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Posey
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Rice (SC)
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney, Thomas J.
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce (CA)
Russell
Rutherford
Sanford
Scalise
Schneider
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smucker
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Suozzi
Taylor
Tenney
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Vela
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Zeldin

NAYS—169

Adams
Aguilar
Barragán
Bass
Beatty
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (MD)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capuano
Carbajal
Cárdenas
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Courtney
Crist
Crowley
Davis (CA)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Demings
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Espaillat
Esty (CT)
Evans
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Gomez
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hanabusa
Hastings
Higgins (NY)
Himes
Hoyer
Huffman
Jackson Lee
Jayapal
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Khanna
Kihuen
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster (NH)
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lawson (FL)
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham, M.
Luján, Ben Ray
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn B.
Matsui
McCollum
McEachin
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Panetta
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Peters
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Raskin
Richmond
Rosen
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Smith (WA)
Soto
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Vargas
Veasey
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—14

Cummings
Davis, Danny
Katko
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Olson
Rice (NY)
Rooney, Francis
Ros-Lehtinen
Slaughter
Smith (MO)
Tsongas
Walz
Wilson (FL)

□ 1745

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I was not present for the following votes because I chose to remain in my congressional district in Miami because of health reasons. Had I been present, I would have voted ''no'' on rollcall Vote No. 104; ''no'' on rollcall Vote No. 105; ''yes'' on rollcall Vote No. 106; ''yes'' on rollcall Vote No. 107; and ''no'' on rollcall Vote No. 108.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4061, FINANCIAL STABILITY OVERSIGHT COUNCIL IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2017, AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4293, STRESS TEST IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2017

Mr. BUCK, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 115–600) on the resolution (H. Res. 780) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4061) to amend the Financial Stability Act of 2010 to improve the transparency of the Financial Stability Oversight Council, to improve the SIFI designation process, and for other purposes, and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4293) to reform the Comprehensive Capital Analysis and Review process, the Dodd-Frank Act Stress Test process, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. RUTHERFORD) laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, March 14, 2018.

Hon. PAUL D. RYAN,
Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Under Clause 2(g) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, I herewith designate Mr. Robert Reeves, Deputy Clerk, and Mr. Christopher Donesa, Legal Counsel, to sign any

and all papers and do all other acts for me under the name of the Clerk of the House which they would be authorized to do by virtue of this designation, except such as are provided by statute, in case of my temporary absence or disability.

This designation shall remain in effect for the 115th Congress or until modified by me.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS,
Clerk of the House.

IN MEMORY OF SERGEANT MARK J. BASERMAN

(Mr. ROTHFUS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in remembrance of a remarkable community servant, a faithful friend and husband, and a brave veteran: Sergeant Mark J. Baserman.

A corrections officer who devoted many years of service at the State Correctional Institute in Somerset, Pennsylvania, Mark tragically lost his life in the line of duty on February 26, 2018. Known throughout Johnstown and by colleagues as a man of integrity, bravery, and strength, thousands attended his remembrance service to pay their respects to Mark and his family.

A 1975 graduate of Greater Johnstown Vo-Tech High School, as a young man, Mark volunteered many years with the Oakland Volunteer Fire Company and he served in the Army. Before becoming a corrections officer, Mark worked more than 20 years as a first responder with East Hills Ambulance Service.

Mark's life history of public service is evident. Putting others first, including his wife, Rebecca, and mother, Lucille—both who have physical disabilities—is a powerful testimony and a shining example.

Mr. Speaker, as we grieve the loss of this honorable man, I offer my deepest condolences to Mark's family, friends, and the Johnstown community.

SCHOOL AND GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION

(Ms. BONAMICI asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to say that we must refuse to accept gun violence as normal. Today, I stand with students from Oregon to Florida, who are courageously and peacefully demanding that their elected leaders take real action to prevent gun violence in their communities.

This past weekend I met Madeline, a high school student from Beaverton, Oregon. She said that now when she enters a classroom, her first thought is: where can she hide, and how could she escape.

As a mom, that broke my heart. And I heard from students in McMinnville, Oregon. They told me they are terrified when they hear a fire alarm because that is how the Parkland, Florida, massacre started.

How have we become a country where our students are afraid in their classrooms?

Mr. Speaker, we owe it to Madeline and to all of the students around the country to protect them from violence and to keep them safe in school and in their communities.

The STOP School Violence Act is a modest first step, but we must do more. We must listen to the voices of the students and work toward creating a safer future for them and for everyone.

FEDERAL COURT DISRESPECTS WORLD WAR I VETERANS

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, in 1925, the American Legion erected a memorial in Bladensburg, Maryland, to honor the 49 men who were killed in World War I. The mothers of those who died decided to erect a large cross to mirror the cross-shaped grave markers in the foreign cemeteries where their sons were buried. The 40-foot-tall memorial became known as the Peace Cross.

Even though the monument is secular, and after almost 100 years, an agnostic Federal court ruled the historic monument must be torn down, all because it is in the shape of a cross.

The wrong-headed decision to tear down the 93-year-old monument is proof that this Federal court has no respect for the sacrifices of Americans killed in World War I. Instead of destroying monuments, we should erect more.

What is next? Are Federal judges going to chisel off the crosses on grave markers at veterans' cemeteries?

We will see.

Keep the Memorial Peace Cross memorial. Heaven forbid, don't remove the cross.

And that is just the way it is.

HAPPY PI DAY

(Mr. MCNERNEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MCNERNEY. Mr. Speaker, every year on March 14, mathematicians and dessert lovers around the world come together to celebrate a shared constant in our lives. It may sound irrational, but it is actually transcendental.

Pi Day is a day dedicated to celebrating everything fascinating in the world of mathematics by recognizing its most famous number: 3.14.

Pi represents the ratio of a circle's circumference to its diameter, and has been calculated to over 1 trillion digits. It was first discovered in Ancient Greece and has captivated mathematicians like myself for over 1,000 years.

While Congress officially recognized Pi Day in 2009, it was in 1988 that the transcendental number got its day of dedication, when physicist Larry Shaw organized the first Pi Day at the San Francisco Exploratorium science museum.

Today, pi is used in all kinds of applications and can be found throughout our lives.

So to my fellow mathematicians, dessert lovers, and all of those celebrating today, I wish you a happy Pi Day.

CONGRATULATING MINNESOTA STATE WRESTLING CHAMPIONS

(Mr. LEWIS of Minnesota asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LEWIS of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, although Minnesota is known for hockey, I rise today to recognize the impressive high school wrestling programs in Minnesota's Second District.

This season, Shakopee and Apple Valley continued their strong, outstanding records in wrestling. In fact, Apple Valley held 12 straight State titles until this year, when Shakopee edged them out in the sectionals.

And while Shakopee did not bring home the State title, wrestlers from both Apple Valley and Shakopee put up some extraordinary victories.

Trey Rogers from Hastings finished his season with a perfect record.

Shakopee's Alex Lloyd won his third State championship.

And Apple Valley's Gable Steveson concluded his high school career with a winning percentage of 0.986, the best in State history.

I am proud to have such driven State athletes in my district. Their dedication and hard work will continue to bring them success for years to come, and I look forward to seeing future victories from our Second District wrestlers.

CHILDREN OF OUR NATION

(Ms. JACKSON LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, the children of our Nation are raising their voices. In the last couple of days in my district, many young people representing the 140,000 DACA-status young people in Texas and 800,000 in the Nation walked and shouted and asked and cajoled and spoke eloquently about the ridiculous malaise of this Congress, where we have not reauthorized DACA when there is a bill ready to move.

Do we care about our children? Do we care about the doctors, lawyers, and astronauts? Do we care about the teachers? Do we care about the parents—mothers and fathers—all DACA-status individuals who love this Nation?

And then today we heard from the voices of those who raised their hands

and said: I do not feel safe in school. I do not feel safe.

So they left their schools and honored those who died in Florida just a few weeks ago. They begged for this Nation and this Congress to get out of its stupor and to begin to pass real gun safety legislation.

Raise the age. Ban the bump stocks. Have universal background checks. The children's voices are crying.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, where in the world does General Sessions get in his mind that he can fire FBI Directors, Assistant Directors? And where in the world does the President get in his mind that he can fire the Secretary of State in such a disgraceful manner?

□ 1800

PUBLIC SCHOOLS WEEK

(Ms. TENNEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. TENNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Public Schools Week.

A quality public education is among the most important gifts we can provide to our children.

As a product of a terrific public school, where my son also attended and graduated from 30 years later, I understand the challenges our local schools, administrators, and teachers are facing in public schools.

Ninety percent of American children attend public school, making the local school district in most communities the largest and most significant employer.

I had and will continue to be a strong advocate for public schools throughout our communities and throughout our Nation.

Throughout my time in office, I have called for responsible increases in education and resources to our public schools, that are increasingly having to take on unfunded mandates and face many of the societal challenges that are now brought into the school districts.

As a former member of the New York State Assembly Education Committee, I fought against a very unfair school aid formula that indirectly and unfairly impacted our upstate public schools.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in recognizing the public schools and thanking those teachers, administrators, and custodians who provide guidance and provide leadership and a lifetime of memories to our students.

Communities are stronger and schools are better when we work together to support public education.

NATIONAL SCHOOL WALKOUT

(Mr. PANETTA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PANETTA. Mr. Speaker, today, high school students got up from their desks and walked out of their classes to take a stand against gun violence and for school safety. From the east coast of Florida to the central coast of California, students left their classrooms for 17 minutes to remember the 17 lives lost at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School and to demand that Congress take action on gun violence.

Now, today, Mr. Speaker, I commend you. We acted together to pass the STOP School Violence Act for school safety and security, but with all due respect, Mr. Speaker, that is not enough, and it is time we come together to pass commonsense reforms that have broad support across our Nation, from banning bump stocks to repealing the Dickey amendment, to fixing our system of background checks.

We all appreciate the emotion and passion by the high school students all across our country, but we realize, as they do, that thoughts and prayers only go so far. So now it is up to Congress to govern not just by crisis, but actually by leadership to make our schools, our communities, and our country safer.

THE LIBERAL MEDIA

(Mr. OLSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, the American people hate the # inhuman liberal media more and more every day. The last example? A Washington Post oped, titled, ''I Would Have Aborted a Fetus With Down Syndrome.'' My entire hometown of Sugar Land, Texas, was disgusted by those nine words.

I sent the hurtful article to Ammie, Massey, and Kristin, three friends with gorgeous Down kids. Ammie was stunned, because The Post basically said:

> If you knew your child would have cancer, cerebral palsy, diabetes, be deaf, blind, mute, or autistic, they should be aborted.

Ammie's Sadie has Down. Ammie says about her daughter:

> Even on my hardest days, her smile can take all the difficulties away from my day. I will forget them. Through my tears, I typed this note.

Mr. Speaker, none of us is perfect and none of us should be aborted because we are not perfect.

HONORING THE LIFE OF CHARLESTON HARTFIELD

(Mr. KIHUEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KIHUEN. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to remember the life of Charleston Hartfield.

Charleston was a military veteran who served for 16 years and was deployed to Iraq. He had received a Presidential Citation for extraordinary heroism in Iraq, along with numerous other individual commendations and achievement medals.

After the military, Charleston began his career with the Las Vegas Police Department, where he had worked for 11 years while also being an active member of the National Guard.

Along with protecting our Nation, he also enjoyed coaching youth football. Although he had no experience in football, he bought and studied books about coaching.

Charleston was a husband and a father to a son and a daughter.

He attended the Route 91 music festival on October 1 in Las Vegas with his wife, who was his high school sweetheart.

Charleston died trying to save the lives of concertgoers. As gunfire erupted, he immediately jumped in to usher people to safety.

He was loved by many and touched many lives.

As a published memoir author, Charleston's story will always be remembered. He was a selfless man who dedicated his life to protecting the community and country he loved.

We also grieve the loss of Charleston's mother, who died 2 days after his funeral from what many people said was a broken heart.

I would like to extend my condolences to Charleston Hartfield's family and friends. Please know that the city of Las Vegas and the State of Nevada and the entire country grieve with you.

PALMETTO WOMEN'S CENTER

(Mr. NORMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. NORMAN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to highlight a pro-life pregnancy center in my own district, the Palmetto Women's Center.

The Palmetto Women's Center is focused on uniting hope, health, and healing to women as they bring a child into their family. The center provides women with pregnancy tests, ultrasounds, Biblical counseling, education from nurses, connections within the community for access to resources, and much, much more. For example, the center partners with the Rock Hill Salvation Army to ensure that soon-to-be mothers can have access to maternity clothing and baby supplies.

The Palmetto Women's Center will be able to reach more women in my district as they begin operating in their new mobile unit. This will allow the staff of the center to travel throughout the district and provide women with the center's free services.

Palmetto Women's Center is working to lower the number of abortions in South Carolina and supporting women as they choose life for their children. I

applaud the work that pro-life pregnancy centers are doing, and I will continue to be an advocate for them and for life.

CELEBRATING CONGRESSWOMAN MARCY KAPTUR

(Ms. SÁNCHEZ asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. SÁNCHEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate my dear friend, MARCY KAPTUR, from the Ninth District of Ohio.

Earlier today, the Speaker and minority leader honored MARCY for hitting a historic milestone. She is the longest serving woman in the history of the House, which is quite an accomplishment.

Ever since joining Congress, MARCY has been blazing trails, and I have been honored to know her for many years and to work with her on important issues impacting working families.

She has been a steadfast advocate for labor unions, fighting to ensure that hardworking men and women get paid a decent wage, and she has been fighting efforts to ship good American jobs overseas. MARCY knows that labor unions are a critical part of our country, creating a middle class and moving us all forward.

She has also been a strong advocate for our military and national security.

Her work is far from done. I know she will continue to be a powerful voice in our Caucus, and I look forward to many more years working with MARCY on issues that are important to the American people.

THE WALK UP MOVEMENT

(Mr. STIVERS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STIVERS. Mr. Speaker, as co-chairman of the House Civility and Respect Caucus, I want to talk about something that people aren't talking about today.

There is a movement called the walk up movement, where a lot of kids around this country are taking action. They are walking up to the kid who sits alone and asking him to join their group. They are walking up to the kid who never has a voluntary partner and asking them to be the partner. They are walking up to teachers and saying, ''thank you.'' They are walking up to people and just being nice.

Civility and respect is for everyone. It makes a difference in our lives. There are a lot of people recognizing a lot of things today, but I just want to recognize, today, that the walk up movement is constructive, it is helpful, and it is going to change people for the better.

HONORING CONGRESSWOMAN MARCY KAPTUR

(Mr. RYAN of Ohio asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor our colleague from Ohio, Congresswoman MARCY KAPTUR, who has become the longest serving woman in the United States House of Representatives. She is from Toledo, Ohio.

I want to rise today to recognize being able to see someone of her caliber for so many years contribute so greatly. The World War II monument on The Mall here in Washington, D.C., was a long-term project that she started and she finished.

Those of us who represent working class people in Ohio know Marcy, respect Marcy. She is tough, she is smart, and she has one of the biggest hearts in this Chamber.

This is what I love about her: she is not afraid to say the word ''union'' and to recognize the power of working people coming together to bring economic justice to our society.

Mr. Speaker, we salute Ms. KAPTUR's service and look forward to many, many more years ahead working on behalf and for those working class families in Ohio.

HONORING OFFICER RYAN MORTON

(Mrs. HARTZLER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. HARTZLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and to applaud the heroism of Clinton Police Officer Ryan Morton, who gave his life last week protecting the citizens of Clinton, Missouri.

Ryan was beloved by all. He was a veteran who fought in Afghanistan, an ardent Royals fan, and a dedicated law enforcement officer who stepped up to serve his community as a full-time police officer after the tragic death of another Clinton police officer named Gary Michael. Sadly, Officer Morton lost his life 7 months to the day after Officer Michael was killed.

Officer Morton embodied what we all should emulate: dedication, patriotism, service, and a willingness to lay down one's life for others.

We mourn the loss, but we celebrate Ryan's life.

May the Lord comfort his family and the Clinton Police Department, and may his example inspire us all.

NORTH CAROLINA CENTRAL UNIVERSITY MEN'S BASKETBALL TEAM CHAMPS

(Mr. BUTTERFIELD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I rise with great pride to congratulate the North Carolina Central University men's basketball team for winning the 2018 Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference Basketball Tournament. NCCU, Mr. Speaker, is located in Durham, North Carolina. For the second successive year, the NCCU Eagles won the MEAC tournament, by defeating the Hampton University Pirates 71 to 63.

As a proud alumnus of NCCU, I was delighted to cheer the entire team, the players, the coaches, and staff during their outstanding performance in one of the Nation's most popular college athletic tournaments.

The basketball program has benefited from the exceptional leadership of Head Coach LeVelle Moton and Athletic Director Dr. Ingrid Wicker-McCree.

I want to reiterate, Mr. Speaker, how proud I am of the NCCU men's basketball team and the entire Eagle family on this historic win. The hard work of the team and the unwavering support of Eagle pride and Chancellor Dr. Johnson Akinleye, NCCU students, and the faculty and all of the staff have made this accomplishment possible.

I wish this great team much success as they embark upon the NCAA tournament.

Go Eagles.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD the names of the players, the coaches, and the staff.

NORTH CAROLINA CENTRAL UNIVERSITY 2017–2018 MEN'S BASKETBALL ROSTER

Larry McKnight, Jr.; C.J. Wiggins; Zacarry Douglas; Brandon Goldsmith; Jordan Perkins; Reggie Gardner, Jr.; Rashann London; Alston Jones; Alex Mills; Pablo Rivas; Raekwon Harney; Marius McAllister; Dominique Reid; Raasean Davis; John Guerra.

COACHING STAFF

LeVelle Moton, Head Coach, Men's Basketball; Luke D'Alessio, Assistant Coach, Men's Basketball; Reggie Sharp, Assistant Coach, Men's Basketball; Eric Wilson, Assistant Coach, Men's Basketball; LaRon Parks, Director of Basketball Operations.

NIFLA V. BECERRA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HARRIS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HARRIS. Mr. Speaker, before I begin, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the topic of my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Maryland?

There was no objection.

Mr. HARRIS. Mr. Speaker, next Tuesday, March 20, the Supreme Court will hear oral arguments for the case NIFLA v. Becerra. At issue is a California law that requires medically licensed pro-life pregnancy centers to advertise for and to promote the abortion industry by posting notices alerting clients that the State of California provides free or low-cost abortions.

This law blatantly violates the Free Speech Clause of the First Amendment. The government may never compel anyone, including pregnancy centers, to make statements with which they disagree. This is clearly and blatantly unconstitutional, and courts across the Nation agree.

When abortionists sought to compel the speech of pregnancy centers in other jurisdictions, their laws were not allowed to stand. In fact, in 2009, in my home State of Maryland, a Baltimore city ordinance required pregnancy centers to post signs in their waiting rooms stating that they do not refer for abortions. This January, the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled unanimously that this law is unconstitutional. Judge Wilkinson said that the ordinance compels ''a politically and religiously motivated group to convey a message fundamentally at odds with its core belief and its mission.''

Similar laws have been tried in Austin, Texas; Montgomery County, Maryland; and New York City. These laws, too, have been partially or fully invalidated. Even the California law in question has already been found to violate freedom of speech.

While the Federal case was advancing to the Supreme Court, a parallel track was being pursued at the State level. In October of last year, Judge Gloria Trask found that the law violated article I, section 2 of the California Constitution. In fact, she granted an injunction that prevents California from enforcing the law. She said the ''speech required by the FACT Act is unquestionably compelled and content based.'' It forces the clinic to point the way to the abortion clinic and can leave patients with the belief that they were referred to an abortion clinic provider by that pro-life pregnancy center.

□ 1815

Now, instead of seeking to silence pro-life pregnancy centers, people in every community should celebrate and support their work. They provide vital free or low-cost care to vulnerable women and children. So today we are here to talk about how pro-life pregnancy centers help mothers in our communities, giving them real choice.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. LAMALFA), who organized this Special Order with me, for comments he might make.

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, I am proud and pleased to join with Dr. HARRIS in this effort. Now, at this point, 130 of our colleagues have signed on to the petition to the Supreme Court to let them know that we believe this is morally wrong.

What we have: Again, as a California legislator, I have experience with the efforts our State legislators have done in the past and currently with Assembly Bill 775, which is known as the Reproductive FACT Act—fact, indeed—as Dr. HARRIS mentioned, requiring licensed medical centers that offer free pro-life help to pregnant women to then have to post written advertisements promoting the availability of free or low-cost abortions subsidized by the State of California.

It also requires nonmedically licensed centers to note, in multiple languages, that they do not have a medical provider on staff, which is kind of interesting due to the places that provide abortions having lower standards for medical care and standards for the doctors on staff to have to be overseen. It is very interesting, the double standard for that type of healthcare, as you would call it, versus other healthcare centers at abortion clinics. Yet they want to point out that there wouldn't be a medical provider on staff at these pro-life places, which aren't required to have them anyhow.

So the court will consider whether these disclosures required by the Reproductive FACT Act, by the California Legislature, violate the free speech clause of the First Amendment. Indeed, it is a blatant violation. The government has no business forcing private citizens or anyone else to promote an ideology that violates their beliefs.

The whole purpose of these pregnancy centers is to provide free pro-life help to prospective mothers, not to serve as a billboard for abortions. If anyone needed further proof of the moral degradation in California's State government, this is exhibit A.

The Supreme Court must set a precedent, as lower courts have already done, as Dr. HARRIS mentioned. They must set a precedent that we will not watch, we will not stand by and watch as California's liberal elites bully anyone into giving up their constitutionally protected freedoms under the First Amendment.

Indeed, I want to thank Dr. HARRIS and all of the rest of my colleagues you will hear from here tonight for standing up on this issue, helping to not only bail out California's irresponsibility, but, more importantly, to stand up for the rights of people who are trying to save lives and provide positive counseling to those who find themselves in crisis.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Dr. HARRIS for this Special Order.

Mr. HARRIS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California for his comments.

Mr. Speaker, we need to remind people that these pro-life pregnancy centers are private entities. They run on private donations. They provide services at no charge to these mothers. In some pregnancy centers—a lot of them, for instance—they will have a room that is just full of supplies, supplies to help a mother, to help a mother in a crisis pregnancy get through the pregnancy, take care of that child, and to give that child the very precious gift of life.

Mr. Speaker, I would next yield to the gentleman from Michigan for comments he might make on the importance of pregnancy centers. While he is getting to the microphone, let me just tell you a story that one of the pregnancy crisis centers told me. Again, these are centers that frequently now provide ultrasound exams.

And they tell me the story of a woman who called the helpline seeking an abortion, actually. She called the pregnancy center helpline. She knew very little about the emotional, physical, or spiritual repercussions of the choice she was considering. She felt alone, told by her boyfriend to ''get rid of it'' or he was gone.

But the pregnancy center gave her a choice. They scheduled an appointment. She came for the appointment. And after seeing her 9-week-old baby's heartbeat and it move about playfully in her womb, she decided to give this child the gift of life.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. HUIZENGA).

Mr. HUIZENGA. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend from Maryland for his leadership and my friend from California on this.

Mr. Speaker, I can't think of anything that is more important than what we are talking about here in Washington. There are three critical foundations which our Nation was built upon: the freedom of speech, the freedom of conscience, and the right to life.

Thomas Jefferson, the author of the Declaration of Independence and our third President, said: ''No provision in our Constitution ought to be dearer to man than that which protects the rights of conscience against the enterprises of the civil authority.''

What he means by civil authority is government.

Mr. Speaker, as I stand here today in the well of the House Chamber, Americans' freedom of conscience and our right to life is, once again, under attack, and this time in California. This law at issue in California is a classic example of government using its power to force citizens to promote messages that conflict with their personal beliefs.

Pro-life pregnancy centers are a valuable asset to women, to men, to the families, and certainly to those babies. Not only around the country but certainly in Michigan, these centers provide, at no charge, practical advice and resources, information, emotional support for expecting mothers and those fathers and families in need. As leaders of this Nation, we should be offering support, resources, and praises for their efforts, not forcibly targeting these PRCs with unconstitutional government mandates.

Through the work of my wife, Natalie, who served for a number of years on the board of a local pregnancy resource center in west Michigan, I have seen firsthand the overwhelming positive impact that they have on the community. My sister-in-law still serves on that board. This is real impact in real lives, to women and certainly to their babies.

Now, maybe even more importantly, even after that baby is born, these resource centers will oftentimes provide care and clothing and education and emotional support. I know in my own church in west Michigan we regularly have those dresser drives where we fill a dresser for that pregnancy center, and we are providing those diapers and providing that formula. We are there to help those mothers make it through.

Well, the Federal Government should never force or attempt to coerce medical professionals, employers, or resource centers to perform or promote abortions against their beliefs. Our basic freedoms and founding principles were established to protect us from that exact sort of intimidation.

Mr. Speaker, I want to again thank my friends for leading this effort, but these pregnancy resource centers work. We know that. They offer compassionate care to those who need it the most and should be treasured by the government and not targeted by them.

Mr. HARRIS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Michigan for his comments. He brings up a good point. These pregnancy centers don't only help mothers and give them choices; they actually help the fathers as well. A lot of times these fathers just don't know what fatherhood will be like, and they mentor these fathers and, again, begin to give that couple the ability to create a loving household for that child.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) to also speak on this topic.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I, too, rise in support of pro-life pregnancy centers, not only in the Fourth District of Arkansas but all across our country.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Maryland, Dr. HARRIS, and my colleague Mr. LAMALFA from California for hosting this important time so that we can come together and talk about the great work that these crisis pregnancy centers do.

In my hometown of Hot Springs, Arkansas, in 1988, a crisis pregnancy center was formed to assist young parents and to protect innocent lives. In the last 30 years, Change Point Pregnancy Center has saved the lives of 2,821 babies by offering and advocating for alternatives to abortion. This center is comprised of compassionate volunteers and staff who invest significant time and energy in our posterity, making a positive difference for our future.

Mr. Speaker, I know firsthand the quality of these volunteers because my own mother was one of them in the early years of the crisis pregnancy center, when it was just getting off the ground.

In addition to free pregnancy testing and ultrasounds, Change Point offers diapers, wipes, and formula through their Earn While You Learn program, which offers supplies to families who attend parenting classes at the center. Families and churches like mine have been vital in supporting Change Point Pregnancy Center, not only by volunteering but also by donating supplies and baby bottles full of change to help fund the center.

Change Point has taught more than 10,000 classes for both mothers and fathers. As Mr. HARRIS mentioned, these centers are not only for mothers, but they also help fathers and they help parents and families. They give families the tools to succeed rather than the stigma that burdens them.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to support Change Point in their continued mission to provide care and support to families in the Fourth District of Arkansas, and I applaud these centers not only from my home State but all across the country for the great work that they are doing.

Mr. HARRIS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Arkansas for those words in support of these pro-life pregnancy centers. Tonight we are going to hear, during this hour, from some of the real leaders of the pro-life movement; but, in this case, we should really call this the pro-choice movement because that is what these pregnancy centers actually do: they give women a real choice.

A lot of women who come to these pregnancy centers, of course, are pressured or expect that they can't bring these pregnancies to fulfillment, to the birth of a new life. And these pregnancy centers give them the choice to do that. They provide the resources, the support, the mentoring, the prayers that these difficult pregnancies need.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING), a pro-life leader, to speak about these crisis pregnancy centers.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I thank Dr. HARRIS for leading on this Special Order here this evening and appreciate the opportunity to be recognized.

There are a number of things that I would point out. For starters, I chair the Constitution Committee for a reason, and the delivery by Mr. LAMALFA on California's horrible Reproductive FACT Act law—it is not facts, by the way, but it forces pro-life pregnancy centers to provide free advertising for the abortion industry.

I don't think there is any question, if you coerce people to advertise for something that, in the first place, is immoral and directly runs against the convictions of the people who are volunteering their time and those who are contributing their resources to bring about a crisis pregnancy center, which is driven by the hearts of the pro-life community in America—I can hardly think of anything more important than having that happen.

Now, freedom of speech is one thing. You can't limit speech. But for a State to impose speech, that is another level. That goes beyond. That is beyond the pale of the constitutional First Amendment rights.

So as I think about crisis pregnancy centers and what it matters and how it matters to me and the district that I represent: Not long after I was elected to Congress, I went to Gabriel's Corner in Council Bluffs, Iowa. I walked in there, a crisis pregnancy center, a building that was built in what was an empty lot across the street from Planned Parenthood's abortion center. As I walked in there, they had a big picture window they had set up and a kneeler there so that you could be there to look out through that window and pray for those mothers who were going into the Planned Parenthood.

And they said to me in that briefing that if a mother was able to have a 4D ultrasound then—this would be about, say, 13, 14 years ago—that 70 percent of the mothers would decide, once they had seen the ultrasound, to keep the baby.

As we walked through there, we finished the tour, and I said: Where is your ultrasound?

They said: Well, we don't have one.

I said: Why not?

They said: We can't afford it.

They told me the price on it then was $100,000 for a refurbished ultrasound. I said: Let's raise the money for the ultrasound so that you can save 70 percent of the lives of the babies who come in here because of their mother.

So we set about the fundraising effort. I hardly got started and an anonymous benefactor showed up and said: Why are you waiting? Why don't you have the ultrasound?

□ 1830

I answered: We're raising the money.

He said: Well, go buy the ultrasound, but don't tell anybody who I am.

So he wanted to be an anonymous benefactor. We did that; set up the ultrasound. The annual dinner for Gabriel's Corner, the first little baby that was saved by Gabriel's Corner that we knew was brought along to that dinner. And I looked back in that dinner and there was that man sitting in the table clear back at the end, not talking to anybody, but watching. Wow. I have never forgotten what that meant.

Another occasion, an individual came to me and he said: I'm in between careers. I need something to do.

As we discussed this, it came to the foundational idea to establish Mary's Choice in Sioux City, Iowa. They went ahead with that, a Catholic pregnancy center, a crisis pregnancy center. As they followed through, they built that next to—or they developed it next to Planned Parenthood's abortion clinic.

Planned Parenthood couldn't stand the guilt of people praying for them, so they built a big fence, thinking that was going to block the prayers. Well, I think it attracted them instead. The last time I was there, I had my picture taken in front of the Planned Parenthood center in Sioux City. There is a Century 21 real estate sign in front of there, and you can't read ''Planned Parenthood of the Heartland'' any

longer on there except in the glue, where they pulled the sign off. It is for sale, or may be sold by now.

Progress has been made, lives have been saved. The respect for innocent, unborn human life has grown. And to muzzle them, or force a speech, not just limiting their freedom of speech, but forcing speech—so I just looked at my iPhone here, and there are a number of ultrasounds that have been texted to me. I am kind of like, I guess I would say, the number one proponent of procreation in Congress, as far as I know.

Here is one. It says: ''Baby looked good yesterday. Moving like crazy on the ultrasound.''

I answer: ''This is so beautiful. I'll keep my prayers going. This ultrasound is an answer to them. God's blessings.''

Next ultrasound comes along. This is dated just last Friday. I sent back: ''What is the heartbeat rate for this perfect little miracle?''

She answers: ''161 beats per minute.''

And then I say: ''Purring along like a finely-tuned racing motor, that little miracle.''

''Yes, and she's moving all around'' is the answer.

And here is the conclusion of this. I just think this is so important to implant this in our memory.

She answered this way, this mother: ''These ultrasounds are amazing. Watching her stretch and cross her legs, curl up her hand, suck her thumb. At 19 weeks, I can't imagine anyone contemplating abortion would proceed with it after seeing that in their own little baby.''

That little baby is my little granddaughter, and I am going to stand up for life so long as I live.

Mr. HARRIS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Iowa for those touching comments. Again, this is about giving mothers choices.

You know, one has to ask the question: Why in the world don't abortion clinics show ultrasounds? What are they afraid of? Are they afraid of giving a woman a real choice, of actually seeing that baby, of denying the fact that it is not a blob of tissue, it is actually a baby with a heartbeat?

It is a baby that moves. It is your child. But they don't get that choice in an abortion clinic. They get it at a crisis pregnancy center.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARRINGTON) for his remarks.

Mr. ARRINGTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Maryland, Dr. HARRIS, for his leadership on the most sacred of issues.

Mr. Speaker, in the shadow of over 60 million precious American lives aborted in the United States, there is light. This light shines through the roughly 2,000 pro-life pregnancy centers in communities across our Nation, including mine in west Texas. These pregnancy centers are dedicated to serving 2.3 million women a year. That is 6,500 a day.

Because of their good work, providing ultrasounds, medical services, and parenting classes, and even ministering to their deeper emotional and spiritual needs, these pregnancy centers save lives, hundreds of thousands of lives.

You see, Mr. Speaker, they believe, like a lot of us do, that all life is a gift from God and deserves their constitutional right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. But now these pro-life pregnancy centers in California are being forced by law to advertise in a way that goes directly against their mission and, more importantly, their conscience.

The State of California mandates that these pregnancy centers disclose how patients can obtain a State-sponsored abortion. California, in my opinion, is abusing the power of the State to force people to post messages they do not believe in and which violate their conscience.

Government coercion of speech or conduct that violates the religious conscience of an individual is in direct violation of the First Amendment. The Founders intentionally listed the right to freely express our religious beliefs first because they recognized the vital role faith in God plays in cultivating a moral foundation necessary for this democratic society.

While this inherent right to religious expression is being undermined, the Constitution could not be clearer on this question. I am confident the Supreme Court will uphold this sacred right against the heavy hand of government coercion.

Mr. HARRIS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas for those comments. He is absolutely right. No matter where you stand on the issue of abortion, you should stand with the First Amendment on the right of an individual not to have their speech compelled by the government; and that is what at stake in this court case.

I want to just thank God that we have a President who understands the importance of these constitutional bases, and one who, I believe, will nominate Justices to the Supreme Court who will continue to uphold the First Amendment and the other amendments to the Constitution.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. HARTZLER), a pro-life leader in the House of Representatives.

Mrs. HARTZLER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman and Representative LAMALFA for hosting tonight's Special Order to draw attention to the wonderful benefits of crisis pregnancy centers.

I would like to share the story of two women. Summer is a smart 17-year-old who is in love with her first love, John. Although their parents are concerned about how serious they have gotten, they spend as much time together as possible. They soon find out that their college plans are in jeopardy when they discover that they are pregnant.

Tanya is a 40-year-old single mom with three kids. She works at a local restaurant as a server, and she gets by with the help of Federal welfare programs. She has been seeing Sam off and on for the past several months, but they recently broke up. Now she finds out that she is pregnant. She can't handle one more mouth to feed. Abortion seems to be the only option.

Summer's and Tanya's situations are different, yet they both can find help and hope through their local crisis pregnancy centers. Like over 2.3 million women and men across America, they can receive pregnancy tests; ultrasounds; parenting classes; and other basic necessities, such as maternity and baby clothing, through these centers. These vital centers are making a huge difference for so many.

Pregnancy care centers provide a safe haven for women in crisis. In other words, they provide a safe haven for pregnant moms who need love and support as they welcome their babies into the world. There are more than 2,300 pregnancy care centers throughout America. Some of these clinics provide medical care, housing for expectant moms and their children, and adoption referrals.

I am thankful for the Shiloh Center in Harrisonville, Missouri, my hometown. The Shiloh Center welcomes moms in difficult circumstances, offering hope and help, enabling each mother to choose life for her baby. Like many other centers, the Shiloh Center provides free pregnancy testing, ultrasound services, counseling, and educational resources.

The Shiloh Center also provides prenatal care for pregnant moms, and ensures that new moms are equipped with baby clothes, diapers, and formula for their little ones.

There are thousands of these centers across America. I would like to highlight the wonderful pregnancy care centers in my district: Crossroads Pregnancy Resource Center in Warsaw, Missouri; My Life Clinic in Columbia, Missouri; Pregnancy Health Center Lake of the Ozarks in Camdenton, Missouri; Door of Hope Pregnancy Center in Clinton, Missouri; New Beginnings Women's Center in Warrensburg, Missouri; Pregnancy Support Center in Lebanon, Missouri; Birthright of Sedalia in Sedalia, Missouri; Free Women's Center of Pulaski County in Waynesville, Missouri; Birthright of Moberly in Moberly, Missouri; Birthright of Nevada in Nevada, Missouri; and Choices Pregnancy Center in Marshfield, Missouri.

I am grateful to each of these centers for the countless hours of community service and client care lovingly offered to women like Summer and Tanya and thousands in similar circumstances experiencing challenging life circumstances. They are bringing practical help and hope, and that is the best story of all.

Mr. HARRIS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. HARTZLER) for her comments.

Just to remind people, you know, there are things you find in a crisis pregnancy center you just don't find in your local Planned Parenthood. Almost all of them will have a room where donated clothing—clothing that, you know, most of it used. Yeah, that is the way it is. People who have had children, their children are grown. They will donate their clothing to a pregnancy center to help those mothers who need help, mothers who perhaps feel they can't financially afford to have a child because they have to buy clothing for a child, they have to buy diapers. These pregnancy centers give them a real choice.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX), another pro-life leader in the House of Representatives.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HARRIS) for leading this Special Order tonight and for yielding to me.

Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize the life-affirming and lifesaving work done across the country by pro-life pregnancy centers.

I have the privilege of representing the New Hope Pregnancy Compassion Care Center in Yadkinville, North Carolina; and I am proud to share the testimony of a young woman who perfectly encapsulates what these care centers do.

She writes: ''The day I found out I was pregnant, I was very upset and didn't know what to do. I had so many different emotions and knew that it was going to be very hard, especially with me still being in college. I didn't know how I was going to tell my parents, my family, or my church. After having two positive pregnancy tests, I decided to go to Compassion Care Center. This was one of the best decisions I could have ever made.

''When I got there, I took another pregnancy test and it was positive. After that, I ended up having an ultrasound. After I seen my little baby on the ultrasound, I was lost for words. I had so many emotions and felt like I had no one. After my ultrasound, I ended up talking to a staff person about life and about this new baby. I told her how scared I was to tell my parents and how bad of a person I felt because of this. Even though this baby was not planned by me, God had planned it for me. She explained to me that even though I was still in college and still living at home, that she knew that I could do this and get through this. After we talked for a while about my life, the new baby, and religion, we prayed together.

''I ended up going home after that and telling my parents. It was very hard for them to cope with at first, but eventually they accepted it. I started going back to Compassion Care every week after that to take classes that offered videos about pregnancy and babies. Watching those videos helped me so much because it was a lot of new information that I did not know.

''I earned points every time that I came to watch these videos by watching them and doing homework sheets. The points I earned I could use to buy stuff in the store. The store had many different items that I could get. I got maternity clothes, baby clothes, diapers, wipes, and toys. These items helped me tremendously.

''Without Compassion Care offering these classes and items, I wouldn't have known what to do. I have learned so much stuff that I didn't know before and they have given me the best support. I absolutely love everyone there and appreciate everything that they have done for me. I just recently had my daughter, and she has become my entire life.

''I know one thing, though, if I would have not been involved with Compassion Care Center, I would not have been able to do this. They were a lifesaver and I cannot express enough how thankful I am that they were there for me every step of the way.''

Mr. HARRIS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from North Carolina for comments.

Again, just reminding, as the gentlewoman said, these are centers that provide true resources to women at a time when they are very, very vulnerable. I can't imagine why a city council or a State legislature, or any jurisdiction, or any legislature would want to—what amounts to—close these centers down, because these are people who believe abortion is wrong.

□ 1845

They are not going to refer people for abortions. That is the bottom line. They will close their doors before they will send someone to something that they think is morally reprehensible, and the last thing the State should do is compel them to ever do that. Why we would want to close these centers down that are so vital to our communities is a puzzle to me.

Mr. Speaker, I yield as much time as he may consume to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. NEWHOUSE) for his comments.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Maryland for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak in support of the First Amendment free speech rights of pro-life pregnancy centers across the Nation. I want to thank my colleagues, Congressman ANDY HARRIS as well as Congressman DOUG LAMALFA, for leading this Special Order this evening.

Mr. Speaker, our Declaration of Independence proclaims that life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness are God-given rights of all people. If we truly believe that, then we must be consistent that the right to life is inherent for every person, born or unborn.

National Institute of Family and Life Advocates v. Becerra is a case before the Supreme Court that centers on the right of free speech of pro-life licensed medical centers. Under California's State law, these centers are forced to violate their conscientious objections and post written advertisements for free or low-cost abortions subsidized by the State.

I would ask: What could be more deeply offensive to any person who shares the strongly held belief that abortion takes innocent lives?

I believe that this unjust law violates First Amendment protections under our Constitution, and the ramifications of this Court decision will be felt across the Nation.

There are nearly a dozen crisis pregnancy centers in central Washington State, and most are in the Fourth Congressional District, which I represent. Life Choices Pregnancy Medical Center in Yakima, which I recently visited, is a pregnancy medical center that provides pregnancy testing, medical consultation, STD testing, and adoption referrals for expectant mothers.

Crisis pregnancy centers exist to support mothers, fathers, and their children. Many provide free material resources for young families and ongoing parental support. These centers exist to further the progress and protection of innocent life.

I signed onto the amicus brief supporting NIFLA with more than 140 colleagues because States do not have the right to force private individuals or entities to compel speech that violates their conscience.

I am proud of the House of Representatives' work to protect the sanctity of life, such as the Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act, which I supported, to ensure that children who survive an abortion or an attempted abortion are given proper medical treatment. Today I stand with my colleagues to be a voice for the voiceless and to stand for the right of free speech of all who believe in the sanctity of life.

Mr. HARRIS. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Washington for those comments. He points out that each of our districts have numerous pregnancy centers, usually. In fact, crisis pregnancy centers outnumber abortion clinics three to one. These are valuable resources in anyone's district, in any town, any county.

What is at issue here is, if you had a nonprofit running a recreation center in your neighborhood and it provided resources to troubled teenagers after school, this would be like the State telling that recreation center, ''Do you know what? You have got to promote a certain religion in your recreation center,'' or, ''Do you know what? You have got to put out certain political pamphlets of one political party on your desk when people come in the door.'' We would be incensed with that. This is exactly what California is attempting to do with this law to these pro-life crisis pregnancy centers.

With that, I yield as much time as he may consume to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. WILLIAMS) for his comments.

Mr. WILLIAMS. Mr. Speaker, I thank Dr. HARRIS for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this time to recognize pro-life pregnancy centers and all the good they do for mothers and their unborn children.

As a God-fearing father and grandfather, I have always believed that life begins at the moment of conception. No one should ever be forced to promote the abortion of an unborn baby against their will.

Rather than protecting free speech, a constitutional right, the Federal Government is extorting speech by forcing these pregnancy centers to contradict their pro-life message.

During my time in Congress, I have visited multiple pro-life pregnancy centers around the 25th District of Texas. In particular, I would like to highlight the Austin Pregnancy Resource Center and the Cleburne Pregnancy Center, both of which I have been to.

These outstanding centers provide resources, information, and emotional support for those soon-to-be moms. They also provide after-care for moms and their baby, such as supplies, clothing, and education, as we previously heard. Women deserve to know there are better options than abortion and that there are facilities out there to help them.

The bottom line, Americans and organizations should not be forced by the government to promote ideas that conflict with their beliefs. As a steadfast pro-life supporter, I will continue advocating for the rights of the unborn and the centers that fight for them.

In God we trust.

Mr. HARRIS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas and, again, remind everyone that these are such valuable resources in their towns and their neighborhoods.

I yield as much time as he may consume to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. JOHNSON).

One thing about Congress is we have people with all different areas of expertise, but on this particular issue, the gentleman from Louisiana brings particular expertise because of his background as a lawyer and one who has defended religious liberty in courtrooms here in the United States, protecting that very important right given to us in the First Amendment that is at issue, at issue in this California case.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I thank Dr. HARRIS for this time this evening and all of our strong colleagues who are standing with us today for the Constitution and for the sanctity of human life.

You know, Psalm 127 says:

Children are a heritage from the Lord, a reward from him.

For most women, of course, finding out they are pregnant is certainly a beautiful moment in their life. Often, it is an answer to years of prayer. However, of course, there are times when the heavy responsibility of carrying a child can bring uncertainty. That is why the work of thousands of pro-life pregnancy centers throughout our Nation is so vital.

Hundreds of thousands of women have sought the guidance and the services of these pregnancy centers nationwide, and they have been embraced and supported with unconditional love and care throughout their entire pregnancies. These centers serve the woman, the child, and their whole family.

There are more than six pregnancy care centers in Louisiana's Fourth Congressional District—that is my district—from the Community Care Center, the Northwest Louisiana Crisis Pregnancy Center, and Mary's House in the northern part of our district to the Community Pregnancy Center, the New Life Crisis Pregnancy Center, and the Cenla Pregnancy Center in the southern part of our district. These centers work day in and day out to serve our communities. I know these folks well. They are selfless servants down in the trenches.

Over the past two decades, I have provided pro bono legal services to almost all of these centers and many more around the country, and I have often defended their causes in court because I believe so very strongly in what they do: they save lives and they provide critical care, like performing ultrasounds and counseling services and parenting classes and so much more, and they do this at zero cost to the persons who are receiving these vital services.

They also do it with zero Federal funding, by the way, and they save their clients and taxpayers hundreds of thousands of dollars every year.

As fathers and mothers and sisters and brothers and friends, I think Members of Congress have to stand with these pregnancy care centers throughout our districts, and we ought to support these women and their children and their families, especially in times as precious as pregnancy when they need us most.

As Dr. HARRIS mentioned, on March 20, my former colleagues at the Alliance Defending Freedom will stand before the U.S. Supreme Court, and they will argue on behalf of National Institute of Family and Life Advocates and its affiliated pregnancy centers in California.

All of us ask and expect the High Court to protect the freedom of speech not just for pregnancy care centers, but for anyone who would be forced by the government to speak a message that contradicts their sincerely held beliefs. It is absolutely absurd for the State of California to try to force pro-life centers to provide information on abortion services.

The outcome of this case could not only affect the freedom of speech for every American, it could save countless innocent lives. This is a pivotal moment in our Nation's history, and we pray the Court will uphold our fundamental liberty, the sanctity of every single human life, and the best of our American traditions.

Mr. HARRIS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Louisiana not only for those excellent remarks, but for bringing this kind of expertise to the House of Representatives.

Now I yield as much time as he may consume to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH).

Mr. SMITH is a leader in protecting human rights around the world, from the U.S. House of Representatives, a leader in protecting life and, in this case, giving his remarks about how important pro-life pregnancy centers are to our Nation and our communities and how damaging this law would be.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I thank Dr. HARRIS for his leadership for many, many years. He is an extraordinary physician—Johns Hopkins and so many other places where he has been an anesthesiologist, and we are so grateful for the expertise and precision that he brings. Doctors can focus in a way that makes it so clear and so nonambiguous.

In defense of life, never has that message been more important than now because there is so much fuzziness, so much distortion, and it is about time clarity breaks out when it comes to the abortion issue. We have never had that national debate.

In a way, we have had it in a minor way, in a micro way. Every time a woman goes in and has an ultrasound, she walks away seeing her baby still in utero. The first baby pictures today, as we all know, are not newborns. On the refrigerators all across America, the first baby pictures happen to be unborn babies, and we all are thrilled when we see our children and grandchildren up on the refrigerator as an unborn baby. That is the first thing they see as they begin to comprehend what they are looking at: ''That is me while I was still in Mommy.''

As Dr. HARRIS pointed out in his opening, the Supreme Court does take up this case next week, NIFLA v. Becerra, the California law that requires medically licensed pregnancy centers to advertise for the abortion industry by putting up notices. Telling clients where to get free and low-cost abortions is an egregious—an egregious—violation of the First Amendment Free Speech Clause.

The government should not compel, should not coerce an organization or organizations and the people behind them to facilitate the dismemberment and chemical poisoning of unborn children, which is exactly what abortion is. The sophistry of choice cloaks the deed, and the deed is all about taking that child apart through dismemberment or through a chemical poison.

Dr. HARRIS spoke earlier about ultrasounds. We know that when abortion is done, many types of abortions, they use an ultrasound. Ultrasound-guided abortions make it easier for them to dismember the child. And it was Abby Johnson who ran a clinic, was director of a clinic in Texas for about 8 years, a Planned Parenthood

clinic, who quit when she finally saw on that screen an ultrasound-guided abortion and was repelled and repulsed by how that child was being killed by a so-called physician. She was repulsed. She became a very strong pro-lifer since then.

Let me say one thing about pregnancy care centers. There are about 2,752 in the country, according to Heartbeat International, and the numbers are growing. There are many in my district, like Dr. HARRIS said are in his as well.

A few years ago, my wife and I went to a pregnancy care banquet in Middlesex County, New Jersey. Two women got up and spoke so eloquently and with tears in their eyes about how they were scheduled and actually en route to the abortion at the clinic, and there were these compassionate women, selfless women who said: Please reconsider. Please take a look at the alternatives. We will help you.

Both of those women turned around, two different times, and went back and had their babies.

With tears in their eyes, two young girls got up a little later, and at first we thought they were just going to talk about how committed they were to life. They talked about school and sports and boys, but at the end of their talk, they looked at the director of the pregnancy care center and her volunteers and thanked them for being there outside that abortion clinic that day, the day that their moms were scheduled to abort them.

Mr. Speaker, in an amicus brief submitted by a head of the NIFLA v. Becerra oral arguments, 13 women told their stories of the care and the hope that they received from pregnancy care centers, and here, briefly, is Angela's story.

Angela grew up in a very difficult household and turned to drugs when she was 14 years old. Angela continued to wrestle with addiction and, at 31, discovered she was pregnant. Although she made an appointment for an abortion, she decided to keep the baby.

Because of her addiction and the circumstance of her pregnancy, she felt she could not turn to her family for support, so she found a pregnancy care center. This one was in New York.

At her first appointment, staff showed Angela her baby through an ultrasound.

□ 1900

Mr. Speaker, let me remind you that Dr. Bernard Nathanson, the cofounder of NARAL, who said, ''I have come to the agonizing conclusion that I presided over 60,000 deaths,'' was one of leaders in the sixties and seventies in promoting abortion throughout this country, and was very effective at it. When he became pro-life, he said:

If wombs had windows, if every woman prior to an abortion would see an ultrasound of her baby, she would run out of that clinic.

Well, the pregnancy care center people in New York showed Angela the ultrasound, and she was enamored, touched deeply by the baby—her baby—that she saw on the screen.

They met with her weekly as the pregnancy progressed, always staying by her side, and a staff member was with her in the hospital when she delivered.

After Angela gave birth to her son, Cameryn, the staff helped her to enroll in WIC and to reach out to New York's Department of Social Services.

She continued to come to the pregnancy center—this is all in the friend-of-the-court brief—for parenting courses and for support in staying clean of those drugs that had so hurt her life.

She writes:

I always thought that people were fake, but they are genuine, particularly at the center. This is who they really are. They will help me. And they are helping to raise my son.

Looking forward to life now, she credits the center with giving her support so that she doesn't turn back to drugs.

Women and children across our Nation share similar stories. I have heard many, many of those stories over my time in the pro-life movement. And every time you meet one of those women—because we argue, Dr. HARRIS and I and all of those in the pro-life movement, that there are two victims in every abortion. The obvious is the dead child, who is dismembered or chemically poisoned; and the mother.

And pregnancy care centers are all about life affirmation, loving them both. And to be told by California, ''You must advertise how to kill that baby,'' when you are about loving them both, like I said at the beginning, is an egregious violation of the First Amendment. And I do believe, and I know Dr. HARRIS and others on our side of this issue believe, that the Supreme Court will see that as such and render that law moot.

Mr. HARRIS. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from New Jersey very much for his comments.

It is a shame that here in the United States, with the freedoms that we have guaranteed in our Constitution, that this even has to come before a court. It is so clear that it is unconstitutional to compel speech against someone's beliefs—political, religious beliefs. These are what our Nation is founded on, and to compel these clinics to do this is something that shouldn't even enter the thoughts of anyone.

Again, we would never compel any other nonprofit existing on donations and the neighborhood providing things to people in those neighborhoods and communities. We wouldn't think of compelling, again, political speech. We wouldn't think of compelling religious activity.

Yet, here, California attempts to compel these volunteers, these clinics, who work on providing such a valuable choice to the women in their community, to essentially refer for an abortion that is against all the deeply held beliefs of these individuals.

Mr. Speaker, I want to read the stories of some of the women who go to these clinics, because this really is about choice. This is about institutions in a community that offer true choice. Now, these are stories from the pregnancy centers in my community.

So let me first tell you about Miranda. Mr. Speaker, 19-year-old Miranda came to this pregnancy center with her boyfriend and learned she was 9 weeks pregnant. Miranda worked 9 hours a day as a cashier at a Home Depot. She, honestly, was not happy with the positive results of her test. She didn't think she could raise a baby, and nobody had any faith in her.

You see, a year earlier, Miranda had had an abortion. She still cries at the recollection and feels the pain of what she had done. She didn't want to make that choice again, but her circumstances hadn't changed, and she felt that that is what she had to do.

Now, the volunteer counselor praised Miranda for working full time and getting her GED. The volunteer counselor explained how Miranda could obtain healthcare, and how that clinic's Earn While You Learn Program would educate her on prenatal care and parenting, as well as provide her with much-needed baby supplies once the baby was born.

Then Miranda saw the fetal models depicting a 9-week-old fetus. She couldn't believe what she was seeing. She asked so many questions, like: When does the heart start beating? Would it be possible for her to hear the beating heart? When does the baby start kicking?

You see, Miranda explained that the abortion clinic she had been to a year before never told her about the development of the baby. She had been 15 weeks pregnant at the time she aborted.

It was so surprising for her to see the truth in those baby models. Nobody ever told her that her baby had been so fully developed. Miranda said that the best part about coming to the pregnancy center was that they ''told her she could do it.'' You see, she had never heard that before. Nobody had ever told her that. She had a real choice now.

Here is a story about Laura. When Laura came to the center 2 years ago, she was feeling nauseated and miserable. The timing of her pregnancy couldn't be worse. She had recently discovered that her mother had been diagnosed with late stage liver disease.

Laura, too, was post-abortive. Her previous abortion was a terrible experience that left her emotionally scarred, of course, as it leaves many women.

She didn't want to have another abortion, but felt she had no choice. She wanted to be there for her mom during her mother's time of need.

Now, the volunteer advocate in the clinic spent lots of time just listening to Laura. It became clear that Laura

really wanted to keep her baby but was lost in trying to figure out how.

Mr. Speaker, this is a recurring story in these pregnancy centers. There is a reason why they used to be called crisis pregnancy centers. These are women frequently in crisis who want to have that choice but don't see the way out of their circumstances.

Well, this counselor helped Laura navigate through the muddy waters of her life and envision a future with her child.

Soon, Laura's fear began to subside. A sonogram revealed a 7-week-old baby. In a tearful voice, Laura said: ''That is my baby.''

Since then, Laura has returned to the center weekly, participating in their prenatal education classes. She actually moved in with her mother so she could help her through her illness. Laura's hope is that her mom will be strong enough to hold the baby and spend her last days on Earth with her grandchild.

Mr. Speaker, that is the kind of hope that pregnancy centers give women and their families. And, often, two lives are saved in these pregnancy centers: the child's and the mother's.

An unplanned pregnancy can provide an opportunity and inspiration for a woman to get her life back on track; in these two cases, to actually start the family. A pregnancy can give a woman a reason to live, to take care of that child; a reason to go back to school to finish her education, as we heard about Miranda; a reason to reconcile with her family.

As a father of five, and everyone who has been a parent knows this: we know how parenthood truly fundamentally transforms a person well before the child is born.

From the time you know that you are going to have a new baby in the family, as well as every moment afterward, life is precious, life is priceless. Pregnancy centers support women during every step of that journey of providing a new life, a gift from God.

Mr. Speaker, next week, the Court will hear a case that perhaps threatens the very existence of crisis pregnancy centers and pro-life pregnancy centers in the United States. I hope that those nine Justices have the wisdom to see that, in America, that a jurisdiction—whether it is California or Baltimore, Montgomery County, or Austin, Texas, or any jurisdiction—that has tried to compel speech in these pregnancy centers is violating our constitutional rights and, worse than that, is really affecting valuable resources in our community, the most valuable resource a woman with a crisis pregnancy can have.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

HONORING CONGRESSWOMAN MARCY KAPTUR, THE LONGEST SERVING WOMAN IN THE HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MAXINE WATERS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, as this month is Women's History Month, it is my honor to rise today to recognize my distinguished colleague, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR), as she becomes the longest serving woman in the history of the United States House of Representatives.

On March 18, 2018, Congresswoman KAPTUR will have served in the House for 35 years, or a total of 12,858 days.

While Congresswoman KAPTUR earns a notable place in American history for her length of service, her true accomplishment is the profound impact that she has had on this Nation through her legislative work, her leadership, her representation of the northern Ohio district, and her steadfast commitment to addressing critically important issues.

I think about Congresswoman KAPTUR every evening that I am in Washington, D.C., because when I leave the Capitol, I drive past the marvelous beautiful World War II national memorial, which would not exist but for the tireless work of Congresswoman KAPTUR.

After being approached by a constituent, Congresswoman KAPTUR first proposed legislation in 1987. She began a yearlong effort to have that legislation enacted into law, and turned the World War II monument into a reality.

Congresswoman KAPTUR's commitment to that project symbolizes what her colleagues know about her. MARCY KAPTUR is one of the hardest working Members of the United States Congress, and she is one of the most dedicated advocates for the people and the values that she represents.

Congresswoman KAPTUR is a community organizer and a serious public policymaker. She serves on the House Appropriations Committee, where she is an incredibly powerful voice for appropriate spending levels for programs and projects important to working families across the country.

She serves as the ranking member on the Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development, and Related Agencies, where she has been tremendously impactful on promoting U.S. energy independence and the protection of the natural resources.

Congresswoman KAPTUR previously served on the Committee on Banking, Finance and Urban Affairs, which is now known as the Committee on Financial Services.

□ 1915

As the current ranking member of the Financial Services Committee, I am grateful that Congresswoman KAPTUR has not lost interest in financial issues. In fact, she has remained extremely engaged on issues pertaining to Wall Street. She has been a leader in responding to issues that arose or were painfully identified during the financial crisis.

Congresswoman KAPTUR and I regularly speak about financial services matters. She shares articles and materials with me about key individuals on Wall Street. She finds and shares information with me on individuals' and firms' involvement in creating financial products or engaging in activities that might be harmful to consumers.

I am thankful to have the benefit of her thoughts on these matters. Congresswoman KAPTUR has the courage of her convictions even in the face of fierce opposition. Since the 1990s, the Congresswoman has been a proponent for the reestablishment of the Glass-Steagall barriers between investment banking and traditional depository banks. Although her legislation on this matter has been considered controversial, Congresswoman KAPTUR has stood by her convictions out of a sincere desire for protecting working families and Main Street over the interests of Wall Street.

Congresswoman KAPTUR supports policies that are good for her district without hesitation. For instance, she fought tirelessly to combat threats to Lake Erie. Congresswoman KAPTUR is a strong advocate in so many areas like national security, energy independence, and support for the Armed Forces. Her attention to important issues, her dedication, her skills as a legislator, and her work ethic should serve as an example for all public servants. I am proud and honored to call MARCY KAPTUR not only my colleague, but my friend.

So I would like to say congratulations to Congresswoman MARCY KAPTUR for taking her place in American history as the longest serving woman in the House. I would like to say to the Congresswoman that I am not so sure that I should have worked with others to sneak up on her tonight and make this a surprise, and I know that, in doing that, she has been sitting there thinking about working on and coming up with things that should be said about Wall Street. But tonight we are talking about MARCY KAPTUR, we are not talking about Wall Street. We will talk about that later on.

But let me just say that the gentlewoman has been a wonderful and extremely acknowledgeable voice and someone who understands the history, not only of Wall Street, but many of the players who have played over the years who were responsible for some of the problems that caused us to have the recession that we got involved in in 2008.

So I thank the gentlewoman for her caring about Main Street, and I thank the gentlewoman for knowing and spending time on these financial issues

despite the fact she has so many other things on her plate. Again, I feel very honored to be her friend.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN).

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, it is not easy to fool MARCY KAPTUR, but we pulled it off. She thought we were going to talk about Wall Street? We are going to talk about Main Street. In that regard, I think it was appropriate for me to bring this.

MARCY, do you recognize this?

It was 30 some years ago that MARCY KAPTUR and I went to Japan, and she had a spark plug made in Toledo. This is an old one, so it is safe. She took it to Japan because it was impossible to export from the United States a spark plug to Japan. They excluded our products completely.

So MARCY and I went over; and everywhere she went, she had a spark plug. People thought it was because she is kind of a spark plug. But, instead, again, it was because of the exclusion of any product made in the U.S. going to Japan. They blocked it out while they had a completely open market. That began a struggle that went on and on and on. MARCY never gave up, and we still haven't given up. She was one of those among us, and we joined together to say that trade is vital, but it has to work both ways. I may give this to the gentlewoman afterwards.

I just say this with deep feeling because of her deep feeling. We spent days and days in Japan and came back and spent days and days, and we pleaded with administrations: let there be reciprocity when there wasn't.

So I am afraid MARCY has done so much that it is forgotten what she was doing some years ago. But she was a pioneer in saying that when it comes to trade, expand it, do so in a way that is reciprocal, and do so in a way that is fair that remembers Main Street.

Secondly, I want to talk about another activity I have been privileged to work on with MARCY KAPTUR. There has been reference to her heritage. Marcy never forgot her roots in Ohio, and she never forgot her family's roots overseas—never. Indeed, her deep feelings about democracy—it was in Ukraine that she and I worked on—really reflected the depth of her feeling about democracy and the United States of America. So together we put together the Ukrainian American Caucus, and she has been the spark plug in that caucus.

I think both activities reflect so much about MARCY KAPTUR, her intelligence, combined with her deep feeling. She has never forgotten where she came from, and she has taken that remembrance, that remembering, and essentially took it into action in this place.

So we will talk about Wall Street some other day. But we are here on behalf of so many to tell Congresswoman KAPTUR that her career has been so distinguished.

I have a special duty here. She and I are the two people remaining in the class that came in. I think there were 81 of us, and the gentlewoman has never, never failed with the same enthusiasm with which she came. What a tribute that is to the gentlewoman and her character.

I finish with this. MARCY remembered her roots, and also that meant deep feeling about family. Her love for her mother and her dedication to her well-being was something that I think pervaded her life, and it spilled over into all of ours.

So, I say to MARCY, with this spark plug and everything else, I am honored to come today speaking for myself and so many others: job well done, but you are still doing it.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY).

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, let me first thank the ranking member of the House Financial Services Committee, Representative MAXINE WATERS, for calling us together to honor someone whom I consider to be a great American.

I rise today to honor this great public servant, a trailblazer in this House, the longest serving female Member in the history of the U.S. House of Representatives, my great friend, the gentlewoman from Ohio, Congresswoman MARCY KAPTUR.

Congresswoman KAPTUR is more than just a senior member of the House Appropriations Committee. She is a mentor to many of us, including me.

The Congresswoman rose from a humble, hardworking family in Toledo to become a champion for jobs with justice, women in the workplace, children's healthcare, and strengthening Social Security and Medicare.

She also is one of the most respected voices for human rights and freedom around the world, especially for Ukraine as it faces military aggression and constant threats from the Russian Federation.

Congresswoman KAPTUR also shares my absolute commitment to protecting wilderness areas, our national shorelines and forests, and standing strong against those special interests who would sacrifice clean air and safe water for short-term profit.

Finally, Congresswoman KAPTUR shares my lifelong interest in history and helping Americans understand that we all stand on the shoulders of the brave men and women who came before us. That is why she was one of the earliest advocates for the World War II Memorial, a long overdue tribute to the Greatest Generation who defended freedom at its moment of greatest peril and saved the world.

Congresswoman KAPTUR continues to stand tall for seniors, veterans, working families, and the core values of the people of Ohio. Her hard work is greatly respected on both sides of the aisle, and I am truly blessed to call her my good friend.

There is one story I would like to relate on a personal note, and we discussed it today at her reception earlier. During my college days, I was a full-time worker in this body. I was a member of the staff of the Office of the Doorkeeper. My door was the west door on the Republican side because Tip O'Neill did not want me to congregate with my dad who was a Member of this body. Our job was to memorize the picture book of every Member, especially the incoming freshmen. In the winter of 1982, I had to memorize her picture to know who she was to be able to identify her. Back in those days, life was simpler because we were the security for this floor. So that is how I first met MARCY KAPTUR. I will always call her my friend.

Congresswoman, congratulations on reaching this historic milestone in service to your constituents and our country. God bless you.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. CHABOT), who is the dean of the Ohio delegation.

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from California for yielding.

First of all, I am glad that the gentlewoman isn't talking about Wall Street this evening. The gentlewoman always wants to talk about Wall Street, and I am glad we are talking about MARCY KAPTUR this evening because she is really special.

□ 1930

This, of course, is in recognition of a fellow Ohioan, MARCY KAPTUR, who will become the longest serving woman in the history of the United States House of Representatives. That is quite an accomplishment. She will be breaking the record currently held by Congresswoman Edith Nourse Rogers, a Republican from Massachusetts, who served from 1925 to 1960.

I think I speak for most Ohioans, regardless of party, when I say we are proud that MARCY has brought this prestigious milestone back home to Ohio.

MARCY has been a stalwart supporter of her constituents, fighting for jobs and fair trade agreements. That is why her constituents continue to elect her to represent them in this body every 2 years, even though we have been trying every 2 years to knock her off. We just haven't been able to do it, she is that good.

Like me, MARCY grew up in a working class family. She was the first member of her family to attend college, earning degrees from the University of Wisconsin and the University of Michigan. Graduating from these two universities, one of which is not even recognized in some parts of Ohio, had to be a tremendous hurdle to overcome when first running to represent Ohioans. Yet MARCY continues to earn the trust of her constituents, and that says a lot about who MARCY KAPTUR is as a person.

As the son of a World War II veteran myself, I would submit that perhaps MARCY's most enduring accomplishment was her 17-year battle to get a World War II Memorial built on The National Mall.

I just wish that it had been completed in time for my father to have seen that. I know he would have been really excited about it. Unfortunately, he passed away in 1998, before that wonderful memorial was completed, but I know he is looking down and sees it. I really appreciate all the other World War II veterans that do get to see it.

Through a number of setbacks, MARCY KAPTUR never wavered in her support for that memorial. Every time I meet with a group of World War II veterans who have flown in on an honor flight—which was another Ohio creation, I might add—to visit the memorial, I am reminded of MARCY's dedication and determination to make that happen. We truly owe her a great deal of credit for the beautiful tribute to the Greatest Generation that the World War II Memorial has become. As dean of the Ohio Republican delegation, I would like to express how proud the Members in this Chamber are for this historic accomplishment.

Even though we do not agree on everything—or, I guess, even very much sometimes—and have been known to have a few disagreements here and there, I am proud that she is not only breaking the record for the longest serving woman in this body, but she is doing so as a Representative of our great State, the great State of Ohio.

We are really proud of MARCY. We are happy that she has accomplished this. We hope she will be around here for many years to come. I hope I am here, as well, to continue to serve with her. Obviously, all of our constituents get to make that decision every 2 years.

Congratulations, MARCY. I speak on behalf of all my colleagues within the Ohio delegation as well as on behalf of an awful lot of other Republicans in the House who respect you greatly.

Congratulations.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, it is now my pleasure to yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO).

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I thank Ranking Member WATERS for contriving this colloquy on Financial Services.

It is my distinct honor to join my colleagues in celebrating this milestone in recognizing Congresswoman MARCY KAPTUR's remarkable record of service to her constituents, her country, and to every woman in every corner of this country. I would add, every man and every child.

On the long, dark road to equality, role models are the street lamps that light the path forward. For the last 35 years, MARCY KAPTUR has been a role model and a source of light for millions of young women and young men. In other words, even after 35 years in this body, she is still woke, just like the ranking member.

Ms. KAPTUR has championed progress on several important issues: protecting our water and our air from pollution, protecting consumers from predatory financial institutions, honoring the incredible sacrifice of our veterans—we have heard at length her work behind the World War II Memorial—and supporting working families so they have a fair shot in this economy.

But it is very much possible, and I would say very much probable, that her greatest accomplishment has not yet been realized. I am confident this Chamber will someday be filled with women—someday soon—who are inspired to run for Congress by the longest serving woman in history.

MARCY has taught me the value and the way to fight for the little guy. I remember this one moment on a Sunday evening when I was catching a few hours of a television show. I have very little time to watch TV, but I had a moment to watch the John Oliver show. I don't even think MARCY knew that she was the subject of that evening's broadcast. I will just briefly say that it was about John Oliver totally disgusted by the way little poultry farmers had been put at a disadvantage by the way we had rigged the rules here in Washington.

MARCY was the hero of the show when they showed her standing at a podium much like this in the Appropriations Committee room trying to unrig the law so it was not so unfair to these poultry farmers. I remember her so passionately standing there saying: All these people want to do is earn an honest living.

I felt that deep in my gut. Here was a Congresswoman standing up for the little guy against the big corporations.

John Oliver whipped the national audience into such a fervor, they were so angry when they saw this happen, and here was MARCY standing up for them. He then accused all the people who rigged the rules, who were defending the rigged rules, of having—I can't even speak about what he said on the floor of the House. I urge you to go see it for yourself. I think you will be quite entertained.

I was so excited, the next morning, on Monday, I saw MARCY on the floor and I said: MARCY, you were great on this show.

She said: What happened?

Then I explained to her. I said: You need to put this on your Facebook page. You are going to get hundreds of thousands of new followers. You need to put this on your website.

But her first concern was this. She said: Oh, I heard the John Oliver show uses bad language.

That typifies MARCY KAPTUR: decent, collegial.

MARCY has taught me many important lessons about the value of this institution. I know she loves the Congress. I know she loves this House of Representatives and wants to uphold the mores, uphold the norms, norms that are so important in a democracy: it is important to be civil; it is important to speak in ways that are respectful.

MARCY serves as that example to me. It is not just the surface niceties, but the deep values of standing up for the little guy against the big corporations and defending the American Dream for everybody.

Mr. Speaker, I thank MARCY for her service, and I look forward to serving with her many more years.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY).

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman, Congressman WATERS, for pulling this little surprise together.

I thank MARCY KAPTUR. It is so great to be able to stand on the floor of the House and laud one of our great, great Members on her great achievement of serving here for 36 years in the House of Representatives. She continues every day to bring her intelligence and persistence to issues from labor and working people to Ukraine.

Her accomplishments are enormous. She was the first in her family to graduate from high school. She earned a BA and an MA, served in the White House, and now is the longest serving woman in Congress.

MARCY has never forgotten her blue-collar roots. She knows the importance of unions in providing job security and good wages. She has focused on making sure that workers get their earned pension benefits. This is a big issue right now that she is leading the charge on.

I feel, and have felt from the beginning, a special affinity, being a midwesterner and coming to this Congress with these Midwestern values: nothing fancy; it is just about working people who want a good life and deserve to get it.

MARCY can match anybody with her understanding in the details of pension policy. She always stays focused on the fundamental goal of pensions, which is simply making sure that, after a life of hard work, women and men can retire with dignity and security, something that I am afraid is in too short supply today. MARCY is continuing to lead that battle.

MARCY has been an expert on trade policy. I learned that early on in my tenure here in the House. On the 10th anniversary of NAFTA, MARCY, with the help of the Teamsters union, organized a visit and took a group of us first to the border city of El Paso, Texas, to look at and talk to people who had lost their jobs and had moved across the border.

We then crossed the border to Ciudad Juarez, where we actually saw people living in the packing crates of the products they were working to manufacture at the maquiladoras.

So, on both sides of the border, we saw the pain that was caused.

On that trip, we went to Mexico City, talked to leaders, talked to union leaders and political leaders, government leaders. We also went to the city of Puebla and talked to people there. It was a really comprehensive trip that gave us a sense of what happens to people when they are not being considered when policies are being made.

She continues today, as we renegotiate the NAFTA agreement and the administration works on that, to have input on what a really fair trade deal looks like—not just free trade, but fair trade—where it is not just the big corporations, but it is the workers in all the countries, in the United States of America and the workers in countries that we have trade agreements with, and that all the workers get a fair deal.

MARCY fights for people who played by the rules, faithfully going to work every day and making their pension contributions. They are counting on her and us to fight for them and to fight for a middle class in this country to help people who are poor get to the middle class and stay there. Those people—our people—could not have a better champion in this United States House of Representatives, in this Congress, than MARCY KAPTUR of Ohio.

I love you, MARCY.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SPEIER).

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, it is a personal thrill for me to participate in this special hour. I want to thank the gentlewoman from California for doing a very good job of surprising our guest of honor this evening. She did it very well because she did it on policy.

She got Marcy to come here on a night when she should be celebrating, but she didn't hesitate to come down here to talk about what is wrong with Wall Street, which shows you how committed MARCY KAPTUR is.

□ 1945

When I think of MARCY KAPTUR, I think of a string of pearls. She is always providing pearls of wisdom to all of us. We have heard from many Members who have spoken about the fact that she has mentored them. I know when I was a young Member here—young only in time served—that it was MARCY who came up to me a number of times to show support and to provide me guidance.

She also has a very elegant way, a very simple and elegant way that she comports herself. When she talks about issues, she talks with great passion, but with great dignity—again, a reflection of a string of pearls.

She has never forgotten her roots. She has never forgotten her constituents. Now, her blood may be red, but there is a lot of blue running through them because she has always been there for the blue-collar worker. And she oftentimes in caucus is the conscience for all of us because she reminds us about the working class: What are we doing for the working class, lower middle class Americans?

Her commitment to economic justice cannot be lost on any of us because that has been one of the main principles that has really directed her work here and has been a moral compass for her.

So when the financial meltdown happened, MARCY had such a passion for wanting to right this terrible wrong, and she was no longer serving on the Financial Services Committee, but she had a thirst to learn everything she possibly could about what was necessary to reform the system. And I remember her coming to a briefing that I had with some experts, and then she invited me to a briefing that she had with some experts because all she wanted to do was get to the truth of what we needed to do.

She has conviction that she, I think, reflected in all she did through that financial meltdown because she was going to stop at nothing less than wholesale changes to fix the system, because, as many of us felt: never, ever again.

So as I think about the fact that we are celebrating the longest serving woman in the history of the United States House of Representatives, I feel so privileged to say that I know you; that I have served with you. There is no one who is more ethical in this building than you; there is no one more compassionate in this building than you; and there is no one more committed to economic justice in this building.

There has never been, nor do I think will there ever be, anyone who cares about Ohio like MARCY KAPTUR.

MARCY, thank you for being a beacon for all of us to follow. I truly love you, respect you, honor you; and I am truly pleased that we are celebrating a wonderful career here tonight that is only going to continue. But I think we all feel pretty special being part of this celebration.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Wisconsin (Ms. MOORE).

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from California for organizing the ''What is Wrong with Wall Street'' here tonight so that we could have the opportunity to hail one of our true champions and sheroes this evening.

I just, first of all, want to associate myself with all of the comments that have already been made. When you have served for 36 years, we could wax on forever about your distinguished career of public service, so I won't do that.

I just want to focus on one thing that you have done that has really touched me in a very profound way, and that is, as a valued friend and colleague and mentor, your passion for the Great Lakes. From your seat on the Appropriations Committee, and now the cochair of the bipartisan Great Lakes Task Force, you have never ever, MARCY, missed a beat when it came to the Great Lakes. And I am sure that there were times when you have felt like you were a lonely voice out there crying in the wilderness.

There is an old African proverb that says: Water has no enemies. So you would think, given that, that there would be just this plethora of funding and strategies, but there has not been. We have seen the crisis in lead in drinking water, bathing; sportsmen depend on water; agriculture depends on water; and truly, we need a water policy and a policy around the Great Lakes that makes sense whenever we do an infrastructure bill.

Now, for every one of those 18,000-plus days of service in the House, you have been a steward and a champion for protecting not only this environmental treasure, but MARCY also recognizes how much this resource provides for our regional and national economy.

If the Great Lakes region, the U.S. and Canadian provinces, were a separate country, it would have a gross domestic product of $6 trillion, making it the third largest economy in the world. That growth and development would not be possible without leaders with vision and passion like you, MARCY, and so I want to thank you.

I agree with the gentleman who has said that your greatest accomplishments have not even occurred yet, as it pertains to developing the potential for these water resources in the Great Lakes.

I want to thank you for your legacy of working to stop the invasive Asian carp; fighting for safe and clean drinking water; making sure that the Great Lakes get the needed support from the Army Corps of Engineers for their funding, for dredging, and to maintain the critical infrastructure to support commerce; for fighting against efforts to roll back the Clean Water Act; and, certainly, for your vigorous opposition to efforts to kill the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative.

Thank you, MARCY, for your leadership, and I love you dearly.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. TONKO).

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from California for yielding.

MARCY, it is an honor to be on the floor this evening. We have joined together many times to share a message for the American public about the fight for what is right. No one leads that fight better than you. We have assembled here to celebrate the extraordinary career of our great colleague and friend from Ohio, my friend from Ohio, MARCY KAPTUR.

MARCY is a towering giant in the history of Congress. Her legislative achievements are too numerous to count. Her work led the way in the creation of the moving and so powerful World War II Memorial on the National Mall. What great respect for our veterans. And that is who you are, a respectful individual.

MARCY was one of the first Members of Congress to raise the alarm for

America's workers and industries facing unfair competition from trade policies around the world.

She has been a champion of America's farmers, fighting tirelessly to protect the rights of poultry growers and restore some balance to our Nation's increasing consolidated meat industry.

She continues to be a champion and a visionary in the fight to bring down skyrocketing prescription drug costs; to restore stability and good sense to our financial system; and to save the Great Lakes and the millions who rely on their resources from the harmful algal blooms—blooms that threaten to poison their rich waters.

There is no Member in this or any Congress who is more committed to serving the needs of her constituents and her district. While she has proven to be truly formidable to her opponents, MARCY is as kind as she is fierce.

In just a few days, this Sunday, March 18, MARCY will become the longest serving woman in the history of the United States House of Representatives. What a proud achievement. What a proud moment. What a great moment in history to witness and share: 35 years, 2 months and 14 days, but who is counting?

Those numbers are the official numbers that surpass the record set by former Massachusetts Representative Edith Nourse Rogers. Her enduring service has met more than three decades whereby girls have grown up in Ohio and all across America seeing that they, too, could serve and lead in the United States Congress, an impressive example that my friend, MARCY KAPTUR, continues to set.

I am more than pleased and more than a little relieved to say that MARCY is as passionate and driven as the day we met nearly a decade ago.

As the longest serving woman remaining in either Chamber, God willing, in a few years, MARCY will become the longest serving woman in the history of the United States Congress. It is my great hope that I will have the privilege to witness that historic moment, just as I am humbled to share in this one.

I want to thank MARCY KAPTUR for years of our friendship, our collaboration, our conversations, our coaching—her coaching, I should say—on the floor between votes and in Special Orders here on the floor after session, and for always upholding the values we share in service of the American people.

Speaking of values, we cherish the bond that we both hold with a common Polish heritage, something that I know causes her heart to pound nobly and boldly and proudly.

MARCY, you are a unique individual, a one-of-a-kind human being. You are a living legend, a leader with a steel backbone, and a treasure of this Congress and our great Nation.

We say thank you for your passion. We say thank you for your intellect. We say thank you for your integrity, and we say thank you for leading in the walk for justice, social and economic justice, so that all people can be touched by your soulfulness and your kind and loving being.

God Bless you. Congratulations.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas, Representative LOUIE GOHMERT.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend and greatly appreciate a moment to speak.

I guess to borrow a bit from Shakespeare's account of what Marc Antony said: I come not to bury MARCY KAPTUR, but to praise her.

I got to know MARCY back during the economic disaster where investment banks brought us to the brink of ruin. And though we come from different backgrounds and we have different ideas at times about the best way to go forward, I always know that MARCY KAPTUR will be honest with me, that she cares deeply about the country, and that is her driving concern. It is actually easy to talk to people in this body—even across the aisle—when their driving concern is in the best interest of the country.

We shared a passion back after the problems in late 2008, in that I saw someone who was ethical and actually righteous who wanted to see that those who caused the problem that brought us to the brink of ruin were not rewarded, and that also we didn't end up punishing those who had no fault.

I am still concerned that she and I were not able to see that the problems were not rewarded and the innocent were not punished. I am not real proud of how our parties together responded to that crisis, but through all of that, and in the years intervening since, actually 10 years—it was back in 2008—I have come to build my respect for MARCY KAPTUR and know that this is somebody—agree or disagree, and we often disagree—but she is going to be honest, and that she has that passion in her heart to do what is best for the country.

□ 2000

There are people who have attributed the comment to different people over the years. My late mother said that our pastor back in 1951, before I was ever around, used it about a married couple, and he said: If two people agree on everything, one of them is unnecessary.

So here on the floor, it is important that we hear from each other and we get different viewpoints in arriving at what is best for the country. But one thing I have grown to understand and know is that when I talk to MARCY KAPTUR, it is somebody who I know will be straightforward, agree or disagree, will be honest, and will be honorable; and that is not a bad way to approach things.

If we had more people with whom we could have those kind of discussions, there would probably be a lot fewer ulcers amongst our colleagues on this floor and the country would be far the better off for it.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my friend, Congresswoman WATERS, for sharing this opportunity. I didn't realize that my friend, MARCY KAPTUR, was going to set a new record. All I knew is I didn't really care about the gender, but I care greatly about the person and how she has enriched this body by being here.

Mr. Speaker, I am grateful for the opportunity.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members will have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the subject of my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SMUCKER). Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from California?

There was no objection.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, prior to wrapping up this session of friends who care so much about MARCY KAPTUR, I yield to the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) not to talk about Wall Street.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I must say, I was not expecting what just happened. I want to thank the gentlewoman from California, my beloved friend of almost over three decades—in having the deep respect I have for her in her own life before she came to Congress and now as the ranking member on the Financial Services Committee; a very difficult position to hold—for taking this opportunity so late in the evening to commemorate my tenure here in our magnificent U.S. House of Representatives.

Mr. Speaker, I thank every single Member who has come down.

Obviously this is Women's History Month, and we had this announcement today, and I happened to be the victim of it.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the people of Ohio's Ninth Congressional District for believing in me throughout my political career, for teaching me, for helping me to learn more and to understand the travails and the possibilities that were in their minds and hearts. I thank them so very much for that.

As with anyone, we all have our faults and human limitations, but, to the best of our ability, we have tried to uphold the Constitution and to help the American people.

I think back to my very first term in Congress, beginning in 1983. There was a great Congressman from Florida, Claude Pepper. I can still see him down in the well. Probably the most important vote I cast in my first few months in Congress was the refinancing of Social Security. What a great leader he was. Probably not originally from the liberal wing of our party, yet liberals and conservatives came together to do what was right in resecuring Social Security for the next generation.

Congressman LEVIN came to the floor with a spark plug. Our fight has always been to define where our jobs went, and we began to track places where we saw production move beyond our ability to restrain. Places such as I represent became hollowed out in many corners of our community. Since the early 1980s until today, this country has not been able to balance its trade accounts or to write trade agreements that were truly fair, as Congressman LEVIN has referenced. So we hemorrhage at the rate of over half a trillion dollars a year, almost $600 billion annually, because we can't get other markets open, and they take it out of the hides of our people and our communities here in this country.

So if we go back to the 1980s. If you really look at when the numbers began to change, it is not hard to understand why the American people are unsettled and frustrated because of what has happened with the economy.

As I said in remarks earlier today, I was taught by a very great professor of economics at the University of Wisconsin many years ago that economics is not destiny, but it is 85 percent of it. If you really think about that, what we have endured over the last period of my service, three decades—going on four decades almost, we have seen this transformation in production platforms.

Unfortunately, with NAFTA on this continent, as we struggle to find a solution to the immigration issue, the reciprocal of NAFTA in Mexico was the upending of millions of small farmers, millions and millions of people who lived at the poverty level, but they had some way to eke out a living. And when their corn market was destroyed after NAFTA's passage in 1993, it took about a decade; but every year, hundreds of thousands of people lost their livelihood. They were desperate, desperate people.

What are they going to do?

Our grandparents fled to this country from what was greater Poland at the turn of the 20th century because they couldn't feed themselves.

It is the same reason the Irish came, right?

We look at what happened in Mexico as the flip side of NAFTA. We have never been able to fix that as a continent.

Are our leaders that stupid that we really can't face the music and develop adjustment provisions, as Europe did when it brought in Spain and Portugal?

So we look back to the basis, the root of why things have happened and hurt the American people, and we can understand their frustration. So I think I have been a voice for that. It is a problem we haven't fixed yet, but it is one that we need to attend to very carefully, because the American people have paid the price of, really, policies that went awry.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Congresswoman WATERS for surprising me. She and I have fought so hard on prudent lending, prudent banking, and we have served here long enough to see when it wasn't, and when greed took over a gambling mentality rather than a prudent banking mentality, what it did to this country and how hard it was to pick up the pieces.

African Americans lost half of their accumulated wealth after 2008, half, since the founding of the Republic. The pain in those communities is not over. Maybe somebody from Wall Street might tune us in and hear that, but I want to tell them that it isn't fixed yet.

What has happened in many places such as I represent, predatory lenders have moved in, auto title loan companies, scam artists, who are making terrible, terrible exploitative deals with these individuals who simply don't know what those agreements they are signing mean. That is wrong.

If we look at the Latino community, they lost one-third of their accumulated wealth in the financial crash of 2008. And then for those who were the remaining Caucasians and other parts of our population, they lost about one-fifth of their wealth. It was extraordinary loss of capital, of money, of property value that belonged to them.

So sometimes, though, we try, but we can't always fix what is wrong. As we look to the future, our primary responsibility here is to defend liberty, as Congressmen TAKANO and LEVIN and Congresswoman SPEIER and so many others who came down here this evening talked about.

I feel very privileged to work with my colleagues in defending liberty and making sure we have the strongest defense in the world, and try to help those countries that are now being invaded by the Russian Federation, whose citizens simply want to be free and to have a decent life.

Mr. Speaker, I note that one of our colleagues has come to the floor, and I don't want to deny him any ability to speak. Congressman SOTO and I have worked so much on issues of concern to Florida and Puerto Rico and, obviously, trying to fix the bad gerrymandering that happened around the country, so I want to acknowledge his presence here this evening.

I thank all of my beloved colleagues for this great honor.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my family; my brother, Steven, who is doing extremely well after a very serious illness and coming back to us. It means so very much to me. I am hoping he is listening tonight. In memory of all of our family members and my godchildren, some of whom were here today, and all of the people who helped me along the way, there is just no way to properly thank them except to keep trying to do a very good job and to meet the unaddressed needs of this great, great Nation.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Congresswoman WATERS so very much for this great surprise and for being my friend.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, there are some wonderful moments in this institution. There are times when we are not always pleased and we don't feel as if anything is getting done, but then there are times like these when we have the opportunity to pay tribute to and to recognize one of our Members who have made tremendous contributions, someone who loves this institution and has worked hard to ensure that we get the best out of it.

I am just pleased and proud that I have been a part of not only the recognition that we have done today, both in the reception that was held earlier for Congresswoman KAPTUR, and for being able to be on this floor this evening and spend this opportunity with my other colleagues who helped us to understand the vast knowledge and contributions that this Congresswoman has made to this institution and all of the advice and mentoring that she has done for so many.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on this special occasion to commemorate our beloved colleague and next door neighbor, Congresswoman MARCY KAPTUR from the 9th District of Ohio.

March has been designated to commemorate Women's History Month and Congresswoman KAPTUR has indeed made history this month.

First elected to the 98th Congress in 1982, and reelected to the succeeding 17 Congresses, MARCY KAPTUR is now the longest serving woman in the history of the U.S. House of Representatives, breaking the record previously set by Congresswoman Edith Nourse Rogers of Massachusetts.

Congresswoman KAPTUR, a native Toledoan, lives in the same modest house where she grew up.

She is a Polish-American with humble, working class roots.

Her family operated a small grocery store and her mother later served on the original organizing committee of a trade union at the Champion Spark Plug factory in Toledo.

After graduating from St. Ursula Academy, she became the first member of her family to attend college, earning a bachelor's degree in history from the University of Wisconsin (1968) and later a master's degree in urban planning from the University of Michigan.

After working for 15 years as a city and regional planner, primarily in Toledo and Chicago, she accepted an appointment as a domestic policy advisor to President Jimmy Carter.

During his Administration, she helped maneuver 17 housing and neighborhood revitalization bills through Congress.

In 1981, while pursuing a doctorate in urban planning and development finance at MIT, she was recruited by the Lucas County Democratic Party to run for Congress against a first-term Republican.

Although she was outspent by a 3-to-1 margin, MARCY KAPTUR parlayed a strong economic message during the 1982 recession to stage a nationally-recognized upset.

In Washington, MARCY KAPTUR fought vigorously to win a seat on the House Appropriations Committee.

Today she is the ranking member on the Energy and Water Appropriations Subcommittee, which is fitting given that the Ninth

District hugs the Lake Erie coastline from Cleveland to Toledo.

Congresswoman KAPTUR also is the first Democratic woman ever to serve on the powerful Defense Subcommittee.

There, she is a strong advocate for national security, energy independence and adequate support for the armed forces.

She is also a member of the Interior Subcommittee where she fights for clean water programs that protect our Great Lakes.

Earlier in her congressional career, she served on the Appropriations Financial Services Subcommittee as well as the Banking Committee.

She served on the Budget Committee as recently as the 112th Congress.

She has received the Prisoner of War ''Barbed Wire'' Award for her commitment to veterans' affairs.

She has secured funding for a path-breaking study into the incidence of post-traumatic stress disorders and other mental health issues among our armed forces.

And she helped lead a community effort to save the 180th Fighter Wing in Toledo when it was threatened by the base closure commission.

Congresswoman KAPTUR has always shown strong interest in America's standing in the world and its relations with other countries.

She currently serves on the Congressional-Executive Commission on China and co-chairs the Congressional Hungarian Caucus and also the Ukraine Caucus.

A strong supporter of Middle East peace, she directed the first surplus farm commodities in 1999 to support the peace process in Lebanon, Israel and the Palestinian Authority.

Congresswoman KAPTUR remains dedicated to the development of democratic institutions globally.

She has spearheaded private charitable efforts to alleviate suffering in nations such as Ukraine and Vietnam.

As leader on issues related to international trade and human and labor rights, MARCY KAPTUR has led the fight for fair trade laws, dating back to her opposition to the North American Free Trade Agreement.

In 1993, Congresswoman KAPTUR was awarded an Honorary Doctor of Laws degree by the University of Toledo in recognition of her ''effective representation of the community.''

St. Ursula Academy named MARCY KAPTUR Alumna of the Year in 1995.

She is recipient of the Taubman College Distinguished Alumna award from the University of Michigan, making her the first woman so recognized and the first graduate of the Urban and Regional Planning Program to be so honored.

MARCY KAPTUR recently received the Director's Award from the Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University for her commitment to increased understanding and appreciation of the peoples and cultures of Eurasia, Russia and East Europe.

MARCY KAPTUR was named the National Mental Health Association's ''Legislator of the Year'' for her championing mental health and received the 2002 Ellis Island Medal of Honor.

MARCY KAPTUR is also the author of a book, Women in Congress: A Twentieth Century Odyssey that was published by Congressional Quarterly in 1996.

Dedicated to the principle that fiscal responsibility begins in ''one's own backyard,'' Congresswoman KAPTUR has consistently returned money to the federal Treasury.

MARCY KAPTUR refuses to accept Congressional pay raises and donates them to offset the federal deficit and charitable causes in her home community.

MARCY KAPTUR leads the charge on urban agriculture in Congress, she introduced the Urban Agriculture Production Act of 2017, which will create help create jobs, healthier, local food options and opportunities for cities and towns to become part of the food production process.

With all of that said, Congresswoman KAPTUR's kindness, thoughtfulness, and generosity precede her.

When Hurricane Harvey hit the 18th District, she promptly sent my staff a box of doughnuts, knowing they would need that extra push to get through the busy hours ahead.

Congresswoman KAPTUR goes above and beyond her job description as Ranking Member of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development, and Related Agencies.

MARCY KAPTUR worked closely with me to pass several Jackson Lee amendments to Energy and Water Appropriations spending bills to provide funding for flood mitigation studies in Houston and Harris County and was crucial in securing House passage of the supplemental appropriations providing disaster recovery relief for hurricane Harvey victims.

So on behalf of the residents of the 18th District of Texas, I say thank you Congresswoman KAPTUR for being there and standing strong with us in our time of need.

Her compassion shows through random acts of kindness and thoughtfulness ranging from holding the door open for a young staffer to calling to check on the status of the 18th District as she is concerned about the human consequences of extreme flooding—I imagine her background in urban planning plays a role in her attentiveness.

As the Ranking Member for the subcommittee with Jurisdiction over the Army Corps of Engineer, Congresswoman KAPTUR helped in the effort to secure funding allocated to study floods—a crucial program for Hurricane Harvey recovery and future preparedness.

Thank you for your leadership, Congresswoman KAPTUR.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate my friend and colleague Representative MARCY KAPTUR of Ohio on becoming the longest-serving woman in the history of the House. On Sunday, March 18, she will surpass the late Representative Edith Nourse Rogers of Massachusetts, who held the previous record of thirty-five years, two months, and fourteen days. But more than her longevity, Representative KAPTUR has brought to the House her tireless work ethic, her intellect, and her devotion to serving the people of lakeshore Ohio.

A Toledo native and the first in her family to attend college, Representative KAPTUR began her public service career as a member of the Toledo-Lucas County Plan Commission and later as a domestic policy advisor to President Jimmy Carter. When she defeated an incumbent Representative in a stunning upset election in 1982, Representative KAPTUR came to Congress and hit the ground running. She has been a leader in the fight for higher wages, workers' rights, and ensuring access to affordable health care. It was Representative KAPTUR who first proposed the idea in Congress of creating a National World War II Memorial, and she wrote the legislation that eventually authorized its construction on the National Mall. As a senior member of the Appropriations Committee, Representative KAPTUR has been at the forefront of efforts to invest in both our national security and in domestic priorities that help working families access opportunities to achieve economic security and get ahead in Ohio and across America.

I have very great respect for Representative KAPTUR's intellect and her passion for working people and the pain she feels whenever they feel pain. No Member is more committed to drawing attention to and addressing the difficult challenges so many working people experience—not only in her native Ohio, but throughout the middle of our country.

I've been honored to serve alongside Representative KAPTUR, both on the Appropriations Committee and on the Floor of the House, for the past thirty-five years. I look forward to continue working closely with her as Democrats carry forward the fight for economic opportunity, equal justice, and stronger communities.

Ms. FUDGE. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to stand today to congratulate my friend and colleague from the great State of Ohio, Congresswoman MARCY KAPTUR who on March 18th will become the longest serving woman U.S. Representative in U.S. history.

MARCY, for 35 years, has served this nation and the people of Ohio with distinction.

It is my honor to serve with someone that never backs down from a fight and leads on all the things that are important to Ohio and all Americans.

I applaud her for her commitment and dedication to revitalizing our cities, ensuring fair trade deals and good jobs for American workers, increased funding for defense and energy security, and protecting the Great Lakes.

She has accomplished and contributed so much yet never forgot where she came from or the people that have helped her to become.

On behalf of the people of Ohio's 11th Congressional District, I thank her for her service and congratulations on this historic achievement.

ISSUES OF THE DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) for 30 minutes.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, it is nice when we can talk across party lines about someone's excellent level of service. It has been an honor and privilege to serve with MARCY KAPTUR my 13 years here in Congress.

Unfortunately, I want to move from talking about someone with ethical, upright, and righteous scruples to talking about a former FBI Director.

□ 2015

I had concerns back when Robert Mueller was FBI Director. And some people have forgotten, but one of the things that he implemented as FBI Director that I have heard from FBI agents around the country caused a great deal of concern was what he

called a 5-year up-or-out policy, which, in essence—it is more complicated than this, but basically anyone who found themselves in a supervisory position within the FBI offices anywhere in the country, in the world, they were in a supervisory position for 5 years. At the end of that 5 years they had to either come to Washington and most likely ride a cubical, sit at a desk, or they could get out of the FBI.

Most of the honorable, wonderful agents we had in the FBI across the country that so many people here in Washington with the FBI like to point to—why? Because they can point around the country to upright, moral, ethical, honest FBI agents so that you don't look at the top of the FBI as it has been here. Since I have been here in Congress both under the Bush administration followed by the Obama administration, there have been problems at the top of the FBI.

The first time I had an opportunity to question Mr. Mueller, FBI Director Mueller, after getting to Congress in 2005, I was not aware of all of the problems that Director Mueller was creating within the FBI, and so I paid deference, in effect, to his service in the military, in Vietnam. I felt like he deserved that. But then, as I have said about other individuals, no matter how grueling someone's service may have been, Vietnam or elsewhere, it still doesn't give them a right to harm my country either through negligence or intentional misconduct.

This 5-year up-or-out policy—people didn't realize what I was understanding and realizing from around the country—was doing massive damage to the Federal Bureau of Investigation. And I kept wondering, ''Why would he do this?''

Now, I understand here in Washington it wouldn't be a bad policy. If you are in a supervisory position for 5 years in Washington, maybe you ought to be bounced out into the real United States, outside this surreal District of Columbia for government service, the paradise for bureaucrats. That would have been a far better policy for the FBI, for probably any bureaucracy here.

For many of the departments and agencies in Washington, that wouldn't be a bad idea: Okay. If you are in a supervisory position in Washington, D.C., for 5 years, at the end of the 5 years you have to go out to the real world, go out to the United States itself, in one of the offices out there and deal with real people in real situations rather than this bubble in Washington, D.C., inside the beltway.

That might have been a good policy, but that is not the one that Robert Mueller utilized.

As I wrestled with that—why would someone implement a policy that forced some of the best people in law enforcement, happened to be in the FBI, in a supervisory position, force them out, why would an FBI Director do that?—it became clear. And I believe it was NPR that had an article, I believe it was, about this policy of Mueller's and how, I believe it was in part of 2007, Mueller's policy ran off around 140 or so supervisors in our FBI offices.

From the FBI agents I knew who were in supervisory positions around the country, some had 20, 25, 30 years of experience. So when one thinks about 140 FBI agents with absolutely priceless, invaluable experience in law enforcement around the country, and Mueller runs them off not because they are unethical—all the cases of which I am aware, they were very ethical. They were good law enforcement officers.

And for those who have been in law enforcement, whether Federal or State or local, I think most would agree with this comment that it takes probably 5 years before someone in law enforcement can gain the respect of other law enforcement officers, and especially if that officer, that agent is with the FBI; because there are too many local, State law enforcement who have dealt with FBI agents who came in, wanted to make a name for themselves, the local officers would do the research, they would do the real tough police work going out, knocking on doors, talking to witnesses, only to have their work, when they finally find the culprit, have, as I have heard local law enforcement talk about, the FBI swoop in, have a press conference, and take the credit for the local work.

So that is a reputation, fair or unfair, that local law enforcement often are thinking about when they see a new FBI agent come into town. They are watching to see: Is this person going to be a selfless team player, strictly in the pursuit of law and order and the rule of law, or are they going to come in and use my work to make a name for themselves?

Over 5 years or so, the FBI agents would gain respect. I have seen it, read about it, and I know that that has, too often, been the case. It takes a while to build that kind of respect among local law enforcement and also to build that kind of respect in the criminal community so that they know that is a nononsense person, that the FBI agent is not about ego; it is about following the law and making sure everybody else does.

Yet here Robert Mueller comes in as FBI Director, and he is putting in place a policy that is getting rid of the best of the best that we have in the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

And some say, well, you may not realize, but he was a Bush appointee. I know he was. And he took office as Director of the FBI shortly before 9/11, so it would be a bit unfair to blame Robert Mueller for failing to see what was coming on 9/11 because he had just simply not been in office that long.

But Director Mueller implemented this policy. And as I struggled with why he would do this—he is running off thousands of years of experience. I mean, just in that, about, three-fourths of 1 year, 2007, where it was maybe, I believe, about 140 supervisory agents who Mueller ran off—not for unethical conduct, not for inefficiency or inability to be a good law enforcement officer, no. He ran them off because they, perhaps, had too much experience.

Anybody who has concern about their own self-image and perhaps—I mean, I was wrestling with why somebody would run off thousands of years of experience within the FBI, and what I kept coming back to is perhaps there is some kind of insecurity that would cause a Director to be concerned that there would be people within the FBI that might not be complete yes-men, who might have more experience and, because they have been there 20, 30 years, be able to say: Director Mueller, I know this appears to be a good idea. That is what we thought 20 years ago or 15 years ago. We tried that, and it failed. And let me explain to you why, and perhaps I can help suggest a better policy or a better approach to this criminal case or this type of case.

When you start running off thousands of years of experience within the FBI, you are creating a great vacuum for experience within the FBI. So that could create situations, and did, where you could have people who were the special agent in charge in the supervisory position for 5 years, and then, because of Mueller's policy and them not wanting to take their family to Washington, D.C., and sit in some cubical or sit at some desk, be a yes-man—they wanted to be law officers.

And so, in many cases of which I had heard, FBI agents said: I am not going to sit in a cubical for Mueller. I am a law officer. I am about investigating and enforcing the law. So I am getting out. I am going to make more money where I am going. I would rather have stayed in the FBI. That is where my heart is. That is where I wanted to be. But Mueller is forcing me out. Yeah, it will be better for my family. I will have better hours. I will make more money. But I am not going to Washington. I want to be here in real America making a difference here.

Those are the kind of people that Robert Mueller ran off. Maybe it was his insecurity. Maybe, some have said, it was a God complex. I don't know. But I know, in my heart, I believe Robert Mueller did more damage to the FBI than all of the FBI Directors put together since J. Edgar Hoover. And it is dangerous when one person runs off so many people.

So when we came to find out—and again, this was during the Bush administration, the second term. Alberto Gonzalez was the Attorney General. And we had been assured that this very dangerous—dangerous because it was so easily manipulated and abused, but it was called the National Security Letters, NSLs. They were like a subpoena, except without the formalities.

Under this law that created what are called the National Security Letters, someone in the Justice Department

could simply write a letter to an individual, to a company, to a bank, and say: I am writing this under Federal law regarding National Security Letters that allows me to just simply send a letter to you, sign the letter, and direct you to deliver to me all of the documents you have regarding this person or this company, whatever the case might be.

They would also put into the letter what the law said, that if the recipient of the letter leaks or tells anybody about that letter, then they have violated the criminal law of the United States and they can be put in prison for leaking, for saying that they had received a letter from the FBI or Justice Department asking for documents.

That is a powerful weapon for the U.S. Congress to hand over to the Justice Department, and especially if it is utilized by one lone FBI agent.

Well, we have been told in Judiciary Committee repeatedly by FBI Director—we have been told informally, talking about the NSLs, National Security Letters, no, there are no known abuses of the National Security Letters. And then there was an inspector general investigation just to see whether there had been any abuse of these National Security Letters.

The report came back from the inspector general that there were potentially thousands of abuses of the National Security Letters where an FBI agent just sent the letter and, under the Fourth Amendment under our Constitution, there was no probable cause that a crime was committed.

□ 2030

There was no evidence that this individual committed a crime. The FBI agent just wanted to find out more about this person; maybe do a fishing exercise to see if there might be something that the FBI agent might investigate.

Perhaps the FBI agent, maybe he didn't like somebody in the community, so he wanted to see if there was anything out there, maybe in his banking records, or in his dealings with other companies. So he sends a national security letter, says give me all the documents you have on this person.

In my mind, that is a violation of every American's constitutional rights. It was a gross deviation from propriety. It violated what FBI Director Mueller told us about how the NSLs were being used as an investigatory tool, and a lot of us got very upset. And I think, to a large degree, that is why the Attorney General ended up stepping down.

In retrospect, it really should have been Robert Mueller who stepped down. They were his FBI agents. He failed to control; he failed to provide proper supervision. And I can't help but think perhaps a contributing factor, maybe the contributing factor to all of the widespread abuses of this power that Congress gave the Justice Department could well have been, probably was because FBI Director Robert Mueller decided to get rid of thousands of years of experience.

These are the agents, the supervisors, the people with the most experience that could have told a younger, inexperienced FBI agent: You may be tempted to do this, but that would be an abuse. Don't even try it. Don't even go there.

But because Mueller had stripped the FBI of thousands of years of experience, there were not the ''gray hairs'' or the ''no hairs'' that were out there to mentor younger FBI agents. Sure, there were some around, but not like there would have been had there been such insecurity or whatever it was that caused FBI Director Robert Mueller to do such terrible damage to the ranks of the FBI.

This is a guy that we were told: He will be an absolutely perfect special counsel. Well, I knew as soon as I heard that he was being appointed that this was a mistake; that this is a guy that did such horrendous damage to the FBI's ranks, to their experience level.

In fact, as I mentioned to FBI Director Mueller on one of the occasions where I was given the chance to ask questions during our Judiciary Committee hearing, in essence, I said: Director, do you realize that if you really applied your 5-year up-or-out policy to everyone in the FBI in a supervisory position, since you think it is such a good idea, you, Director Mueller, would have had to have left before September of 2006?

But instead of being consistent in the way he treated himself as he treated such invaluable FBI agents when he ran them off for no reason other than possibly insecurity, not only did he serve 10 years as FBI Director, which was an insult to all of those he ran off after 5 years, but then President Obama said: Hey, I am going to extend you 2 years.

An ethical, fair man, I believe, would have said: I am sorry, President Obama, but I was so vicious in the way I implemented this 5-year up-or-out policy and ran so many good agents off, it would be inappropriate, not only for me to have served 10 years, but to add 2 years on top of that, 12 years. But Robert Mueller did not do that. He was not fair across the board. He was not consistent.

That brings me back to—here is a report, March 15 of 2012, by NPR, the headline is: ''Report: Prosecutors Hid Evidence in Ted Stevens Case.''

Now, Ted Stevens, as I recall, was the longest serving Republican in the Senate back in 2008. Senator Stevens was running for re-election, and he was considered by many to be one of the most ethical, upright Senators out of the 100 who were in the U.S. Senate. Yet Mueller's FBI decided, apparently, to take out this patriotic, honest, honorable U.S. Senator by what I consider to be abuse of the justice system.

This article from NPR says, it starts with this:

''A blistering report released Thursday found that the government team concealed documents that would have helped the late Stevens, a longtime Republican Senator from Alaska, defend himself against false-statements charges in 2008. Stevens lost his Senate seat as the scandal played out, and he died in a plane crash 2 years later.

''The 500-page report by investigator Henry F. Schuelke III shook the legal community, as law professors described it as a milestone in the history of prosecutorial misconduct.

''Investigators weren't talking Thursday. But Brendan Sullivan, who defended the Senator, had plenty to say. 'The extent of the corruption is shocking,' Sullivan says. 'It's the worst misconduct we've seen in a generation by prosecutors at the Department of Justice.''

But it is important to note, Mr. Speaker, that this was an FBI case, and it is difficult to believe that the Director of the FBI would have not been personally monitoring, if not personally dictating instructions in such a politically sensitive case as a long-term, sitting U.S. Senator; that if you are going to use and manipulate the Department of Justice to take out a U.S. Senator, you should be extraordinarily sure that you have a legitimate case.

But I don't have the information that would indicate what briefings FBI Director Mueller had over the investigation, but I would humbly submit, Mr. Speaker, either Director Mueller got regular briefings on the investigation and development of the case against Senator Ted Stevens, or he was incompetent in not even bothering to keep abreast of developments in a case that would be so politically sensitive.

But this article says: ''The report''—by the Inspector General—''is based on a review of 128,000 documents and interviews with prosecutors and FBI agents on the hot seat.''

But sadly, the FBI, under Mueller, pushed this case, this investigation, to a head so that it was capable of being tried before the 2008 election in November and, in fact, Stevens was convicted just days before the election, and then I believe he only lost the race for Senate by a couple of thousand votes or so.

But the report says that prosecutors should have shared information that might have obliterated the witness' credibility against Stevens, and they had evidence that their key witness had told the same story 55 different times; but that the FBI got evidence that their key witness had had a sexual relationship with a 15-year-old girl and then asked the girl to lie about it under oath. And so it is easy to see how he would have been manipulated.

But after telling the story that would have acquitted Ted Stevens, as he should have been acquitted we now know from all the evidence, actually, they were able to push the witness into changing his story immediately before trial in order to testify against Stevens.

Like I said, we do not know exactly what Mueller knew, didn't know, but he surely had to know when the FBI agent who was assisting his supervisor in the case, when he did an affidavit, signed it under penalty of perjury, indicating the improprieties of the agent in charge of the case, which is named Kepner, Director Mueller had to have known that one of his agents said: I cannot live with this prosecutorial misconduct. This is figuratively what he said.

The agent in charge, the FBI agent in charge, hid evidence that would have proved what I believe, beyond a reasonable doubt, Ted Stevens was not guilty. Not just raised a reasonable doubt; would have proved he was not guilty.

As the Alaska Dispatch News asked in their headline from their article in September 2016—actually, June 6, 2012, then updated September 2016, their headline asked: ''Why is lead FBI agent in botched Ted Stevens case still employed?''

So we do know, under Mueller's FBI, that he did such horrific damage, running off thousands of years of experience, years later, after one FBI agent had such pangs of conscience that an innocent man, Ted Stevens, was convicted when he was 100 percent not guilty, the agent that was the whistleblower had been run off from the FBI. That had to have been with Mueller's consent. He was removed from every criminal case, which means you need to get out because you are not going to have a job.

Yet the agent, Kepner, who was in charge of the investigation, manufactured evidence, hid evidence, according to these reports, and she was still working in the criminal division of the FBI.

So when anybody talks to me about how fair and ethical and upright Robert Mueller is, I don't buy it. I have seen the damage he did to the FBI. I have seen the damage he created by not allowing his FBI agents to be trained to recognize radical Islamists.

Sure, after the FBI got notice under Mueller that Tsarnaev, the Boston bomber, had been radicalized and he was a threat to lives and U.S. security, oh, yeah; they sent out an FBI agent to talk to him. And apparently he said: Oh, no, I am not a terrorist.

And then they went the extra step to talk to his mother who said: Oh, no, he is a good boy. He is not a terrorist.

But because of Robert Mueller placating the Council on American-Islamic Relations that was a named party co-conspirator supporting terrorism, he placated CAIR, and he had the training materials for our FBI agents purged so they didn't know what to look for. That is the reason the Boston bombers were on the loose. He needs to resign and go home.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 2045

DANGERS OF BURN PITS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SOTO) for 30 minutes.

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss the Helping Veterans Exposed to Burn Pits Act, H.R. 1279, and I will talk a minute about one of my own constituents, Brian, who is facing this very dangerous condition.

From the summer of 2004 through 2009, my constituent Brian was deployed a total of six times on combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan as a United States Marine Corps helicopter mechanic.

As a junior marine, he would haul trash daily to the airbases' burn pits. He helped burn all the unit's trash and stood security watch on the burn pits, which are always located near work or housing areas in airbases.

During each deployment, Brian would smell the trash burning in the pits and was always in the path of the smoke. He would often wear rags across his mouth and nose to reduce the foul smell and filter the smoke from the air he was breathing.

After some time, Brian developed breathing troubles, and the base medical center provided inhalers that helped temporarily. When he was home in between the deployments, he had breathing treatments and was diagnosed with bronchitis on multiple occasions.

In 2013, Brian developed a serious case of pneumonia. An abscess had formed in the lower lobe of his left lung. It ruptured, filling the lobe with fluid. The doctors removed a portion of Brian's left lung to save his life. The surgery kept him alive but greatly reduced lung capacity and functionality.

In 2016, Brian was offered the option to retire early from the United States Marine Corps. The Veterans Administration reviewed his case and determined a 100 percent disability rating. He is currently going through more testing due to undiagnosed heart issues and elevated blood level count for his blood cells, and he is still being treated for lung problems.

To this day, Brian reports having rib cage pain and nerve damage from the lung surgery on a daily basis.

Brian is, unfortunately, not the only servicemember whose health is deteriorating due to exposure to harmful substances from burning of waste in military bases.

While we are glad to see action taken in the NDAA for fiscal year 2018, we need a more permanent solution. I am proud to cosponsor H.R. 1279, Helping Veterans Exposed to Burn Pits Act, that would create a center of excellence within the Department of Veterans Affairs to better understand the health effects and treatments associated with burn pits.

I also encourage our United States military to provide proper breathing safety apparatuses and reconsider their current policy of having burn pits on or near our bases.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation and these reforms because we all have an obligation to care for our veterans.

HONORING DR. CYNDIA MORALES MUNIZ DURING WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Dr. Cyndia Morales Muniz.

Dr. Cyndia Morales Muniz serves as an assistant director at Hispanic Initiatives in the president's division at the University of Central Florida, affectionately known as UCF in central Florida. As chair of UCF's Hispanic Serving Institution, HSI, Task Force, she facilitates communication and collaboration within the university community to strengthen UCF's Hispanic-serving efforts.

As founding president of the Latino Faculty & Staff Association, LaFaSA, at UCF, Dr. Muniz has been the catalyst that has elevated Latino programming at UCF. With grant support from the Hispanic Federation, she established the CREAR Futuros Mentoring Program at UCF in 2016. The following year, she planned UCF's inaugural Latino graduation ceremony, Nuestra Graduacion.

In the local community, she supports the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Metro Orlando and the Hispanic Heritage Scholarship Fund of Metro Orlando.

Dr. Muniz is highly regarded in the central Florida community. She also advocates for Latino student success at the national level, helping lead two national projects in partnership with Excelencia in Education and serving as the UCF representative within the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities. She also coleads the Puerto Rican Education Relief Team at UCF, helping support displaced students affected by Hurricane Maria in their transition to central Florida.

Having been a first-generation, low-income college student, she takes full advantage of opportunities to discuss and elevate best practices and policy implications for underrepresented communities.

Dr. Muniz earned a bachelor's degree in sociology at Binghamton University, a master's degree in sociology at St. John's University, and a doctoral degree in educational leadership at the University of Central Florida. Most recently, she was selected as a 2018 College Board Professional Fellow.

Dr. Muniz is a proud Puerto Rican and resides in Orlando with her loving husband, Antonio.

For that, Dr. Cyndia Morales Muniz, we honor you.

HONORING VETNAH ''YEMEN'' MONESSAR DURING WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Vetnah ''Yemen'' Monessar.

Vetnah ''Yemen'' Monessar is a community organizer and political activist with over 13 years of experience in mobilizing and elevating the narrative of Muslim Americans in our community.

She has led legislative and electoral campaigns at all levels of government, advocating for equitable healthcare, education reform, fair access economic development, and human rights, in addition to numerous other issue-based campaigns.

Vetnah serves as the executive director of Emgage Florida, a civic engagement nonprofit that aims to educate, engage, and empower Muslim Americans in the civic engagement process.

She made history as the first hired woman State director for a Presidential campaign as the State coalition director for Hillary for America.

Vetnah currently serves as the vice president of the Orlando American Muslim Chamber of Commerce, on the Young Professionals Board of Harbor House, and on the Orlando Chapter 57 Citizen Review Board and has received numerous community service and leadership awards.

She received her degree in Islamic studies and religion from the Islamic University of Dr. Bilal Philips, as well as a degree in paralegal studies with a focus on transactional and litigation law.

As a community leader, she is a constant champion of those who traditionally do not have their voices heard and empowering them to be involved in the democratic process.

For that, Vetnah ''Yemen'' Monessar, we salute you.

HONORING MARGIE VIERA DURING WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Margie Viera.

Margie Viera is a force of nature and an inspiration to us all.

She works with community leaders, government, and businessowners from all industries to bring opportunities and growth to the central Florida region. She has influence in major areas, including public affairs, education, business development, international commercial import and export, and strategic alliances.

She helps businesses, big and small, to achieve growth. Her work has made an impact globally in major world centers, including in Puerto Rico; California, Texas, Florida in the United States; as well as Latin America, Spain, among other countries.

Margie is passionate about volunteering and mentoring. She is the development director at the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Metro Orlando, one of the Nation's leading organizations committed to the economic development of the Hispanic community directly impacting the central Florida region. Throughout her tenure as development director, Margie has engaged widely in policy development and advocacy across education, economic, social, and cultural spheres.

In the educational industry, Margie worked transforming lives through her service as the daytime program director at Ana G. Mendez University System, where she started the first bilingual program that serves Hispanic youth and empowered her students by giving them access to professional opportunities and skills development.

She is the cofounder of the Aspire to Inspire Youth Mentorship Program, which impacts underserved students to inspire them to become the next generation of leaders. Aspire to Inspire is a community organization that inspires Latin youth to stay in school and reach for the stars while creating a culture of #Paying IT Forward in her community.

Born in Puerto Rico and the single mother of two boys, Margie understands firsthand the challenges of living on the mainland away from her family on the island. She is a woman of valor, a loving mother, and a fierce advocate for education.

Margie Viera is a Latina leader using her powerful voice for our most vulnerable in central Florida.

For that, Margie Viera, we honor you.

HONORING KAREN COOPER WELZEL DURING WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Karen Cooper Welzel.

Karen Cooper Welzel was born in Michigan. Both her parents fought for workers' rights and led the formation of the United Auto Workers union. Her family history became the basis for Karen to become politically active and as involved as she is today. Karen and her husband, George, moved to central Florida in 1994 and soon thereafter joined in the Polk Democratic Executive Committee meetings and the local Democratic club meetings.

Karen worked in human resources and later became a corporate HR director for a private hospitality company, overseeing five hotels and other properties.

Karen volunteered for the Howard Dean Presidential campaign in 2003 and continued in local politics by participating in Democratic clubs and the Polk County Democratic Party. She attended training sessions, served as a delegate to the Florida Democratic Party conventions, and encouraged and supported local candidates.

Karen was later elected chairwoman of the Polk County DEC. She chartered five new Democratic clubs in the county and opened two campaign offices. She also serves on the board of directors of Side Street Art Beat, an organization that provides opportunities for creative self-expression and support for individuals with special needs.

In 2014, Karen started a local chapter of the Democratic Women's Club of Florida in East Polk County. She currently serves as the chair of the Candidate Screening Committee.

In 2016, she was elected by the Polk County DEC members to serve as the State Committee Woman and currently is chairing the Polk DEC Campaign Committee. Karen and members of the DWC East Polk Ridge Club organized two women's rallies that resulted in the creation of the DWCF Lakeland Club.

Karen has stood before the Polk County Legislative Delegation several years in a row demanding voting rights for all citizens and gun safety measures.

Karen is the mother of two sons and now proud to be a grandmother.

For that, Karen Cooper Welzel, we honor you.

HONORING YBETH BRUZUAL DURING WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor of Ybeth Bruzual.

Ybeth Bruzual is a beloved Venezuelan-Puerto Rican journalist in our community who has lived in central Florida since 1981 and considers our area her home.

Ybeth is an anchor for Spectrum News 13. She also hosts ''Political Connections'' on Sundays.

She is a three-time Emmy nominee and won an Emmy in 2016 for the Pulse Vigil live coverage at Lake Eola. Bruzual was honored with the UCF Department of Political Science Outstanding Alumni Award in 2015 for her political coverage.

She is fascinated by politics. She earned a bachelor's degree in international politics from the University of Central Florida. She puts that knowledge to good use in her job at News 13.

Ybeth bleeds black and gold and is a proud member of the UCF Alumni Association. She enjoys cheering on the UCF Knights at sporting event at Spectrum Stadium.

She also earned an AA degree from Valencia College, where she served as a writer and circulation manager in the 1990s on the school's newspaper, Valencia Voice.

She calls herself an endless prisoner of hope, and demonstrates that by her many community activities. She is a past board member for both Shepherd's Hope Clinic and Central Florida Chapter Board for Lighthouse of Central Florida, offering service to the blind, and a former mentor for the Compact Program for Orange County Public Schools.

Ybeth is the past president of the Central Florida Chapter of the National Association of Hispanic Journalists, and is a proud lifetime member of that organization.

Ybeth and her husband, Alfredo, have a young son.

And for that, Ybeth Bruzual, we honor you.

□ 2100

HONORING LISA ANN FRANCHINA DURING WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Lisa Ann Franchina.

Lisa Ann Franchina is a local attorney. She is also a member of many civic organizations, and has served on many community boards in central Florida.

Born in Queens, New York, Lisa received her bachelor of arts in humanities from Hofstra University, and her juris doctorate from the Shepard Broad Law Center at Nova Southeastern University.

After her graduation from law school, Lisa was an assistant public defender in Orlando, handling trials and appeals in criminal court. For the last 25 years, Lisa has been a small-business owner, operating her own firm.

In 2016, Lisa received a Spotlight Award for her service on the membership committee of the family law section of the Florida bar.

In additional, Lisa is an active member of our community. She is a current member and past secretary for the Orange County League of Women Voters, and a member of the Tiger Bay Club of Central Florida as well. Lisa has served as President of the Central Florida Chapter of the National Association of Women Business Owners, as a director and executive committee member of the Back to Nature Wildlife Refuge, and as a board member for the Orlando Marine Institute.

Lisa is currently serving her third term as president of the Board of Trustees for the Orange County Library System, and her second term as chair of the Orange County Animal Services Advisory Board.

Lisa is a shelter volunteer at the Orange County Animal Services, and has donated over 5,000 volunteer hours in the past 2 years.

Lisa was named as 2016 Orange County District Four Citizen of the Year for her service to the central Florida community.

And for that, Lisa Ann Franchina, we honor you.

HONORING DAISY LOPEZ-CID DURING WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Daisy Lopez-Cid.

Not many people can say that, in the height of a financial meltdown and national housing crisis back in 2008, they would venture out on their own to open up a real estate brokerage.

While most were downsizing, Daisy Lopez-Cid was planning her empire. In 2007 and 2008, she dove in feet first and opened her office. By 2016, office number two made its debut, and both have been churning out steady numbers since their doors opened.

Daisy was ranked in the top 250 sales agents in the country 4 years in a row; and, in 2015, she was ranked number 3 in the Nation.

She joined NAHREP, the National Association of Hispanic Real Estate Professionals, in 2008, and quickly realized how the association's mission to advance sustainable Hispanic home ownership lined up with her core values as a real estate professional.

To give back to the organization that has empowered her for so long, she now serves as the NAHREP 2018 national president.

Recently, when Hurricane Maria hit our native island of Puerto Rico, she traveled down there for over 2 weeks, bringing down thousands and thousands of pounds of supplies: food, water, medications, clothing, and so many other of the bare essentials that we need for living every day.

She went down door to door, and people in Puerto Rico welcomed her into their homes and welcomed the much-needed help that helped lift up the island, along with so many entrepreneurs in central Florida who helped with our brothers and sisters in Puerto Rico.

Although real estate was not her first career, it was clear to see that this former New York paralegal had found her calling in real estate. Daisy is someone you want to have in your corner, as her zest for success is contagious, and her wisdom speaks beyond her years. Her vast real estate knowledge and love for education and for educating her agents has allowed her firm to grow on Broadway in Kissimmee, and to put more families into homes.

Daisy has a passion for customer care that is contagious, and her 50 agents will tell you that she is in it to win it.

Her goal is and has always been quality over quantity, and that makes Daisy a success. It is a priority for her to educate her agents and equip them with the tools they will need for success.

She also serves as a trustee in our local community college, Valencia College, where we worked together to create Poinciana Valencia campus, which now is up and running and serving thousands of folks in south Osceola County.

And for that, Daisy Lopez-Cid, we honor you.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

SENATE BILL REFERRED

A bill of the Senate of the following title was taken from the Speaker's table and, under the rule, referred as follows:

S. 2286. An act to amend the Peace Corps Act to provide greater protection and services for Peace Corps volunteers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs; in addition, to the Committee on Education and the Workforce for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 7 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, March 15, 2018, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

4257. A letter from the Under Secretary, Acquisition and Sustainment, Department of Defense, transmitting Selected Acquisition Reports for the Navy/Marine Corps Major Defense Acquisition Programs, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 2432(b)(1); Public Law 97-252, Sec. 1107(a)(1); (96 Stat. 740); to the Committee on Armed Services.

4258. A letter from the Chairman, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Twenty-fifth Report to Congress on Progress Made in Licensing and Constructing the Alaska Natural Gas Pipeline, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 16523; Public Law 109-58, Sec. 1810; (119 Stat. 1126); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4259. A letter from the Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Commission's NUREG Revision — Consolidated Guidance About Materials Licenses: Program-Specific Guidance About 10 CFR Part 36 Irradiator Licenses Final Report [NUREG 1556, Volume 6, Revision 1] received March 12, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4260. A letter from the Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, Department of Defense, transmitting a report on the value of sales of defense equipment for the first quarter of Fiscal Year 2018, pursuant to Secs. 36(a) and 26(b) of the Arms Export Control Act, the March 24, 1979, Report by the Committee on Foreign Affairs (H. Rept. 96-70), and the July 31, 1981, Seventh Report by the Committee on Government Operations (H. Rept. 97-214); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4261. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. Act 22-272, ''Extension of Time to Dispose of 8th & O Streets, N.W., Temporary Amendment Act of 2018'', pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4262. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. Act 22-271, ''Public Employee Relations Board Term Limit Amendment Act of 2018'', pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4263. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. Act 22-270, ''Office of Employee Appeals Hearing Examiner Classification Amendment Act of 2018'', pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4264. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. Act 22-257, ''Relieve High Unemployment Tax Incentives Act of 2018'', pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4265. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. Act 22-258, ''City Innovation Fund Re-Establishment Amendment Act of 2018'', pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4266. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Congressional and Intergovernmental Relations, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting the Department's FY 2019 Annual Performance Plan and FY 2017 Annual Performance Report, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 1115(b); Public Law 111-352, Sec. 3; (124 Stat. 3867); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4267. A letter from the Attorney, CG-LRA, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Drawbridge Operation Regulation; Pequonnock River, Bridgeport, CT

[Docket No.: USCG-2017-0750] (RIN: 1625-AA09) received March 12, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4268. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Special Local Regulation; Gasparilla Marine Parade; Hillsborough Bay; Tampa, FL [Docket No.: USCG-2017-1102] (RIN: 1625-AA08) received March 12, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4269. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, Office of Regulations and Administrative Law, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Special Local Regulation; Pamlico River, Washington, NC [Docket No.: USCG-2017-1100] (RIN: 1625-AA08) received March 12, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4270. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Drawbridge Operation Regulation; China Basin, Mission Creek, San Francisco, CA [Docket No.: USCG-2017-1015] (RIN: 1625-AA09) received March 12, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4271. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Drawbridge Operation Regulation Canaveral Barge Canal, Canaveral, FL [Docket No.: USCG-2017-0161] (RIN: 1625-AA09) received March 12, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. GOODLATTE: Committee on the Judiciary. H.R. 3249. A bill to authorize the Project Safe Neighborhoods Grant Program, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 115–597). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. GOODLATTE: Committee on the Judiciary. H.R. 3996. A bill to amend title 28, United States Code, to permit other courts to transfer certain cases to United States Tax Court (Rept. 115–598). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. GOODLATTE: Committee on the Judiciary. H.R. 506. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide an additional tool to prevent certain frauds against veterans, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 115–599). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. BUCK: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 780. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4061) to amend the Financial Stability Act of 2010 to improve the transparency of the Financial Stability Oversight Council, to improve the SIFI designation process, and for other purposes, and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4293) to reform the Comprehensive Capital Analysis and Review process, the Dodd-Frank Act Stress Test process, and for other purposes (Rept. 115–600). Referred to the House Calendar.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. MESSER:

H.R. 5268. A bill to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to authorize the Secretary of Homeland Security, through the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, to make grants to eligible local education agencies to provide improved security measures on school grounds, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mrs. RADEWAGEN:

H.R. 5269. A bill to require State or territorial approval of restriction by the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Commerce of recreational or commercial fishing access to certain State or territorial waters, respectively; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. BUCSHON (for himself, Mr. BARTON, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. BARR, Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia, and Mr. MCKINLEY):

H.R. 5270. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow a credit against tax for coal-powered electric generation units; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. LEE:

H.R. 5271. A bill to repeal certain impediments to the administration of the firearms laws; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. STIVERS (for himself, Mr. ENGEL, Mrs. COMSTOCK, and Mr. GIBBS):

H.R. 5272. A bill to ensure that programs and activities that are funded by a grant, cooperative agreement, loan, or loan guarantee from the Department of Health and Human Services, and whose purpose is to prevent or treat a mental health or substance use disorder, are evidence-based; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. ENGEL (for himself, Mr. POE of Texas, Mr. MCCAUL, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. KEATING, and Mr. COOK):

H.R. 5273. A bill to reduce global fragility and violence by improving the capacity of the United States to reduce and address the causes of violence, violent conflict, and fragility in pilot countries, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. CASTRO of Texas (for himself, Mr. MEADOWS, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, and Mr. ROSKAM):

H.R. 5274. A bill to promote international exchanges on best election practices, cultivate more secure democratic institutions around the world, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. LONG (for himself, Mr. COSTA, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. JONES, Mr. PERRY, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. BOST, Mr. BIGGS, Mr. GOODLATTE, Ms. CHENEY, Mr. YOUNG of Iowa, Mr. SMITH of Nebraska, Mr. MARSHALL, Mr. WOMACK, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. KIND, Mr. CRAWFORD, Mr. GRAVES of Missouri, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mr. VALADAO, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. THOMAS J. ROONEY of Florida, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. PEARCE, Mr. ABRAHAM, Mr. HARPER, Mr. HARRIS, Mr. O'HALLERAN, Mr. ROUZER, Mr. MCKINLEY, Mr. SHUSTER, Mr. ROKITA, Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, Ms. SINEMA, Mrs. HARTZLER, Mr. SCHRADER, Mr. LEWIS of Minnesota, Mr. EMMER, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Mr. SMITH of Missouri, Mr. SMUCKER, Mr. NEWHOUSE, Mr. COLLINS of New York, Mr. GALLAGHER, Mr. BUCK, Mr. DUFFY, Mr. BLUM, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. RATCLIFFE, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. KUSTOFF of Tennessee, Mr. BARTON, Mr. PETERSON, Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, Mr. SIMPSON, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Ms. DELBENE, Mrs. NOEM, Mr. YODER, Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER, Mr. GROTHMAN, Mr. STIVERS, Mr. FORTENBERRY, Mr. DAVIDSON, Mr. HUIZENGA, Mr. VELA, Ms. TENNEY, Mr. THORNBERRY, Mr. GONZALEZ of Texas, Mr. MITCHELL, Mr. WESTERMAN, Mr. RENACCI, Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire, Mrs. ROBY, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. MULLIN, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. PANETTA, Mr. BYRNE, Mr. MARINO, Mr. DENHAM, Mr. MOOLENAAR, Mr. WALBERG, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, and Mr. GIBBS):

H.R. 5275. A bill to amend the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 to provide an exemption from certain notice requirements and penalties for air emissions from animal waste at farms; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. ROYCE of California (for himself and Mr. BLUMENAUER):

H.R. 5276. A bill to modernize the Food for Peace Program in the United States Agency for International Development, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Agriculture, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mrs. BEATTY (for herself and Mr. STIVERS):

H.R. 5277. A bill to require the Financial Literacy and Education Commission to establish and publish best practices for teaching financial literacy for institutions of higher education, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services, and in addition to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. BUCHANAN (for himself, Mr. YOHO, and Mr. SOTO):

H.R. 5278. A bill to make daylight savings time permanent for the State of Florida, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. BUCHANAN (for himself and Mr. CURBELO of Florida):

H.R. 5279. A bill to make daylight savings time permanent, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. CUELLAR:

H.R. 5280. A bill to designate the Federal building and United States courthouse located at 1300 Victoria Street in Laredo, Texas, as the ''George P. Kazen Federal Building and United States Courthouse'', and to designate the jury room in that Federal building and United States courthouse as the

''Marcel C. Notzon II Jury Room''; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. DAVIDSON (for himself, Mr. MEADOWS, Mr. NORMAN, Mr. SANFORD, Mr. KELLY of Mississippi, and Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania):

H.R. 5281. A bill to provide for congressional review of the imposition of duties and other trade measures by the executive branch, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Rules, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania (for himself, Mr. KIND, Mr. BISHOP of Michigan, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. HOLDING, Ms. SÁNCHEZ, Mr. RICE of South Carolina, Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER, Mrs. WALORSKI, Mr. POCAN, Mr. SESSIONS, Ms. ADAMS, Mr. GIBBS, and Ms. VELÁZQUEZ):

H.R. 5282. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to encourage retirement savings, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. KING of Iowa:

H.R. 5283. A bill to make technical amendments to update statutory references to certain provisions classified to title 7, title 20, and title 43, United States Code; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. KING of Iowa:

H.R. 5284. A bill to amend chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, to provide for Congressional oversight of agency rulemaking, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Rules, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. MAST (for himself and Mr. THOMAS J. ROONEY of Florida):

H.R. 5285. A bill to condition eligibility for a Federal license to deal in firearms on the passage of an online behavioral awareness training course, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. MAST (for himself, Ms. GABBARD, and Mr. KING of New York):

H.R. 5286. A bill to impose a 60-day moratorium on the transfer or receipt of an assault rifle, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. PEARCE (for himself and Mr. HECK):

H.R. 5287. A bill to amend the Truth in Lending Act to clarify the exclusion for seller-financers from the definition of mortgage originator, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. POSEY (for himself and Mr. HECK):

H.R. 5288. A bill to delay the effective date of the rule issued by the National Credit Union Administration titled ''Risk-Based Capital''; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. ROKITA:

H.R. 5289. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit any individual serving as President or Vice President or as a Member of Congress, or any individual who served as an employee of the office of the President or Vice President or the office of a Member of Congress, from engaging in any lobbying activity after serving in such a position, to amend title 41, United States Code, to prohibit executive agencies from awarding contracts to former elected officials, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. SANFORD:

H.R. 5290. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to require the disclosure, public documentation, and reporting of Federal employee bonuses, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Ms. TSONGAS (for herself, Mr. GRIJALVA, and Mr. KEATING):

H.R. 5291. A bill to establish an offshore wind career training grant program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. POCAN (for himself and Mr. GRAVES of Missouri):

H. Res. 779. A resolution expressing support for the designation of the week of March 12 through 16, 2018, as ''Public Education Week''; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. CARTER of Georgia (for himself, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia, Ms. ESTY of Connecticut, Mrs. BUSTOS, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. MAST, Mr. KENNEDY, Ms. STEFANIK, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. SHUSTER, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. BISHOP of Michigan, Mr. YOHO, Mr. TIPTON, Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana, Mr. HARPER, Mr. DELANEY, Mr. POLIQUIN, Mr. GRAVES of Georgia, Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. NORMAN, Mr. ADERHOLT, Mr. ESTES of Kansas, Mr. BABIN, and Mr. DUNN):

H. Res. 781. A resolution recognizing Girl Scouts of the United States of America on its 106th birthday and the importance of leadership development for girls; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. FOSTER (for himself, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. MCNERNEY, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. GAETZ, Ms. KAPTUR, Ms. MOORE, Mr. MOULTON, Mr. POCAN, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. RUSH, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. TONKO, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. HIMES, and Mr. POLIS):

H. Res. 782. A resolution expressing support for designation of March 14, 2018, as ''National Pi Day''; to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

By Mr. LYNCH (for himself and Mr. JOYCE of Ohio):

H. Res. 783. A resolution expressing support for designation of September as ''National Brain Aneurysm Awareness Month''; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Ms. STEFANIK (for herself, Ms. TENNEY, Mr. KING of New York, and Mr. FASO):

H. Res. 784. A resolution honoring Chris Mazdzer of Saranac Lake, New York, for proudly representing the United States in three consecutive Olympic Winter Games; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. MESSER:

H.R. 5268.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mrs. RADEWAGEN:

H.R. 5269.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article IV, Section 3, clause 2

Article I, Section 8, clause 3

Article I, Section 8, clause 18

By Mr. BUCSHON:

H.R. 5270.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3

By Ms. LEE:

H.R. 5271.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts and excises, to pay the debts and provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States; but all duties, imposts and excises shall be uniform throughout the United States;

To borrow money on the credit of the United States;

To regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian tribes;

To establish a uniform rule of naturalization, and uniform laws on the subject of bankruptcies throughout the United States;

To coin money, regulate the value thereof, and of foreign coin, and fix the standard of weights and measures;

To provide for the punishment of counterfeiting the securities and current coin of the United States;

By Mr. STIVERS:

H.R. 5272.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I Section 8, Clauses 1 and 18 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. ENGEL:

H.R. 5273.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the Constitution

By Mr. CASTRO of Texas:

H.R. 5274.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3: ''To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States . . .''

By Mr. LONG:

H.R. 5275.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

According to Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the Constitution: The Congress shall have power to enact this legislation to regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among

the several states, and with the Indian tribes.

By Mr. ROYCE of California:

H.R. 5276.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8 of the Constitution of the United States

By Mrs. BEATTY:

H.R. 5277.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution which grants Congress the power to regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.

By Mr. BUCHANAN:

H.R. 5278.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, clause 3 provides Congress with the power to '' regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian tribes.''

By Mr. BUCHANAN:

H.R. 5279.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, clause 3 provides Congress with the power to ''regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian tribes.''

By Mr. CUELLAR:

H.R. 5280.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The judicial power of the United States, shall be vested in one Supreme Court, and in such inferior courts as the Congress may from time to time ordain and establish.

By Mr. DAVIDSON:

H.R. 5281.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, subsection 1: ''Congress shall have Power to lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts and excises''

and

Article 1, Section 8, subsection 3: ''To regulate commerce with foreign nations''

By Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania:

H.R. 5282.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The Congress enacts this bill pursuant to Article I Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. KING of Iowa:

H.R. 5283.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the Constitution.

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the Constitution confers on Congress the authority to make all laws necessary and proper for carrying into execution the powers vested by the Constitution in the government of the United States, or in any department or officer thereof.

This legislation makes technical amendments to update statutory references to certain provisions classified to titles 7, 20, and 43, United States Code, as necessary to keep the title current and make technical corrections and improvements. Making revisions to the United States Code is a necessary role of Congress with respect to executing the powers vested by the Constitution in the government of the United States.

By Mr. KING of Iowa:

H.R. 5284.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to Congress' powers granted under Article I of the United States Constitution, including the legislative vesting clause of Article I, Section 1; the power granted to each House of Congress under Article I, Section 5, Clause 2; and the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clause 18.

By Mr. MAST:

H.R. 5285.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The Necessary and Proper Clause in Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. MAST:

H.R. 5286.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The Necessary and Proper Clause in Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. PEARCE:

H.R. 5287.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3: ''The Congress shall have power. . . To regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian tribes.''

By Mr. POSEY:

H.R. 5288.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. ROKITA:

H.R. 5289.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3, To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several states.

By Mr. SANFORD:

H.R. 5290.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution

By Ms. TSONGAS:

H.R. 5291.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 51: Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi.

H.R. 66: Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana, Ms. NORTON, Mr. DESAULNIER, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. SHERMAN, and Ms. ROSEN.

H.R. 173: Mr. O'ROURKE.

H.R. 196: Mr. GIANFORTE.

H.R. 291: Mr. WITTMAN.

H.R. 389: Mr. CARBAJAL.

H.R. 483: Mr. BROOKS of Alabama.

H.R. 559: Mr. POLIQUIN and Mr. BRADY of Texas.

H.R. 592: Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN and Mr. SENSENBRENNER.

H.R. 644: Mr. CRAWFORD, Mrs. HANDEL, and Mr. DESJARLAIS.

H.R. 754: Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico.

H.R. 771: Mr. ESPAILLAT.

H.R. 846: Mr. CONAWAY.

H.R. 1038: Mr. POLIQUIN.

H.R. 1171: Mr. BISHOP of Michigan.

H.R. 1267: Mr. GROTHMAN.

H.R. 1276: Ms. BASS, Mr. AGUILAR, Mr. DELANEY, and Mr. TONKO.

H.R. 1278: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.

H.R. 1279: Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHI.

H.R. 1291: Ms. BARRAGÁN.

H.R. 1322: Mr. RUIZ.

H.R. 1339: Mr. MEADOWS.

H.R. 1409: Mr. SCHNEIDER, Mr. JOYCE of Ohio, Mr. RASKIN, and Mr. COLLINS of Georgia.

H.R. 1472: Mr. SENSENBRENNER.

H.R. 1478: Mrs. DINGELL, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. COSTA, Mr. GARAMENDI, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. HIMES, Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. KEATING, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. RICHMOND, Mr. NEAL, and Ms. SEWELL of Alabama.

H.R. 1494: Mr. HUIZENGA.

H.R. 1519: Mr. COLLINS of New York.

H.R. 1544: Mr. KHANNA.

H.R. 1553: Ms. HANABUSA.

H.R. 1649: Mr. COHEN.

H.R. 1661: Mr. CAPUANO and Mr. HUDSON.

H.R. 1676: Mr. CARBAJAL.

H.R. 1697: Mr. COOPER.

H.R. 1734: Mr. STIVERS and Mr. POLIQUIN.

H.R. 1802: Mr. SOTO and Ms. VELÁZQUEZ.

H.R. 1825: Mr. DENT and Mr. CUELLAR.

H.R. 1881: Mr. COLE, Mr. DUNN, Mr. SMITH of Nebraska, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. BANKS of Indiana, and Mr. PEARCE.

H.R. 1911: Mrs. COMSTOCK.

H.R. 1943: Ms. STEFANIK.

H.R. 1953: Mr. GONZALEZ of Texas.

H.R. 2055: Mr. SUOZZI.

H.R. 2077: Mr. FASO and Mr. O'HALLERAN.

H.R. 2152: Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana.

H.R. 2267: Mr. ESPAILLAT, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. WALZ, and Mr. RYAN of Ohio.

H.R. 2358: Mr. KING of New York and Mr. JONES.

H.R. 2488: Mr. CAPUANO.

H.R. 2584: Mr. RUTHERFORD and Mr. WELCH.

H.R. 2663: Mr. CARBAJAL.

H.R. 2670: Mr. TONKO.

H.R. 2942: Mr. AGUILAR.

H.R. 2987: Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York.

H.R. 2999: Mr. O'HALLERAN.

H.R. 3067: Mr. KUSTOFF of Tennessee.

H.R. 3192: Mr. RYAN of Ohio and Mr. LANCE.

H.R. 3207: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. MOORE, Mr. ENGEL, Ms. ESTY of Connecticut, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. CARBAJAL, and Mr. SOTO.

H.R. 3330: Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana and Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina.

H.R. 3378: Ms. MCSALLY.

H.R. 3464: Mr. O'ROURKE, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, and Mr. KENNEDY.

H.R. 3503: Mr. BYRNE.

H.R. 3569: Mr. CORREA, Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHI, and Mr. RUSH.

H.R. 3642: Mr. PALAZZO.

H.R. 3666: Mr. BISHOP of Michigan.

H.R. 3798: Mrs. HANDEL.

H.R. 3842: Ms. MOORE.

H.R. 4018: Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. KHANNA, Mr. ESPAILLAT, Mr. FOSTER, and Ms. JAYAPAL.

H.R. 4052: Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 4078: Mr. SUOZZI.

H.R. 4106: Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire.

H.R. 4203: Mr. SMUCKER.

H.R. 4223: Mr. CULBERSON.

H.R. 4236: Mr. POLIQUIN.

H.R. 4256: Mr. VISCLOSKY and Mr. ALLEN.

H.R. 4267: Mr. GRAVES of Georgia.

H.R. 4638: Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. ESPAILLAT, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Mr. NADLER, Ms. SLAUGHTER, and Ms. MENG.

H.R. 4659: Mr. ARRINGTON.

H.R. 4681: Mr. SUOZZI, Mr. CICILLINE, and Mrs. WAGNER.

H.R. 4744: Mr. SCHNEIDER and Mr. POE of Texas.

H.R. 4747: Mr. THORNBERRY.

H.R. 4811: Mr. COSTA and Ms. ROSEN.

H.R. 4837: Mr. JEFFRIES.

H.R. 4844: Mr. PALAZZO.

H.R. 4857: Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina.

H.R. 4904: Mr. HULTGREN.

H.R. 4909: Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. DESAULNIER, Mr. COSTA, Mr. ABRAHAM, Mr. GARRETT, and Mr. CICILLINE.

H.R. 4915: Mr. PITTENGER, Mr. HARRIS, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. NORMAN, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, and Ms. TENNEY.

H.R. 5001: Mr. COHEN and Mr. CAPUANO.

H.R. 5085: Miss RICE of New York and Mr. MACARTHUR.

H.R. 5099: Ms. ROSEN.

H.R. 5107: Mr. OLSON.

H.R. 5111: Mr. JONES.

H.R. 5112: Mr. GOHMERT.

H.R. 5116: Ms. STEFANIK.

H.R. 5126: Mr. PANETTA and Ms. STEFANIK.

H.R. 5132: Mr. JOYCE of Ohio, Mrs. NOEM, Mr. KNIGHT, Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia, Mr. GRAVES of Missouri, Mr. DESANTIS, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. HUDSON, Mr. LATTA, Mr. VALADAO, Ms. TENNEY, Mr. O'HALLERAN, Mr. PETERSON, Mr. KINZINGER, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. GROTHMAN, Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California, Mr. ESPAILLAT, and Mr. LEVIN.

H.R. 5138: Ms. SINEMA and Mr. COLLINS of New York.

H.R. 5155: Ms. MATSUI, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. SARBANES, Ms. HANABUSA, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Ms. NORTON, Mr. KEATING, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. NADLER, Mr. COHEN, Mr. TONKO, Mr. ENGEL, Mrs. DINGELL, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, and Mr. BUTTERFIELD.

H.R. 5180: Ms. KAPTUR and Mr. KIHUEN.

H.R. 5187: Mr. PASCRELL.

H.R. 5199: Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia, Mr. LONG, Mr. KUSTOFF of Tennessee, Mr. GOSAR, and Mr. YOHO.

H.R. 5214: Mr. NORMAN.

H.R. 5216: Mr. FITZPATRICK, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. MATSUI, and Ms. BROWNLEY of California.

H.R. 5222: Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire and Mrs. BEATTY.

H.R. 5242: Mr. KNIGHT and Mr. MAST.

H.R. 5243: Mr. KNIGHT and Mr. MAST.

H.R. 5244: Mr. YOUNG of Alaska and Mr. CURBELO of Florida.

H.R. 5247: Mr. CALVERT and Mr. HUIZENGA.

H.R. 5262: Ms. SLAUGHTER.

H.R. 5263: Ms. SLAUGHTER.

H.J. Res. 31: Ms. GABBARD.

H. Con. Res. 60: Mr. RUPPERSBERGER.

H. Con. Res. 111: Mr. VALADAO, Mr. DENHAM, Mr. CURBELO of Florida, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. YODER, Mr. CARTER of Georgia, Mr. KNIGHT, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. RUSH, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Ms. JAYAPAL, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. ROYCE of California, Mr. ESPAILLAT, Mr. MCCAUL, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. COFFMAN, Mr. PAULSEN, Mr. EMMER, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. HURD, Mr. REICHERT, Mr. KINZINGER, and Mr. BILIRAKIS.

H. Res. 69: Mr. HUNTER.

H. Res. 128: Mr. YOUNG of Iowa and Mr. RUSSELL.

H. Res. 319: Mrs. COMSTOCK and Mr. BUDD.

H. Res. 632: Mr. KHANNA.

H. Res. 644: Mr. SIRES, Mr. MCCAUL, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. SCHNEIDER, Mr. SUOZZI, and Mrs. WAGNER.

H. Res. 652: Ms. SHEA-PORTER.

H. Res. 763: Ms. STEFANIK, Mr. GROTHMAN, Mr. CARTER of Texas, Mr. ROKITA, Mr. BARR, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. ABRAHAM, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. ADERHOLT, and Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas.

H. Res. 768: Mr. RUIZ.

H. Res. 772: Mr. ESTES of Kansas, Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mr. NORMAN, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, Mr. HARRIS, Mr. BABIN, Mr. MESSER, and Mr. GAETZ.

H. Res. 774: Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. FASO, Mr. YOUNG of Iowa, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. DENT, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. ISSA, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. TROTT, Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. REED, Mr. POLIQUIN, Mr. THOMAS J. ROONEY of Florida, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. CULBERSON, Mr. HURD, Mr. PAULSEN, and Ms. STEFANIK.

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PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 115th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 164 WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 14, 2018 *No. 45*

Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable RAND PAUL, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Our Father in Heaven, increase our faith until we are no longer awed by life's challenging seasons. Direct our Senators in their work, using them to fulfill Your Divine purposes. Lord, remind them that all things are possible to those who believe in Your prevailing providence. We acknowledge this day our great need of Your sustaining power so that we can walk without stumbling or slipping along life's pilgrim pathway. Help us to remember that faith without works is dead.

We pray in Your merciful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, March 14, 2018.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable RAND PAUL, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Kentucky, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ORRIN G. HATCH,
President pro tempore.

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

HONORING OFFICER SCOTTY HAMILTON

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, hearts are heavy in Pikeville, KY, this morning. Last night, Officer Scotty Hamilton, a 12-year veteran of the Pikeville Police Department, was shot and killed in the line of duty.

The investigation is ongoing. My Kentucky staff and I are monitoring the situation closely.

For now, our sincere condolences go out to his family, friends, and colleagues at the Pikeville Police Department.

Officer Hamilton leaves behind a wife, a young daughter, and a community that is safer for his service.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, now on an entirely different matter, this will be a busy day for the Senate. Today, Senator THUNE and our colleagues on the Commerce Committee will continue their hearings on rebuilding America's infrastructure.

Notably, five Cabinet Secretaries will testify: Secretaries of Labor, Commerce, Energy, Agriculture, and Transportation will all share the administration's ideas for cutting redtape, streamlining permitting, and aligning Federal resources with local needs.

I am grateful for the Trump administration's commitment to this issue, and I hope this week's hearings, along with the ongoing work of our colleagues on Environment and Public Works, Appropriations, and other committees, will keep building momentum.

Bipartisan results are achievable this year, starting with billions of added funding for infrastructure improvements in the budget agreement, and extending to the work of many committees in the months ahead.

ECONOMIC GROWTH, REGULATORY RELIEF, AND CONSUMER PROTECTION BILL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, today we will also finish considering the bipartisan banking reform bill championed by Senator CRAPO. The Economic Growth, Regulatory Relief, and Consumer Protection Act is cosponsored by a quarter of the Senate—split down the middle between Republicans and Democrats—and was advanced earlier this week by two-thirds of our colleagues. That is because this modest but essential bill tackles a problem that hurts communities in red States and in blue States. It hurts rural areas, farm towns, suburbs, and urban neighborhoods.

The problem is this. The Dodd-Frank Act has proven to be far too blunt of an instrument for regulating our financial system. Regulations meant for Wall Street are crushing Main Street.

Community banks and credit unions play a vital role in our economy. Smaller lenders provide more than 50 percent of small business loans and nearly 80 percent of agricultural loans, but they are struggling to keep their heads above the tide of complicated regulations and compliance costs. Many are going under, and when they do, research shows that access to capital shrinks for small businesses, farmers, ranchers, and low-income Americans.

Senator CRAPO's legislation helps to fix this. It streamlines regulations and

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tailors the rules so smaller lenders aren't caught up in the web of regulations aimed at the biggest banks.

Senators had and still have a wide diversity of views on Dodd-Frank, but all of us should at least agree that Wall Street and Main Street are very different, and that one-size-fits-all is a poor way to address this issue.

I look forward to voting to pass this bill later on today.

TAX REFORM

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, on one final matter, this afternoon President Trump will visit a Boeing production facility in St. Louis. He will hear from local business leaders about how tax reform is giving them room to invest more and hire more.

Missouri's senior Senator tried to block tax reform on a party-line vote. Fortunately, their Republican Senator voted to let them realize this prosperity.

For months now, the headlines have been filled with businesses large and small using tax reform to give workers bonuses, pay raises, and new benefits. But raises and bonuses aren't the only ways that tax reform will help hard-working families.

Thanks to the efforts of Senator HELLER and others in the committee, tax reform doubled the child tax credit and extended it to more middle-class families. When they file their taxes next year, families will be able to take $2,000 off of their tax bill for every qualifying child.

My friend the Democratic leader said repeatedly that tax reform would do nothing to help American workers. The Democratic leader in the House said the law would bring about ''Armageddon.'' I am not sure where they get their predictions, but I don't think they will carry much water with middle-class families in Missouri or Indiana or West Virginia or certainly in Kentucky.

For brand-new parents facing one expense after another, the $2,000 credit will more than cover the cost of a brand-new washer and dryer set or a new refrigerator. For a middle-class family of four, the credit is $4,000. That more than covers the standard down payment on a used car, priced at the national average, or it could kick off a college savings fund.

Just ''crumbs''—really? Maybe adding thousands of dollars to family budgets looks like crumbs in New York or San Francisco, but to most Americans around most kitchen tables, that is real money, and so is the adoption tax credit, which keeps the IRS's hands off more of the hard-earned money that adoptive families need to cover expenses.

Last autumn, I met a wonderful family from Franklin, KY, who adopted their son from Ethiopia in the face of many hurdles and difficulties. His mother wrote my office. She told me:

Our sweet boy is worth every dime and tear.

They were counting on that tax credit, as were many other families. Republicans made sure this credit was preserved.

Here is how that Kentucky mother described the impact. She said:

The tax credit we will receive . . . has allowed us to pay off the last remaining debt we owed. Such a weight lifted off our shoulders.

New pro-family tax cuts and new pro-family tax credits, all while protecting existing pro-family provisions that Americans rely on—that is what every Democrat voted against, but fortunately, it is what every Senate Republican voted for. So the American people won in the end.

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.

ECONOMIC GROWTH, REGULATORY RELIEF, AND CONSUMER PROTECTION ACT

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 2155, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2155) to promote economic growth, provide tailored regulatory relief, and enhance consumer protections, and for other purposes.

Pending:

McConnell (for Crapo) modified amendment No. 2151, in the nature of a substitute.

Crapo amendment No. 2152 (to amendment No. 2151), of a perfecting nature.

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The Democratic leader is recognized.

GUN VIOLENCE

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, at this moment all across the country, students are walking out of school for 17 minutes in memory of the 17 Americans who died at Stoneman Douglas High School 1 month ago today.

Here on the floor of the Senate, I join with those students in remembering the fallen students and teachers of Stoneman Douglas. I join with them in remembering the beautiful children who died at an elementary school in Newtown. I join with them in remembering a long line of American children who perished in the slow-moving tidal wave of gun violence that is consuming our country—all the unopened presents and uncelebrated birthdays, all the empty chairs at dinner tables, graduations, and holidays. These kids had their whole lives ahead of them.

This has gone on for too long. When a disease plagues our people, we seek a cure. When we see drug addiction stealing the lives of our youth, we get together here in Congress and try to do something about it. Why is it that when it comes to gun violence—which is responsible for just as many, if not more, deaths—we throw up our hands and pretend there is no solution?

We know there are commonsense things we could do. Close the dangerous loopholes in the background check system; ensure that anyone with a criminal history or history of mental illness can't get their hands on a gun; and, yes, we should debate the assault weapons ban because weapons of war have no place on our streets and no place in our schools.

While so many students today are mourning their friends and classmates, we in Congress are in a unique position. We alone have the ability to change our laws to make America safer and, God willing, prevent another one of these massacres—these horrible, horrible massacres.

What will we do with that awesome responsibility? I was here on the floor of the Senate when this body failed to advance any legislation in the wake of Sandy Hook. The shame we all felt, and America felt, as this body was unable to act because a powerful special interest seems to have its grip on too many of our colleagues. Well, let this time be different. Let this time be different.

In a moment, I will read the names of 17 Americans—14 children—who were killed in the horrific attack at Stoneman Douglas High School. I am joined by a good number of my colleagues who wish to read the names of children and other victims who died at the hands of gun violence in their States. May their memories—may their memories—inspire us to act.

Alyssa Alhadeff, Martin Duque Anguiano, Scott Beigel, Nicholas Dworet, Aaron Feis, Jaime Guttenberg, Christopher Hixon, Luke Hoyer, Cara Loughran, Gina Montalto, Joaquin Oliver, Alaina Petty, Meadow Pollack, Helena Ramsay, Alex Schachter, Carmen Schentrup, Peter Wang.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, I join with my colleagues today to give the country a sense of the scope of this epidemic. We have tried every means to move our colleagues to action, but in remembering the names of people who have been lost, it is a reminder that there is a human face behind every single one of these numbers, and behind that victim there is a trail of trauma—family members, friends, classmates—that is difficult to unwind.

On December 14, 2012, armed with a tactical semiautomatic weapon with clips of 30 bullets, a gunman walked into Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, CT, and killed 20 children, 6 adults, and himself.

Among them were Rachel D'Avino, 29, a teacher's aide; Dawn Hochsprung, 47, the principal; Anne Marie Murphy, 52, a teacher's aide; Lauren Rousseau, 30 years old, a teacher; Mary Sherlach, 56 years old, a school psychologist; Victoria Soto, a 27-year-old teacher.

The students were Charlotte Bacon, 6 years old; Daniel Barden, 7 years old; Olivia Engel, 6 years old; Josephine Gay, 7 years old, Dylan Hockley, 6 years old; Madeleine Hsu, 6 years old; Catherine Hubbard, 6 years old; Chase Kowalski, 7 years old; Jesse Lewis, 6 years old; Ana Marquez-Greene, 6 years old; James Mattioli, 6 years old; Grace McDonnell, 7 years old; Emilie Parker, 6 years old; Jack Pinto, 6 years old; Noah Pozner, 6 years old; Caroline Previdi, 6 years old; Jessica Rekos, 6 years old; Avielle Richman, 6 years old; Benjamin Wheeler, 6 years old; Allison Wyatt, 6 years old.

I have a 6-year-old, and yesterday he and 24 of his classmates were locked in a tiny bathroom for several minutes for an active shooter drill. When he came home last night, he said: Daddy, I didn't like it.

Since Sandy Hook in Connecticut, there have been hundreds more: Lisa Infante, 52, of Shelton; Antoine Heath, 29, of New Haven; Jonathan Aranda, 19, of New Haven; Miguel Arguelles, 22, of Bridgeport; Cameron Chapman, 25, of Waterbury; Sherrie Blount, 31, of Danbury; Ebony Swaby, 22, of Waterbury; Daniel Joseph Caron, Sr., 63, of Bristol; Michael Watkins, 26, of Bridgeport; Keon Huff, Jr., 15, of Hartford; Joshua Rivera, 28, of New Haven; Deon Rodney, 31, of Bridgeport; Khali Davis, 22, of Bridgeport; Norris Jackson, 36, of Bridgeport; Eduardo Anes, 37, of Hartford; Alfanso Anderson, 49, of Bridgeport; Guy Moore, 26, of Waterbury.

That is just the tip of the iceberg as to what has happened since Sandy Hook, just in my State of Connecticut—representing only 1 percent of the population.

A 6-year-old shouldn't be locked into a bathroom, smushed together with 24 of his classmates, preparing for the day when a shooter potentially walks into his public elementary school. We have a duty to act.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. Mr. President, along with my colleagues today, I rise to address what has unfortunately become the norm for our kids in schools and across the country.

On October 1 in Las Vegas, we saw the worst mass shooting in the history of this country—innocent concertgoers attending an entertainment venue outdoors. There were 58 killed and 500 injured at the hands of a madman with an assault weapon.

In the past 5 years, we have lost an average of 10 children each year to gun violence in Nevada alone. Today I speak in memory of the 50 children from my home State who will never get the chance to grow up and graduate from high school, pursue their dream job, or even have children of their own.

The names I am about to read aloud were beloved sons, daughters, friends, and classmates whose lives were tragically cut short in the last 3 years:

Clemente, 17 years old, from Las Vegas; Jovanni, 16 years old, from Las Vegas; Terry, a 17-year-old from Reno; Tiris, 17 years old, lived in Las Vegas; Marcus, 3 weeks old, lived in Las Vegas; Anthony, 17 years old from Laughlin; John, 11 months old, from Las Vegas; Anthony, 16 years old, from Las Vegas; Bradley, 4 years old, lived in Las Vegas; a young male victim, 16 years old, from Reno; Giovanni, 14 years old, Las Vegas; another young victim, 16 years old, lived in Las Vegas; Luis, 16 years old, from Las Vegas; another young victim, 15 years old, from West Wendover; Sincere, 12 years old, from Las Vegas; Ethan, 17 years old, from Las Vegas; Angelo, 15 years old, lived in Las Vegas; Benjamin, 17 years old, lived in Las Vegas; a young female victim, 3 years old, from Las Vegas; another male victim, 4 years old, lived in Las Vegas; Jhronne, 17 years old, from Las Vegas; Joshua, 17 years old, from Las Vegas; Xonajuk, 14 years old, from Las Vegas; Anhurak, 9 years old, from Las Vegas; Dalavanh, 15 years old, from Las Vegas; Robert, 17 years old, from Las Vegas; another young female victim, 17 years old, from Reno; and Fabriccio, 13 years old, from Las Vegas.

Across the country students are saying ''Never again'' to another child lost to gun violence, and I ask that this Congress do the same thing.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I join my colleagues today to remind all of us of those who have been lost due to gun violence from Washington State.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the names be printed in the RECORD to remind all of us that this is just a fraction of those we know have been lost.

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

Carrie Parsons, Sam Strahan, Deputy Daniel McCartney, Officer Jake Gutierrez, Sergeant Mark Renninger, Officer Ronald Owens, Officer Tina Griswold, Officer Greg Richards, Deputy Anne Jackson, Trooper Troy Giddings, Army Sergeant Timothy Hovey, Michelle Vo, Denise Burditus, Sarai Lara, Shayla Martin, Chuck Eagan, Belinda Galde, Beatrice Dotson, Joe Albanese, Andrew Keriakedes, Kimberly Layfield, Donald Largen.

Gloria Leonidas, Anna Bui, Jordan Ebner, Jake Long, Zoe Galasso, Shaylee Chuckulnaskit, Gia Soriano, Andrew Fryberg, Pam Waechter, Frank Cohens, Jr., Thomas Ianniciello, Erick Valdez-Herrera, James Smith, Michael Clayton, Demonte Young, Karen Perez-Placencia, Carl Phelps, Junior, Justin Love, Brandon Perry, Trina Bolar, Eddie Holmes, Jenna Carlile, Ava Field.

Ashen Field, Tiana Montgomery, LeRoy Lange, Wayne Anderson, Judy Anderson, Scott Anderson, Erica Anderson, Olivia Anderson, Nathan Anderson, Paul Lee, Maxine Harrison, Samantha Harrison, Jayme Harrison, Heather Harrison, James Jr. Harrison, George Brown, Davary Hicks, Jeffrey McLaren, Alex Kelley, Wesley Gennings, Tabitha Apling, Adam Gutierrez, Dennis Sloboda.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I join my colleagues in recognizing that we must take action to protect the safety of our communities.

Senator VAN HOLLEN and I are on the floor, proud of the Maryland students who are here today to speak in solidarity with the students from Parkland, FL, in recognizing and remembering the 17 victims of that tragic episode. We also wish to point out that so many others have lost their lives to gun violence.

In the State of Maryland, we have not been spared. Just Monday night, 10 people, including 2 teenage boys, were wounded in 5 separate shootings in Baltimore. They are the lucky ones who will likely survive their injuries.

Two men killed in separate shootings on Monday were Montrel Rivers, age 20, and Ronald Preston, age 30, both from East Baltimore.

On March 5, 23-year-old Devonte Rhodes was lost to gun violence in Baltimore. One day earlier, Jashawn Ivory, also of Baltimore, was the fatal victim of a shooting.

In February, 28-year-old Jasmine Chandler and her pregnant friend, Mia Robinson, who was also 28, were shot as they sat in a parked car in Northwest Baltimore. Also last month, off-duty Prince George's County Corporal Mujahid Ramzziddin lost his life to gun violence.

Fatal victims of gun violence in Maryland include young people like Tre'Quan Bullock, age 18, the first of seven students at Excel Academy in West Baltimore shot and killed since October 2016.

Lavar Douglas, age 18; Bryant Beverly, age 18; James Martin, age 55; ''Sonny'' Buchanan, age 39; Prenkumar Walekar, age 54; Sarah Ramos, age 34; Laurie Ann Lewis-Rivera, age 25—the list goes on and on and on.

In memory of all of those who have lost their lives to gun violence, it is imperative that we speak out and act.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I wish to thank the young people throughout this country who have the courage to do what the U.S. Congress is not doing; that is, to lead us forward in a way to lower the slaughter we are seeing from coast to coast in terms of gun violence.

The bad news is that people continue to be killed every day. The good news

is that the American people have come together around commonsense solutions to lower the level of gun violence we are experiencing. The American people know that we need to expand and improve background checks, that we need to do away with the gun show loophole, and that we need to do away with the straw man provisions. More and more Americans understand that we should ban the sale and distribution of military-style weapons.

In my small State of Vermont between 2011 and 2016, 42 people were killed by guns. Some of them are Lara Sobel, Julie Falzarano, Regina Herring, Rhonda Herring, Molly Helland, Molly McLain, Kevin DeOliveira, Rhonda Gray, Marcus Austin, and Obafemi Adedapo. These are just some of the people who lost their lives to gun violence in Vermont.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, today many of us will join with Maryland students and other students throughout this region to demand that this Senate and the House of Representatives take commonsense action to reduce gun violence in America—gun violence that has resulted in massacres at concerts, slaughters in churches, and, of course, mass deaths at schools throughout the country, and the death toll we see in the streets of America every day.

I am going to read the names of 17 Maryland young people, people under age 20, who have died just in the last year as a result of gun violence in Maryland.

Andre Galloway, 16 years old; Lavander Edwards, 16 years old; Dashanae Woodson, 17; Shaquan Trusty, 16; Thomas Johnson, 16; Anthony Cheeks, 17; Tyrese Davis, 15; Jeffrey Quick, 15; Xavier Cole Young, 14; Kymici Brown, 17; Larry Aaron, 19; Terry Joseph Bosley, 17; Iyanni Nachae Watkins, 13; Shadi Adi Najjar, 17; Artem Ziberov, 18; Dustin Khoury, 17; and Laila Goodwin, 4 years old. That is not the entire list of people under age 20 who were shot and killed in Maryland. In the State of Maryland, in 2017, 481 souls were lost to homicide, and in 2016, 436 Marylanders were lost to homicide, in all cases by gun violence.

The time to act has long passed, but for goodness' sake, let's join with the students and Americans crying out throughout this country to say enough is enough and enact commonsense gun safety legislation.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, these are the names of 17 children who were killed with guns in my State. I will read their first names only because it makes us remember they could be anyone's children.

Lisa Marie, age 15; William Robert, age 15; Anthony, age 16; Jacob Alexander, age 14; Joseph Anthony, age 17; Terrell, age 3; Joshua Albert, age 15; Alisha, age 17; Jesse, age 18; Cedric, age 18; Darion Joseph, age 15; Justin Daniel, age 17; Jennifer Ellen, age 17; David Andre, age 17; Tabitha Lee, age 16; Terrence, age 16; Anthony Michael, age 3.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, Congress does not have the courage to act on gun violence, but young people across this country are showing the way. They are speaking up, and they are demanding action. I honor them, and I commit to fight alongside them.

I am going to read the names of some of those lost from Massachusetts. They didn't get a chance to join this fight before they died from gun violence, so I take this opportunity to join them to the young people who are fighting today for sensible gun reforms.

Gerrod Brown, 16 years old; Anthony Scaccia, 6 years old; Angel Suazo, 16 years old; Alejandro Lorente, 11 years old; Tenzin Kunkhyen, 16 years old; Janmarcos Pena, 9 years old; Chantal Matiyosus, 16 years old; Latoya Graham, 15 years old; Brian Crowell, 12 years old; Ross Mathieu, 12 years old; Liquarry Jefferson, 8 years old.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, today is a momentous one in the Capitol because the students of America are giving us a real life lesson in the American Constitution. Their energy and passion are a civics lesson for America. What a proud and wonderful moment today is for our democracy. It is sad—indeed, tragic—that this lesson must concern gun violence that has taken such a devastating toll, most recently in Parkland, FL, but literally that toll is true of America every day. We can never become numb to the catastrophic costs of gun violence in America today.

I have the honor to read the names of some of those victims of gun violence; indeed, the Sandy Hook victims. Their deaths are still in our hearts. Their lives are still with us. Their memories are alive today. My friendships with their loved ones, particularly their parents, inspire me to continue this fight against gun violence in America. Their courage and strength have inspired so many of us in this country, and their names deserve to be remembered and read again in this Chamber.

Noah Pozner, age 6; Charlotte Bacon, age 6; Jack Pinto, age 6; Olivia Engel, age 6; Dylan Hockley, age 6; Catherine Hubbard, age 6; Avielle Richman, age 6; Jessica Rekos, age 6; James Mattioli, age 6; Josephine Gay, age 7; Caroline Previdi, age 6; Benjamin Wheeler, age 6; Chase Kowalski, age 6; Ana Marquez-Greene, age 6; Grace McDonnell, age 7; Emilie Parker, age 6; Madeleine Hsu, age 6; Allison Wyatt, age 6; Daniel Barden, age 7; Jesse Lewis, age 6. And their teachers: Victoria Soto, age 27; Lauren Rousseau, age 30; Anne Marie Murphy, age 52; Rachel D'Avino, age 29; Mary Sherlach, their psychologist, age 56; Dawn Lafferty Hochsprung, the principal of the school, age 47.

All of them died in December of 2012. All of them will be remembered not only on this day but forever, not only in Connecticut but around the world. We must always keep them in our hearts as a reason to keep this fight against gun violence going.

In the hearing presently underway in the Judiciary Committee, as I speak, there is testimony from members of the government investigative agencies which have responsibility for stopping gun violence. My fear is, this hearing will be an excuse for inaction and continued complicity by Congress in the failure to act. The complicity in those deaths is on our hands in this body by failing to take action.

There are actions we can take that will help to save lives—commonsense, sensible action—that Congress has failed to take: universal background checks, ban on assault weapons and high-capacity magazines, a red flag statute that will prevent people who are dangerous to themselves or others from having or buying guns. Many of these measures are bipartisan, and we can come together with the lesson from the students and young people who are in the streets coming to the Capitol today. That lesson should be a reminder that the right side of history is in favor of preventing gun violence.

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

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

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, today is 1 month to the day from a tragic shooting in Parkland, FL, where 17 high-school-aged students lost their lives. As so many of my colleagues have done, I come to the floor to remember them, to honor their loss, to speak to their classmates, colleagues, and families, and to share from the experience of my own home State of Delaware.

This morning, today, there are high school students across our country and across my home State of Delaware who are walking out of class to try and draw the attention of those of us in Washington to the urgent need that we work across the aisle to tackle the plague of gun violence that affects communities all over this country. That is why we see young people not just across the country but including in my home State of Delaware demanding that we take action. We need to answer their call.

Let me speak to my hometown of Wilmington, DE. Just last month, 5 people—5 people, last month—under the age of 21 were shot in Wilmington,

and 2017 ended as one of the worst years ever for gun violence and homicides—197 individuals shot, 32 wounded fatally.

If I could, I wish to read the names of 31 individuals who were victims of gun violence in the city of Wilmington in 2017. We are working—Federal, State, and local officials; police departments and community and civic leaders—to try to tackle these challenges, but some of the core causes can only be addressed here. We need to find a way to work together, to respect each other, to compromise, and to tackle the very real epidemic of gun violence in our country.

These 31 Delawareans lost their lives in the city of Wilmington to gun violence in the year 2017: Dariberto Velazquez Mendez, age 32; Santanu Muhuri, age 64; Jermaine Francois, age 34; Charles Mays, age 66; Jamiere Harris, age 21; Kayden Young, age 21; Ainsley Cumberbatch, age 23; Jamiel Congo, age 23; Keevan Hale, age 38; Tajuane Helton, age 41; Richard Crosby, age 30; Yaseem Powell, age 18; Tyree Robinson, age 23; Bryan Brooks, age 29; Tynesia Cephas, age 16; Joquon Coverdale, age 22; Derrius Jackson-Paul, age 23; Sherman Pride, age 22; Shamar Lindsay, age 25; Cyree Watson, age 22; David Bailey, age 23; Nycire Mills, age 23; Kai'Mel Ennals, age 20; Barry White, age 19; Allen Melton, age 28; Albert Hazzard, age 33; Dwayne Grimes, age 19; Justin McDermott, age 18; Andrew Pennewell, age 25; Shawn Lockhart, age 29; and Keanan Samuels, age 20.

The facts of all of these different episodes of violence and loss vary widely, but the conclusion must be the same: We have to find ways to listen to each other, to work across the aisle, and to stop deadly shootings in our country.

I am encouraged that many of my colleagues today have introduced legislation that would take meaningful steps to tackle gun violence and make all of us safer. We must act. We must listen to the voices of young Americans demanding that we do our job and make our country safer.

I yield 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.

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

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

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, in every corner of our country today and across my State in Washington, countless students are taking part in a walkout in support of reforms to combat gun violence. I stand in solidarity with these students who are trying to provide an example of why we must make progress on this issue. No student should fear for their life while attending school, and I will continue to work on solutions here to curb gun violence.

We in Washington State have been able to make progress by passing initiatives to close gun show loopholes and to move forward on extreme person legislation. I should say that that was passed by the citizens of our State. We should look at the example of Washington's initiatives and the success we have had in our State in curbing gun violence as commonsense solutions that should be considered here in Washington, DC.

When we look at these issues, I am reminded of the tragic shootings in our State—of Sam Strahan, from Spokane, who was killed, and individuals who were killed in Washington in a Marysville-Tulalip shooting when Jaylen Fryberg, at just 15 years old, opened fire on students and killed Gia Soriano, Andrew Fryberg, Shaylee Chuckulnaskit, and Zoe Galasso and wounded Nathan Hatch.

These tragedies are more than we can take at our schools. These tragedies are something that we need to address here in Washington. So I stand in solidarity with our students who are trying to address these issues and address our Nation's need to come together and provide better solutions to protect our students.

We are still heartbroken about this shooting in the sense of it being an example of the challenges we face—a young man who took his father's gun. He was a father who never should have had the gun to begin with because he was on a domestic violence restraining order. Yet he was still able to go to a store, get the gun, and keep the gun in the home. Then the young student was able to take that to school.

I want all of these families to know that we still think of them, that we are still mourning the loss of these individuals, and that we are working very hard with our colleagues to come to some resolution.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SULLIVAN). The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I have come to the floor to talk about the legislation before us, which is the banking legislation that has been reported out of the Banking Committee on a bipartisan vote and awaits our attention here today.

Mr. President, like my colleague from Washington State, I will also speak briefly to the issue that is being raised in States across America and in schools across America, where students are demonstrating their support and their solidarity with the folks in Parkland, FL, where 17 kids were lost earlier this year.

My dad was a hunter, grew up in West Virginia. I was born in West Virginia and grew up in Virginia. I bought my first BB gun when I was 10 years old, and I still have the shotgun that my grandfather gave me just before he died, when I was just a pup of a teenager. In my family, we are big believers in Second Amendment rights—to own and bear arms. We are also big advocates of using common sense with respect to weapons.

My dad was not only a hunter, he was also a gun collector. He would buy and sell guns to other people whom he knew. From the time my sister and I were little kids, my dad would always say to us, ''Just use some common sense.'' He said it a lot to us when we were growing up. We must not have had much of it because he said it very often. My dad said that it didn't make common sense for somebody who had serious mental health problems or a felony record to be able to go to a gun show and buy a weapon. It also doesn't make a lot of sense for people who can't fly on airplanes because they are on a terrorist watch list to be able to buy guns. My dad would have said that didn't make a lot of sense.

What is happening across the country is that the kids are leading us. In a verse in the Bible, it reads that the ''child shall lead them.'' I think that is really what is going on here, and I think States are already starting to address this issue in a more constructive way than we have done thus far.

My hope is that the children will lead us and that the States will lead us as well. Maybe we will be able to come to agreement on some of these issues that are respectful of our Second Amendment rights in the Constitution but that are also consistent with the kind of common sense that my dad always talked about with respect to everything, including the buying and selling of weapons.

Mr. President, I remember standing on this floor—I think it was about 8 years ago—when we debated the Affordable Care Act. That was at a time when we were spending about 18 percent of the GDP for healthcare in this country—18 percent. The Japanese were spending 8 percent. They had better results in Japan for their healthcare than we had, and they covered everybody. Think about that. We had been spending 18 percent, and they had been spending 8 percent. They had gotten better results in healthcare—in life longevity for adults and in lower rates of infant mortality. They covered everybody. When people went to bed in this country at that time, 40 million people went to bed without having any healthcare coverage. I think most of us realized at the time that that was not a good thing. I used to say that the Japanese can't be that smart and we can't be that dumb.

We passed the Affordable Care Act. There was a lot of debate and a lot of amendments offered in committees, including in the Finance Committee on which I served, Republican amendments and Democratic amendments. As we know, the final vote here on the floor was not a bipartisan vote. It was a huge issue that we were trying to address—delivering healthcare to 300 million Americans.

For those who supported the legislation, even they realized that it was not perfect and that we were going to have

to come back at some point in time and make changes to it. The Democrats felt that way. The Republicans and Independents felt that way as well. We ended up not coming back and offering modest amendments or making tweaks to the legislation. At the end of the day, we ended up with a battle here, initially over the repeal of the ACA and later over repealing and replacing it.

I felt proud of the work we had done on the ACA. In my knowing it was not perfect, I always looked forward to coming back shortly after we had adopted it, actually, and making some tweaks. I felt the same way about Dodd-Frank, the banking legislation that we passed after the great recession about 7 or 8 years ago.

I will just remind everybody, especially our young pages here today, who were probably about 7 or 8 years old at the time, that we didn't fall into a burning ring of fire—we fell off a cliff. The unemployment rate shot up to 10 percent, and banks stopped lending money to send kids to school or to allow people to buy a car or a house. Credit was shut off for businesses as well. The unemployment rate skyrocketed. Our economy was locked up, and we felt that we had to do something.

What we tried to do was to figure out how we ended up in that mess in the first place. What had gone on is that the people who wanted to buy houses, who were not creditworthy, ended up being loaned money by banks across the country to buy houses. In many cases, the appraisals for the houses were not worth the paper they were written on. The creditworthiness of the buyers was not worth the paper it was written on as well. We had unqualified people who were trying to buy property. They were unable, realistically, to repay their loans. It all worked just fine until we went into a slump. As the unemployment rate started to go up, people found it more and more difficult to make their payments.

In the olden days, I remember the first house I lived in when I was a kid. My parents borrowed money from a bank for a mortgage, and then they paid it off to that bank. I remember, when they paid off the mortgage to the house they owned in Danville, VA, it was a big deal. My dad actually took the mortgage and burned it up outside, not inside our house.

Yet, 7 or 8 years ago, for a lot of people, after they borrowed money from banks, the banks sold those mortgages to somebody else, oftentimes to Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac would package those mortgages into mortgage-backed securities—into a security that could be sold to investors in this country and to investors around the world. As long as housing prices continued to rise, everything worked fine. When they stopped rising and started falling, a number of those mortgage-backed securities were riddled—almost like Swiss cheese—with bad mortgages. As more and more people failed to be able to pay their mortgages, the mortgage-backed securities lost their value. Those investors around the world who had invested seriously in mortgage-backed securities got scared, and it started to spiral down from there.

That was not really the only reason we got into a burning ring of fire all those years ago, but it was a big reason. Part of what we decided to do with Dodd-Frank was to make sure that didn't happen again. We would make other mistakes, but we were not going to make that mistake again.

The legislation was passed. Again, not everybody was for it. I voted for it and helped to write some of the provisions in the bill. I knew at the time, as I think we all did, that anything that big—a massive change in our banking regulatory approach in this country—was going to have to be tweaked and revisited just like the Affordable Care Act. It has taken a while.

For the most part, our Republican friends—not all and probably not including the Presiding Officer—were interested in repealing Dodd-Frank. I and, I think, the majority of folks on our side were interested in fixing the provisions that needed to be fixed but not in throwing the baby out with the bath water.

The legislation before us today was reported out of the Banking Committee but not unanimously. It was reported out, I think, last fall, by the chairman of the committee, MIKE CRAPO from Idaho, whose name is on the bill. I am going to spend some time here today talking about what it does and what it doesn't do.

If the bipartisan bill before us becomes law, 90 percent of Dodd-Frank will remain unchanged. Let me say that again. If the banking bill before us today becomes law, 90 percent of Dodd-Frank will remain unchanged.

The legislation that has been authored by Senator CRAPO and others does not touch some of Dodd-Frank's most important reforms. Some of those most important reforms include the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. It remains. The Financial Stability Oversight Council remains. It is affectionately known as FSOC, and it works to identify and to address overarching threats to the financial system. The regulations that crack down on risky derivative trading remain, and the ability of the FDIC to wind down failing complex institutions through an orderly liquidation authority remains.

Under this legislation, the Federal Reserve would retain the authority to apply enhanced standards to any bank with over $100 billion in assets. In addition, banks with over $100 billion would still be subject to numerous regulatory requirements. Those requirements include, one, meaningful stress tests; two, increased capital requirements to provide a cushion in tough times and bad times; and, third, vital international reforms to leverage in liquidity standards.

I have a number of charts. I have more charts today than I think I have ever brought to the Senate floor. I promise we will be done by sundown. It will seem that long, but in reality it will not be.

Let me start off, if I could, with a couple of claims made about the bill and, then, talk about the reality.

One of the claims is that this bill would gut Wall Street reform that was passed after the financial crisis to prevent another global meltdown.

That is the claim. Here is the reality. This bipartisan bill makes targeted, commonsense fixes that will provide tangible relief to community banks and credit unions, while leaving in place the rules and regulations that will keep Wall Street accountable.

Before we look at the next claim, like the Presiding Officer, I do customer calls all over my State. The Presiding Officer has a big State, and I have a little State. I visit businesses, schools, hospitals—you name it. I do customer calls literally every week, including the credit unions and small community banks. Sometimes they come to see me, and oftentimes I go to see them. For years, during those customer calls, visiting credit unions and community banks, especially in the central and southern part of our State, they would say to us: We didn't create the financial meltdown that led us to the great recession. Yet we bear the burden of the regulatory reform for that meltdown.

It wasn't their fault. We need a lot of the regulation that is adopted in Dodd-Frank, but keep in mind that credit unions and community banks didn't cause the problem but yet they bear a big part of the burden of fixing it.

Another claim is that this bill rolls back stress test requirements for all big banks. I will say it again. This bill rolls back stress test requirements for all big banks. That is the claim.

Here is the reality. This bill continues to require stress tests for all banks over $100 billion in assets. That would be the largest financial institutions. That is the reality.

The claim is that this bill does nothing to protect consumers. That is the claim—that the bill does nothing to protect consumers.

Here is the reality. This bill actually creates new protections. It provides free credit freezes and allows year-long fraud reports. It allows parents to turn credit reporting on and off for minors. It provides free credit monitoring for all Active-Duty servicemembers.

I am a retired Navy captain. Our Presiding Officer is a colonel—Navy salute.

It was one of the things that Senator COONS and I insisted on in order to support this legislation, and that was to provide free credit monitoring for all Active-Duty servicemembers as part of the bill.

Another reality in terms of new protections is that it encourages banks to report suspicious behavior they become aware of.

That is a little bit of the claims and the reality. I can go on with that, but I will not. I will actually turn to the words of other people, starting off with questions from Senator JON TESTER of Montana, a senior member of the Banking Committee. The first question he asked last November was to a fellow who had been nominated to be Chairman of the Federal Reserve, Jay Powell, who was confirmed on this floor with 80 or 90 votes—a big bipartisan vote.

Senator TESTER asked Mr. Powell, who was a Governor, if I am not mistaken, at the time within the Federal Reserve System. He asked:

Part of that bill—

The bill before us today—

is eliminating the Volcker Rule compliance for community banks that have less than $10 billion, as long as they have less than 5 percent, trading assets and liabilities. Any concerns there?

The witness, Federal Reserve Chairman Jay Powell, said: ''None.''

Senator TESTER went on to ask the Federal Reserve Chairman—I think this was in February of last year. Senator TESTER, my colleague, is a farmer out in Montana. He asked Jay Powell, who was not yet the Chairman of the Federal Reserve:

But I'm a dirt farmer, OK? I just, kind of, read things as they are and don't read a lot of extra stuff into it. You're the—you're the man on the Fed and so I need to know your opinion. Does 2155 require the Federal Reserve to weaken any of the Dodd-Frank enhanced prudential standards for . . . [foreign banks] such as Deutsche Bank, UBS or Barclays?

This was the response of Chairman Jay Powell of the Federal Reserve:

It does not, according to my reading of the text.

I will just add that this is the text of the bill.

Senator CRAPO, the chairman of the Banking Committee, has put together this bipartisan legislation, with a lot of help from JON TESTER and others. In a hearing last July, he questioned the woman who was then-Chairman of the Federal Reserve, Janet Yellen. I think she did a very good job. She stepped down, and I thank her for her service and leadership.

Senator CRAPO said:

There appears to be growing consensus that Congress should consider changing the $50 billion SIFI threshold [for big banks]; also, changing the Volcker rule, exempting certain institutions from company-run stress testing requirements and reducing the burdens on community banks and credit unions.

He went on to ask:

Do you agree that it would be appropriate for Congress to act in each of those areas?

He asked: Do you believe it would be appropriate for Congress to act in each of those areas—changing the SIFI threshold, changing the Volcker rule, exempting certain institutions from stress test requirements, reducing the burdens on community banks and credit unions.

Do you agree that it would be appropriate for Congress to act in each of those areas?

She said four words: ''I do—I do.''

Again, in February of last year, Federal Reserve Chairman Janet Yellen, on the Volcker rule, said:

So, yes, let me reiterate what I said there. It's important to look for every way we can to mitigate the regulatory burden. What we've suggested previously and I would reiterate with respect to Dodd-Frank is that Congress might want to consider exempting community banks from the Volcker rule. . . .

That is what she said last February, a year ago.

Then, former Federal Reserve Governor Daniel Tarullo spoke. I think his position is held now by Andy Cohen. Last year, Daniel Tarullo said:

We have found that the $50 billion in assets threshold established in the Dodd-Frank Act for banks to be ''systemically important,'' and thus subject to a range of stricter regulations, was set too low. . . .

He went on to say:

The fact that community banks are subject at all to some of the Dodd-Frank Act rules seems unnecessary. . . .

I will say it again.

The fact that community banks are subject at all to some of the Dodd-Frank Act rules seems unnecessary to protect safety and soundness, and quite burdensome on the very limited compliance capabilities of small banks.

Dan Tarullo said that last April.

Here are the words of former Federal Reserve chairman Paul Volcker, whom I got to know and work with when I was in the House of Representatives. He was Chairman of the Federal Reserve, and I was on the Banking Committee. He was a giant then and still is—literally and figuratively.

Here are his words in February of this year. He said:

I am pleased that the Senate Banking Committee has forged ahead with meaningful bipartisan financial reform to ease the unnecessary regulatory strain on small banks, helping them to flourish as an engine of economic prosperity. . . .

He goes on to say that he doesn't agree with every single word of the legislation before us today, but he concluded by saying:

I thank you for the opportunity to comment on this important piece of legislation and look forward to its swift passage.

This is in a letter to Senator BROWN, I believe. It doesn't mean he agrees with every single sentence and paragraph, but he looks forward to it.

Former Congressman and former Banking Committee chairman and my colleague Barney Frank, spoke on whether Dodd-Frank needs reforms in a CNBC interview last February. He was asked if Dodd-Frank needed reforms, and he said: ''Of course.''

On the $50 billion SIFI threshold, he said: ''I think it should be changed,'' and he went on to say: ''It's too low, I believe it is.''

Again, former Congressman Barney Frank on November 27 of last year said:

If this bill became law tomorrow, well over 90 percent of the Wall Street reform bill would be unchanged. . . . The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau; the strict regulation of derivative trading; the orderly liquidation authority; the risk retention requirements on securitizations and most other provisions would remain in full force. . . .

In full force.

We are almost done here. I thank my colleague from Vermont for his patience.

This is former Congressman Barney Frank on relief for community banks. These words are from the CNBC interview last February, a year ago.

With regard to banks under $10 billion, some of them are spending more money than they should complying with provisions that were never really intended to apply to them and I understand that. The Volcker Rule which says that large banks should do more lending and less derivative trading, which I think is a wholly good thing, a number of small banks which never did much derivative trading are overdoing the effort to show [that] they aren't there. I would exempt some of the banks under $10 billion from some of those rules and I would agree to raise the $50 billion threshold.

Last but not least, a couple of comments more—one from the Bipartisan Policy Center recently; the words of two of the folks from there:

As U.S. politics descends ever further into partisanship, there are still signs that old-fashioned legislating is not dead. This week, the Senate Banking Committee will mark up one of the first significant pieces of financial regulatory legislation in years with real bipartisan support. . . .

These are not major changes. Yet taken together, they are constructive and should provide greater incentives to extend credit, particularly to Main Street small businesses, without undermining the progress made since the crisis in making the financial system safer.

This statement is from the president and CEO of the Independent Community Bankers of America:

The markup of S. 2155 is a rare opening for real, impactful relief that will strengthen economic growth, job creation, and consumer protection. It is the culmination of years of collaborative effort to achieve consensus among Members of Congress across the spectrum and community bankers in their home States and districts. Community bankers urge all members of the Senate Banking Committee to vote YES on S. 2155.

This is from the president and CEO of the Credit Union National Association, or CUNA:

This bill includes credit union-specific provisions that provide meaningful regulatory relief, a sign that policymakers are praying close attention to the needs of credit union members. We thank Senator CRAPO and his colleagues for working across party lines to advance regulatory relief legislation that benefits community financial institutions, and look forward to continuing to work closely with them as the bill moves through the legislative process.

I hope we will keep these words in mind in the hours and days ahead as we take up this important legislation.

I have no interest in undoing Dodd-Frank. I am a strong supporter of Dodd-Frank. I helped to write some of the provisions in Dodd-Frank, and I have no interest in pulling the plug on Dodd-Frank.

Can we make some reasonable changes? Yes, we can. I felt the same way about the Affordable Care Act.

With that, I yield the floor to my friend from Vermont, and I thank him for his patience.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

GUN VIOLENCE

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I was just at a hearing in the Judiciary Committee, and we were talking about what continues to happen, over and over again in this country—mass shootings. We are an outlier in this country, as we have far more shooting deaths per capita than any other similar country in the world, and we heard some of the things that make it difficult to attack the problem.

For example, Congress has passed legislation that cripples the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms. When ATF is asked to perform a trace on a gun involved in criminal activity, they have to go to a warehouse with stacks of papers to do a physical search of records. They search warehouses that contain the amount of information I can store on an iPhone and find in a matter of seconds. This physical search is something Congress has required them to do.

We heard about the fact that you can buy magazines carrying 15 or 20 rounds, even though many states including my own State of Vermont, limit the number of rounds you can have in your weapon for deer season.

We want to give the deer a chance, but we don't want to give children in school the same chance. This is the world upside down. We limit what you can buy and use to go deer hunting but not what can be sold to people who want to shoot children.

Outside the Capitol right now, there are young students who have brought their powerful message to those of us inside the Capitol. They say thoughts and prayers are welcome, but what the United States needs right now is action.

I said this morning at the hearing that I am tired of people saying: ''Oh, this is not the time to talk about taking steps. This is the time for prayer and reflection,'' as though it is an either/or thing. It is getting kind of weary to hear that refrain over and over again—this is not the time for action. Tell that to the parents, tell that to the other children, tell that to their siblings when they are at the funeral because somebody shot them.

Now, I am very, very proud of those students in Vermont whose voices are joining this nationwide chorus of student voices. We have Vermonters showing up, even though we have had 10 to 20 inches of snow in some towns in Vermont in the last day or so, and it is still snowing heavily there now. We know that in Washington, half an inch of snow would close the place down but not in my State. These Vermont students are not going to use a heavy snowstorm as an excuse for not showing up to deliver their message. We are here in comfort in a secure building. We ought to act in solidarity with these students and with the students who put shoes out here on the lawn of the Capitol—rows and rows and rows of shoes—symbolizing children who have died.

Now, I remember a little over a year ago, millions of women across the Nation brought their energy into the halls of government. In my own hometown of Montpelier, VT, where I was born, our State's capitol, there are only 8,500 people. We had 19,000 to 20,000 show up on the statehouse lawn for the women's march there. Brave and strong, they were speaking out. My sister was one of those joining them. In fact, some had to park their cars on the interstate; they caused such a traffic jam just to be there.

I remember the hundreds and hundreds of Vermonters who came here to Washington. My wife Marcelle and I hosted them before the march with coffee and doughnuts, and we had to keep sending out for more coffee and more doughnuts because of the number of people there.

We marched with them alongside our daughter and granddaughter. We saw people of all races, all backgrounds, all across the economic and political spectrum marching for women's rights. They made a difference, and now our students are doing the same thing. Our students are acting as a catalyst to break the inertia that has prevented Congress from dealing with the plague of gun violence.

When I was chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee, we brought several pieces of gun legislation here, and even those that got 50-plus votes were blocked from going further. There was heavy pressure from powerful lobbyists. The lobby that wasn't heard, though, were the children who were facing this danger. Now they are being heard. Now they are being heard.

The question is, does Congress have the courage to listen? The strength of our democracy is citizen engagement. At a time when it has never been more important to protect and engage in our democracy, I am deeply moved by the students who are making their voices heard today. I think of those students in Florida and elsewhere who faced a horrendous thing that most of us will never see, even if we have been in combat, but they had the courage to go back to school after the shooting. They saw this tragedy, they faced the danger, they saw their classmates and teachers killed, and they still had the courage to go back to school.

Well, I would ask: does Congress have the courage to do something? That is the question they are asking. If we can't answer it positively, then we in Congress have failed these students.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

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

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

WOMEN'S HEALTHCARE

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, time and again, President Trump and Vice President PENCE have made clear they will put extreme ideology ahead of women's health and constitutional freedoms. We have seen it in their efforts to undermine women's ability to get reproductive healthcare from providers they trust. We have seen it in their efforts to let employers deny women birth control coverage based on what they believe and regardless of what the women who work for them believe. We have seen it in the administration's close coordination with a hate group on tailoring policies to undermine Planned Parenthood. We heard it loud and clear when Vice President PENCE laid out his far-right vision that women's freedom to have safe and legal abortions could end in our time. We have also seen it implemented to an appalling extreme in Scott Lloyd's inexcusably harmful and ideologically driven actions as Director of the Office of Refugee Resettlement.

The Office of Refugee Resettlement is a little-known but very important office inside the Department of Health and Human Services. They are supposed to be helping resettle refugees who are fleeing violence, to resettle and integrate Iraqis and Afghans whose lives are actually in danger because they work for the U.S. Government. They provide rehabilitative, social, and legal services to survivors of torture, and they are charged with overseeing a network of providers across the United States who care for unaccompanied children who arrive at our Nation's borders—children and youth—seeking safety in our country.

However, under Director Lloyd, it has become a testing ground for the radical Trump-Pence agenda to interfere with women's health choices. Repeatedly, under the supervision of Director Lloyd's office, when young women—some of whom are survivors of sexual abuse—have sought safe and legal abortions, his response has been to personally step in and put up barriers to their care. He worked to prevent young women in his custody from speaking with lawyers about their rights. He personally interfered to try to pressure women out of their decisions to have abortions. Director Lloyd even had his office explore the possibility of reversing an abortion once the medical procedure was underway—a practice that the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists has noted is ''unproven and unethical.''

A deposition from ongoing litigation shows just how reckless and irresponsible Scott Lloyd has been. In emails,

he admitted he was making these decisions on an ad hoc basis. In other words, Director Lloyd wasn't concerned with fulfilling his duty as the head of the Office of Refugee Resettlement. He wasn't concerned with the well-being of women. He wasn't concerned with their personal decisions or their freedoms. He was only concerned with furthering an extreme, ideological agenda.

Women and men across the country are not having it. They are standing up and standing against Scott Lloyd's extreme policies. Many have signed a petition calling for his removal, and they are just the latest addition to a growing outcry against Director Lloyd's willful disregard for women's rights.

Many Senate and House Democrats have called for him to step down. I am again calling on Secretary Azar to fire Scott Lloyd as Director of the Office of Refugee Resettlement because Scott Lloyd's actions and his personal beliefs about what women can and can't do with their bodies show a fundamental disrespect for the rights and equality of women, as does setting policy that has huge implications for women's health and lives through an ''ad hoc'' process.

Scott Lloyd's actions to undermine women's health and to deny women's rights are utterly unacceptable, and they cannot go unchecked. We cannot permit bullies to try to intimidate vulnerable young women who are making the healthcare decisions that are right for them—not President Trump, not Vice President PENCE, and not Scott Lloyd.

I am going to keep standing up and fighting for the rights of these women and immigrants across the country and for the rule of law that ensures those rights. I am going to keep fighting against those who think they are above the law and who want to roll back the clock on these freedoms. I urge my colleagues to join me today in standing with women, standing for the rule of law, and calling for Scott Lloyd's immediate removal from office.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I am pleased to join my colleague from Washington to talk about the challenge that women both here in the United States and across the world are facing from the excesses of this administration.

What we have seen time and again is that the Trump administration has exhibited a dangerous obsession with rolling back women's reproductive rights here in the United States and abroad. Just in the past 14 months in office, this administration has launched a multipronged and aggressive assault on women's rights. One of President Trump's first acts in office was to reinstate and greatly expand the global gag rule, which prohibits U.S. funding for international women's health organizations that so much as mention abortion. What they did was to say that this is not going to just affect those organizations but any health organization that the United States puts funding into. This action will cause a significant increase in unsafe abortions and maternal deaths across the developing world. The administration has proposed budgets that would eliminate all Federal funding for Planned Parenthood, and, going even further, would prohibit States that on their own would direct Federal funds to Planned Parenthood for those same health services. They would prohibit States from doing that.

Most recently, the State Department reportedly removed data on reproductive healthcare from its annual human rights report. So is the idea that if you don't give people access to data, then it doesn't happen? The administration instructed career employees at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to remove words such as ''fetus,'' ''diversity,'' ''evidence-based,'' and ''science-based'' from their official vocabulary.

Well, if we are not basing decisions at the CDC on evidence-based and science-based data, then what are we basing it on? As Senator MURRAY says, they are basing it on ideology. Well, that is a lousy way to make a decision about where to put our healthcare money.

This administration has even attacked women's access to birth control, issuing new rules that allow almost any company to opt out of the birth control benefit in the Affordable Care Act.

Simply put, you cannot support women's empowerment unless you support women's access to family planning. Recently, the United Nations Population Fund's ''Family Planning 2020'' report explained why women's access to all healthcare services, including abortion, is so vital both to women's advancement and to their country's economic development. The report says:

> Every woman and girl must be able to exercise her basic human right to control her own reproductive health. Access to safe, voluntary family planning is fundamental to women's empowerment. It's also fundamental to achieving our global goals for a healthier, more prosperous, just, and equitable world.

The report goes on to say:

> Rights-based family planning programs have a greater ripple effect than almost any other development investment, from saving lives and improving health to strengthening economies, transforming societies, and lifting entire countries out of poverty. It is the surest path to the future we want.

Well, I couldn't agree more. Study after study demonstrates that access to comprehensive healthcare services is closely correlated to the economic success of women and their families. By contrast, lack of access to basic healthcare services, including family planning counseling and all birth control options, is a major factor in perpetuating the dangerous, life-threatening cycle of poverty.

Now, I think it is really ironic that those who seek to outlaw abortion do so under what they say is the pro-life banner. I think it is ironic because we know from experience that outlawing abortion doesn't end abortion, it simply drives it into the shadows and unsafe conditions. Like many in this Chamber, I remember the days before 1973, when abortion was against the law. An estimated 1.2 million women each year resorted to illegal abortions, typically performed in unsanitary conditions by unlicensed practitioners and often resulting in infection, hemorrhage, and even death. Just about every woman of my generation has a story about a friend or an acquaintance who had to resort to this kind of risky, dangerous abortion or who thought she had to resort to that.

Well, I don't think we want to go back to those days. We know that right now in the United States, we have the lowest level of abortions that we have had since 1973. That is a success that is directly attributed to the increased access to contraception that is in the Affordable Care Act.

We know that again and again, studies have found that policies to limit or ban abortion outright have the unintended consequence of dramatically increasing abortion overall. Conversely, when family planning services are accessible, the rates of unplanned pregnancies and abortion go down. Again, according to the Guttmacher Institute, we are seeing success in terms of reducing the number of abortions and unintended pregnancies.

Now, what we have seen internationally is that the global gag rule has had especially lethal consequences. It denies access to safe abortions and, in doing so, it dramatically increases abortions overall. A Stanford University study of implementation of the global gag rule during the George W. Bush administration found that the number of women having induced abortions more than doubled in countries that were most impacted by the policy.

Today, in Nigeria—which is the one country we have data on to date, based on the expansion of the global gag rule in the Trump administration—health workers on the ground estimate that because of the administration's new global gag rule, there will be an additional 660,000 abortions in Nigeria from now through 2020, and that could result in nearly 10,000 additional maternal deaths.

The Trump administration claims it wants a smaller government. The President ran on a platform promising to get the government out of people's lives. Yet it is doing everything possible to inject the government and law enforcement into some of the most intimate, difficult, and personal decisions a woman has to make.

This is not only insulting, but it is condescending to all women. We don't need guidance from the government for an adult. We need to be able to consult those we choose to consult and make

our own decisions about the healthcare we need.

To take away women's access to full reproductive health services, including abortion, is demeaning and unacceptable. We cannot allow the Trump administration to turn back the clock and put women's lives at risk.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. ERNST). The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, first of all, I wish to commend my Pacific Northwest colleague Senator MURRAY for taking this time to talk about these exceptionally important issues. I had a chance to listen to the thoughtful remarks of our friend from New Hampshire—3,000 miles away from the Pacific Northwest—and she has been, as usual, extraordinarily eloquent and passionate about the cause of women's health, and it is great to be able to follow her.

We can sum up the healthcare policy of the Trump administration in just one word: discrimination. I am here with my colleagues today to discuss a particularly alarming example of the Trump agenda of healthcare discrimination and an example of where the administration is working overtime to make women's healthcare worse.

What is particularly frustrating about this is we are dealing with a bureaucracy run amok. The Office of Refugee Resettlement, which is part of the Department of Health and Human Services, has made a critical judgment. They will put ideology over the law of the land when it comes to the medical care available to the young women in its custody.

Under Director Scott Lloyd, the office has attempted to block several immigrants from exercising their freedom of choice with respect to reproductive health. It has no legal right to do so. This issue is settled law, but this hasn't stopped the Director and its agency from dragging young women into prolonged, taxpayer-funded court battles.

There are roughly 5,000 young people in the Office of Refugee Resettlement's custody. Most of them are from Central American countries. Many of these young women are survivors of sexual violence. They are on their own, and they didn't come here to have somebody else's ideology dictating their medical care. In my view, this office ought to uphold its duty to provide all the care these young women have a right to receive, and it ought to check the ideology at the door.

That is not how the Office of Refugee Resettlement is working under Mr. Lloyd. According to a recent report from VICE News, ''Mr. Lloyd receives a spreadsheet every week containing information on every pregnant teen in their custody.''

He reportedly sought to interfere in a young woman's medical procedure that was actually already underway. In another case, the report says he put a young woman at further risk by directing staff to inform her parents—against her wishes—that she had an abortion.

Last fall, an HHS official was asked about Mr. Lloyd's direction of the office and the matter of interfering in the medical care of young women. Here is what that spokesman said: ''He by law has custody of these children, just like a foster parent, he knows that that's a lot of responsibility and he is going to make choices that he thinks are best for both the mother and the child.''

I say to my colleagues, that is just rampant government paternalism summed up in just one sentence.

Now, it ought to be no surprise, given his background, that this is the direction the office is taking. This is a gentleman who has made a career out of opposing the right of women to make their own judgments about their own healthcare choices. He has fought access to contraception and to a variety of healthcare services that are important to women. His views are right in line—right in line—with this administration's agenda of healthcare discrimination against women.

Right out of the gate, the administration and Republicans in Congress pushed for legislation that would have deprived hundreds of thousands of women the right to see the doctor of their choosing. They made it harder for many of those women to obtain routine, vital medical care from providers like Planned Parenthood, including cancer screenings, prenatal care, preventive services, physicals, and a whole host of preventive services that have absolutely nothing to do with abortion—nothing to do with abortion.

Then the Trump administration sought to deny women guaranteed, no-cost access to contraception. When women have guaranteed access to contraception, it means healthier pregnancies, healthier newborns, a lower risk of cancer, and, particularly, economic fairness for women of modest means, but the Trump administration wants to unravel that guarantee as well.

Then, the Trump team is green-lighting junk insurance policies that drive up the cost of healthcare for women with preexisting conditions, and they are involved in very elaborate—as my colleague knows—discussions with the State of Idaho. People ought to understand exactly what the Trump administration is saying to Idaho because they are going to say it to other people. The Trump administration is saying to Idaho: You can discriminate, just don't be too obvious about it. That is their position with respect to these junk insurance policies.

The administration is exploring ways to place lifetime limits on the care people can get from Medicaid, and that is a frightful proposition for the millions of older women who count on Medicaid to pick up the tab for their nursing and home-based care.

These are serious healthcare problems around this country. By the way, we never heard anything in the campaign of 2016 about how we were going to turn back the clock on older women for whom Medicaid is often a lifeline for long-term care, but that is what we are dealing with now. These are serious healthcare challenges women face right now—on top of it, a raging epidemic of opioid misuse and abuse and the skyrocketing cost of prescription medicine. When we are talking about the Office of Refugee Resettlement, as my colleagues talked about so eloquently, there is also a lot to be done to fix our broken immigration system.

Finally, it is important, as we get into these issues, to recognize how deep-seated this policy of healthcare discrimination is. The example my colleagues are talking about here today is an example of massive ideological overreach and paternalism. It is happening at the Office of Refugee Resettlement, but it is not the only example. This is behavior that ought to stop.

I thank my colleague, Senator MURRAY, who has been our go-to person for years and years on women's healthcare. I want her and our colleagues to know that I will be doing everything I can to be a part of their efforts to push back on these policies that turn back the clock and particularly discriminate against the rights of women.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

BUDGET REFORM

Mr. LANKFORD. Madam President, when I was in college, I remember watching a State of the Union speech by President Reagan in which he took a 43-pound stack of papers and set them on the podium. As he was giving his State of the Union Address, he said: This is the budget bill that has been given to me—43 pounds of it, all stacked up. It was a famous moment when the President said: Do not send this to me again.

Republicans and Democrats alike stood and cheered. They said: That is a terrible way to do government.

For 5 of the next 6 years there were no more Omnibus appropriations bills, but that did not last. Since 1986, there have been 22 Omnibus appropriations bills. People may ask, what is that?

By law, Congress is to do 12 appropriations bills. Each part of that has a section of the budget, and each one of those is passed as a stand-alone. First, they go through subcommittee, then committee, then to the full floor, and then they pass. But 17 times since 1998 and 22 times since 1986, all of those bills were just looped together to make one giant document—the 43-pound document that President Reagan dropped in 1988.

What is going wrong? We have another one of those omnibus bills next week, in which all of the appropriations bills have been looped together to try to simplify the process, but this actually provides even less transparency.

What do we do with this? How did we get here?

The short story is that the Budget Control Act of 1974 was created right after Watergate in a fight between Congress and President Nixon over the fact that President Nixon was told that Congress wanted to be able to spend certain amounts of money in certain areas, and President Nixon basically didn't want to spend it. So Congress pushed back and put additional requirements on him to actually do what Congress was compelling him to do in that 1974 Budget Act, to try to create more transparency and provide greater leadership for Congress. Out of that was born this Budget Act, but also the House and Senate committees and the Congressional Budget Office were born.

All of those things were to create more input and create a system in which, each year, the President would create a budget and would submit that budget to Congress. Then that budget would lead to authorizing bills from the different committees. And then, from the authorizing, it would lead to appropriations bills and final passage.

Well, how is that working for us? It is not. It created a process so complicated and so slow that, although it makes sense on paper and in legislative language, it doesn't actually work year to year, and it pushes us into what is called continuing resolutions—or, as is commonly thrown around here, CRs. Every year since 1995, Congress has had at least one CR—one continuing resolution; that is, taking last year's appropriations bill, just changing the date on it, and moving it over. There is no strategic planning, nothing. That is a problem for us.

The budget process itself has broken down and has fallen into omnibus spending bills, with 12 bills, all combined. Some years, we fail to get budget bills done at all.

The authorizing process that is supposed to go between the budget and the appropriations process has completely collapsed for us. In fact, in the 2017 appropriations, it happens that there were 256 expired authorizations in the final appropriations bills. About $310 billion of what was appropriated was not authorized even last year. Some of those things hadn't been authorized for more than a decade. Finally, we have passed all appropriations bills only four times in the last 44 years.

We have a major problem with the way we do budgeting. Year after year, people visit me or people bring this to me in townhall meetings or at the grocery store or at Taco Bell; people catch me and say: What is going on with the budget process?

I can tell you that if it sounds as if you say that every year, it is because you have said that every year now for a couple of decades.

How do we get out of this? There is a bipartisan, bicameral committee that has been put together and met for the first time last week. There are 16 total—8 Democrats and 8 Republicans, 8 from the Senate and 8 from the House. Our mission is to revise the way we do budgeting. A lot of Americans probably will not watch this process, but it will be extremely important that we actually fix it.

I am convinced that we are not going to get a better budget product until we get a better budget process. This committee itself is designed in such a way that it takes out the partisanship, not just with equal numbers on both sides, but the agreement from the very beginning is that if we don't have a majority of Democrats and a majority of Republicans signing off on the final proposal, we will not bring it to the floor. If we do, we hope to fix the budget process itself.

The budget process is set up to create gimmicks in the budgeting rather than to fix them. We have a 10-year budget window, and there are all these gimmicks that have been created to try to move spending outside the 10-year budget window to make things look as though they are actually going to balance when they actually don't balance. I would like for us to consider some things like biennial budgeting. Twenty States budget every 2 years. It gives budget certainty for 24 months. We should get that. That helps our economy. That helps our businesses. That helps our agencies. That helps in contracting. That helps us avoid these continuing resolutions—if we can actually do budgeting in 2-year cycles.

I would like to get out of the perpetual focus on government shutdowns and the countdown clocks that happen. I proposed a bill 5 years ago called the Government Shutdown Prevention Act. It is designed to get us to a spot where we actually put the pressure on Congress to get the job done but hold agencies and hold the American people harmless while we work through the process.

Quite frankly, I think the President's budget is a meaningless document. It has never been passed by any President of any party. I don't mind the Presidents releasing their budget priorities—ways we can save money, duplication that they see, key aspects. That is entirely appropriate. But the President's budget every year just becomes a big fight, and when it is late, it throws the process off even more and gives Congress one more reason to say that they are not getting their job done because someone else was late in doing theirs. We should reform that.

We should reform the way we do debt limits. We are the only country in the world that does this. We have had some kind of debt limit since the 1920s, actually. But originally, when it went to the form that it is in now in the late 1930s, it was established as a way to protect us from adding more debt, and it did work for decades.

It has not worked for decades. It has been another fiscal cliff out there that has not resolved anything. We have to fix that so it does what it is supposed to do or take it away, but we can't destabilize international economies because we can't get our job done here.

We have to have some sort of focus on both revenue and spending. We should deal with real consequences when we don't get things done on time. We have to build internal processes that actually get things done. We have to pay attention to $20 trillion, and growing, in national debt.

These are things we can get done, but they will not get done if we don't actually fix the process. There is no moment to actually get the big things and hard things done.

My hope and my commitment, with this body and with this group of 16 of us who have grouped together from the House and the Senate—Republicans and Democrats—is this: Bring a proposal to us that is a fair, nonpartisan proposal that is not focused on what party is in power at that moment but looks at the fiscal health of the Nation, how we can plan for the future, and how we can actually get off this endless cycle of nonaction and get back to a process of predictable budgeting and appropriations. We will bring some of those solutions in the days ahead.

Right now we are meeting and talking. I invite any Member of this body who wants to contribute to catch any one of us in this group. We are not saying that the 16 of us are exclusive to solving the problems.

I also say the same thing to the American people: Anyone in my State or anyone around the country who wants to contribute good ideas, bring them. Let's add these good ideas together. Let's fix the process. Let's get back to actually talking about how we solve the budget issues rather than how we solve our internal processes in the House and the Senate. That is the last thing we should be arguing about and the first thing we should fix.

With that, I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Madam President, according to the latest Gallup poll, 81 percent of the American people disapprove of the way Congress is doing its job—81 percent. I suspect the other 19 percent are not really paying attention. If you want to know why the American people have so much anger and contempt for what goes on in Congress, it is because, time after time, what we are seeing is Congress under the Republican leadership doing exactly the opposite of what the American people want.

This week could mark a new low for the Republican leadership in the Senate in terms of ignoring what the American people want and doing what they don't want. Today marks the 1-month anniversary of the tragic mass shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, FL. I just had the opportunity to be outside, in front of the Capitol, with thousands of beautiful, beautiful young people from all over—I think all over the country. The young people are saying to the

Congress: Do something about the gun violence.

Everyone knows there is not an easy solution; this is not an easy problem to solve. There are hundreds of millions of guns in this country. There are 5 million assault weapons. The young people are saying: Do something. Have the courage to take on the NRA.

The American people overwhelmingly want to expand and improve background checks. They want to do away with the gun show loophole. They want to do away with the straw man provision. More and more people think we should be banning military-style assault weapons—whatever. The American people want us to do something. I don't see anything happening here. The American people want it. It is not happening.

The American people want us to deal with the high cost of prescription drugs. In the State of Vermont, elderly people are cutting their pills in half. I don't see any legislation to deal with the high cost of prescription drugs, to have the courage to take on the pharmaceutical industry.

The American people, overwhelmingly—Democrats, Republicans, Independents—want to raise the minimum wage to a living wage. I don't see anything happening on that issue.

On issue after issue, the American people want action, and they are not getting it. What they are getting is exactly what they don't want but what powerful special interests do want.

This month marks the 10th anniversary of the collapse of Bear Stearns, one of the largest investment banks in America, whose greed, recklessness, and illegal behavior triggered the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression. What is the response of the U.S. Senate to that? Are we talking about breaking up the large banks that have become much larger? Is that what we are talking about? Are we talking about protecting consumers who are paying 20 percent, 25 percent in interest rates on products they buy at a department store? Are we talking about taking on the payday lenders who are squeezing the lifeblood out of poor people who, in desperation, have to borrow money from them? No, that is not what we are talking about. We are not talking about the need to guarantee healthcare to all people. We are not talking about the affordable housing crisis. We are not talking about the fact that millions of moms and dads in this country can't afford childcare. We are not talking about the global crisis of climate change. We are not talking about our crumbling infrastructure, our rigged trade deals that have resulted in the deindustrialization of America. That is not what we are talking about.

What we are talking about at this particular moment, right here in the U.S. Senate, is the deregulation of some of the largest banks in America, some of the very same banks that nearly drove the economy off a cliff in 2008. That is what we are talking about.

Just last week, the Congressional Budget Office told us that the legislation on the floor right now will ''increase the likelihood that a large financial firm with assets of between $100 billion and $250 billion would fail.''

We are not talking about protecting consumers. We are not talking about breaking up large banks. We are not talking about taking on the power of Wall Street.

What we are talking about is deregulating some of the very same banks that drove this economy into the worst economic downturn since the Great Depression. In other words, this legislation will make it more likely that we will see another financial crisis, another taxpayer bailout, and massive dislocation of our economy.

What CBO tells us is that this legislation will increase the deficit by more than $450 million over the next decade—$450 million. This bill, which benefits some of the largest banks in America, will cost us over $450 million. Who is going to pay for that? The big banks? No. It will be the American taxpayers who will be picking up this tab.

The question we have to ask ourselves, which we don't very often—although the American people, I think, understand this emotionally in their guts—is this: How does it happen that a bill like this gets to the floor while we are not dealing with the issues the American people are concerned about, whether it is gun safety, whether it is DACA and protecting the 1.8 million young people who are eligible for that program, whether it is the high cost of prescriptions? How does this particular bill get to the floor of the Senate? The answer is pretty obvious. Follow the money.

Since the 1990s, the financial sector has given more than $3.2 billion in campaign contributions. Let me repeat that. Since the 1990s, the financial sector—Wall Street, other parts of the financial sector—has given over $3.2 billion in campaign contributions. Last year alone, the financial sector spent over $200 million on lobbying. That is why Congress is spending day after day trying to make life easier for large financial institutions while continuing to ignore the needs of working families.

Instead of listening to lobbyists in Washington, maybe, just maybe—I know it is a very radical idea, but maybe, just maybe, we might want to listen to the American people. The American people believe, as I do, that we should strengthen, not weaken Wall Street regulations.

Now is not the time to be talking about deregulating large financial institutions. Now is the time to take on the greed and power of Wall Street, break up the large financial institutions in this country, and stop big banks from ripping off the American people by charging outrageous and usurious levels of interest rates. That is why I have submitted two amendments to this bill that I would like the Senate to vote on this afternoon.

The first amendment would break up large financial institutions so that the taxpayers of this country will never have to bail them out again. The second amendment would establish a 15-percent cap on the interest rates private banks charge their customers on credit cards and other consumer loans.

Before I talk about these amendments, let's be clear. Fraud is the business model of Wall Street. It is not the exception to the rule; it is the rule. Since 2009, major banks in this country have been fined more than $200 billion for reckless, unfair, and deceptive activities. By the way, those fines take place within a very weak regulatory climate, but here are just a few examples of the kinds of activities that large banks have engaged in.

In August 2014, Bank of America paid $16 billion to settle charges that it lied to investors about the riskiness of the mortgage-backed securities it sold during the runup to the financial crisis.

In November 2013, JPMorgan Chase settled for $13 billion for lying to Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac about the quality of the mortgage-backed securities it sold them. Settlement documents revealed how every large bank in the United States committed mortgage fraud.

In April of 2016, Goldman Sachs reached a $5 billion settlement for marketing and selling fraudulent mortgage-backed securities that were the foundation of the housing crisis.

In July of 2014, Citigroup reached a $7 billion settlement for mortgage fraud. Then-Attorney General Eric Holder said that Citigroup's ''activities contributed mightily to the financial crisis that devastated our economy in 2008.''

If you are thinking that the illegal behavior of Wall Street executives was limited to the housing crisis, that it was a one-time thing, guess again. Let me give some more examples.

In May of 2015, five banks, including JPMorgan Chase and Citigroup, paid $5.4 billion in fines after pleading guilty to ''a brazen display of collusion and foreign exchange rate market manipulation,'' according to then-Attorney General Loretta Lynch.

In March of 2014, the FDIC accused 16 large banks, including Bank of America, Citigroup, and JPMorgan Chase, of fraud and conspiracy in an epic plot to manipulate bank-to-bank interest rates that underpinned at least $350 trillion in global financial transactions.

In April of 2011, Wachovia was fined for laundering billions of dollars in illegal drug money. The Federal prosecutor said, ''Wachovia's blatant disregard for our banking laws gave international cocaine cartels a virtual carte blanche to finance their operations.'' That was from the Federal prosecutor. The fine was less than 2 percent of the bank's $12.3 billion profit.

On and on it goes. Mortgage fraud, money laundering, currency manipulation, bribery, conspiracy, rate tampering, and collusion are the routine

practices of Wall Street; they are not the exception. This is their business model.

Our country can no longer afford to tolerate the culture of fraud and corruption on Wall Street. Let us never, ever forget—although, I fear many people have already here in Congress—that during the financial crisis of 2008, the American people were told that they needed to bail out huge financial institutions because those institutions were too big to fail. Do people remember that? They were just too big to fail. If they had gone down, the whole economy would have gone down with them. Yet the four largest financial institutions in this country—JPMorgan Chase, Citigroup, Bank of America, and Wells Fargo—are, on average, 80 percent larger today than they were before we bailed them out. Today, they are 80 percent larger than they were before we bailed them out because they were too big to fail. Does that make sense to anybody? Left alone, that is not even an issue that will be talked about here on the floor of the Senate.

Incredibly, since the financial crisis, JPMorgan Chase has increased its assets by more than $1 trillion. Bank of America has seen its assets grow by more than $800 billion. Citigroup has grown by over $547 billion. After Wells Fargo acquired Wachovia, it nearly tripled in size.

No single financial institution should be so large that its failure would cause a catastrophic risk to millions of Americans or to our Nation's economic well-being. No single financial institution should have holdings so extensive that its failure would send the world economy into crisis. If an institution is too big to fail, it is too big to exist, and we should break it up.

Let me be very clear. We should not just be concerned about the danger these institutions pose to taxpayers. The enormous concentration of ownership within the financial sector is harming the middle class and damaging the economy by limiting choices and raising prices for consumers and small businesses.

Today—and it is important that people understand this, but unfortunately it is not an issue that is discussed at all, not here in Congress and not much in the media—the six largest banks in America have over $10 trillion in assets, equivalent to 54 percent of the GDP in America. When we talk about having the United States move in the direction of an oligarchy, when we talk about a handful of institutions and billionaires controlling the economic and political life of this country, this is what we are talking about.

Let me repeat. The six largest banks in America have over $10 trillion in assets, equivalent to 54 percent of our GDP. The top six banks hold more than half of all credit card debt, control over 90 percent of all bank derivatives, underwrite about a third of all mortgages, and control over 40 percent of all bank deposits.

If Teddy Roosevelt were alive today, I have a sense about what he would be saying. He would say break them up, and he would be right. That is exactly what my first amendment would do.

Specifically, this amendment would require the Federal Reserve to break up any financial institution whose total exposure is greater than 2 percent of our Nation's GDP over the next 2 years. These banks would include JPMorgan Chase, Citigroup, Wells Fargo, Goldman Sachs, Bank of America, Morgan Stanley, U.S. Bancorp, PNC Financial Services, Capital One, and the TD Group—financial institutions that have a combined total exposure of more than 77 percent of our Nation's GDP. None of these institutions would be able to receive a taxpayer bailout from the Federal Reserve or gamble with the federally insured bank deposits of the American people. Under this amendment, no financial institution could have a total financial exposure above $398 billion.

Call me old-fashioned, but I believe the function of banking should be boring. The function of banking should not be about making as much profit as possible in gambling on derivatives and other esoteric financial instruments. The function of banking should be to provide affordable loans to small businesses in order to create jobs in the productive economy. The function of banking should be to provide affordable loans to Americans to purchase their homes and their cars. Wall Street cannot be an island unto itself, and I hope very much that my colleagues will support this important amendment.

Not only do we have to break up these very large banks, but we also have to stop them from ripping off the American people by their charging outrageous interest rates and fees, and that is exactly what my second amendment would do.

Incredibly, since the Wall Street crash, credit card companies have raked in over $1.2 trillion in revenue from interest and fees they charge consumers, including over $160 billion in 2016 alone. That is unacceptable. At a time when the American people hold a recordbreaking $1 trillion in credit card debt and desperately need some relief on that debt, my second amendment would establish a national usury rate of 15 percent on credit cards and other consumer loans.

In America today, incredibly, millions of our people are now paying credit card interest rates of 20, 25, or even 30 percent. I am not just talking about the payday lenders who are acting in a way that is totally unbelievable in ripping off the poorest people in our country. Let's be clear. When credit card companies charge over 20 percent in interest on credit cards, they are not engaged in the business of making credit available; what they are involved in is extortion and loan sharking. That is what they are engaged in.

Interestingly enough, if you read the religious tenets of the major religions throughout history, whether it be Christianity, Judaism, or Islam, what you will find is a universal objection and disgust to usury. This has existed for thousands and thousands of years. People know that it is immoral to lend money to poor people, struggling people, and then charge them excessive interest rates. That is in the religious teachings of Christianity, Judaism, Islam, and other religions.

In the ''Divine Comedy,'' Dante reserved a special place in the Seventh Circle of Hell for people who charged usurious interest rates. Today, we don't need the hellfire and the pitchforks, and we don't need the rivers of boiling blood, but we do need a national usury law that caps interest rates on credit cards and consumer loans at 15 percent.

Despite the fact that banks can borrow money today at less than 1.5 percent from the Fed, the average credit card interest rate today for consumers is now 16.84 percent. Borrow money at 1.5 percent from the Fed, and then charge consumers an average of 16.84 percent.

Further, if you get a credit card from a store like Macy's, Kohl's, Lowe's, or Sears, interest rates are even higher. Stores like these are charging customers an average interest rate of 26 percent, and many of the stores rely on these high interest rate cards for more than a third of their revenue. They are making money not just by selling clothing or washing machines or shoes; a substantial part of their profit scheme comes from the high interest rates they are getting on these financial transactions. What that means is, if you buy a $500 refrigerator from Lowe's, Home Depot, or Sears on one of their credit cards, you will likely owe an additional $130 in interest on a $500 refrigerator. How is that? Do you think that is an issue we might want to talk about just for a moment? I know the consumers of this country don't pour hundreds of millions of dollars into lobbying or billions of dollars into campaign contributions. I understand that. But maybe, just maybe, we might want to remember the folks back home.

Establishing a usury law is not a radical concept. Up until 1978, about half of the States in our country had usury laws on the books that capped credit card interest rates, but those States' interest rates were obliterated by a 1978 Supreme Court decision, that of Marquette National Bank v. First of Omaha Service, which concluded that national banks could charge whatever interest rates they wanted if they moved to a State without a usury law. So all of these credit card companies moved to South Dakota. They moved to Delaware, which had no interest rate caps, and they charged people in Vermont or in Kansas—or in every other State in the country—interest rates of 20 to 30 percent.

This has to stop. The American people are sick and tired of being ripped off by the same financial institutions

they bailed out 10 years ago—what a world. We bail out the crooks—taxpayer money bails them out—and they charge the same people who bailed them out 20 to 30 percent interest rates on loans.

This amendment simply applies the same statutory interest rate cap on credit cards that Congress imposed on credit unions in 1980, capping interest rates at 15 percent, except under extraordinary circumstances. In other words, if you get a credit card through a credit union, you are going to be paying, in almost every case, no more than 15 percent. That is mandated by Federal law. By and large, that law has worked for about 40 years. Unlike big banks, credit unions do not come begging the American taxpayer for huge bailouts. Ten years ago they didn't come for a huge bailout. Credit unions have survived and thrived on a 15-percent cap, and the time has come to extend that cap to private banks as well. There is nothing radical about that. It exists for the credit unions in this country, and it should exist for the large banks.

There has even been support for this concept in the Senate. In 1991, former Senator Al D'Amato offered an amendment to cap interest rates at 14 percent that passed on a vote of 74 to 14. It was not a radical idea, and it passed by a huge vote in 1991.

Here is what Al D'Amato, the Republican chairman of the Senate Banking Committee, said in 1991:

> Fourteen percent is certainly a reasonable rate of interest for banks to charge customers for credit card debt. It allows a comfortable profit margin but keeps banks in line so that interest rates rise and fall with the health of the economy.

That was an accurate statement in 1991. It is even more accurate today.

Let's be clear. Credit cards are no longer used just to buy luxury items. We all know that. All over this country, people are buying their groceries, their food, and other basic essentials with credit cards. Commuters are paying for the gas they put into their cars on their credit cards. Young people are paying their college expenses with credit cards.

According to the Federal Reserve, 44 percent of the American people could not pay for a $400 emergency expense, like a car accident, if they could not charge it on their credit cards or borrow money from a payday lender, a friend, or a family member. That is the reality of America today. It is not a reality we discuss here in the Senate, but that is the reality, nonetheless.

Given that reality, it seems to me that if we are going to respond to the needs of the American people, we need to deal with the issue of usury and stop large financial institutions from ripping off the American people.

Madam President, with that in mind, I ask unanimous consent that the following amendments be called up and reported by number: the Sanders amendment No. 2114 and the Sanders amendment No. 2155; further, that the Senate vote on the Sanders amendment No. 2114 without intervening action or debate; and that following disposition of the Sanders amendment No. 2114, the Senate vote on the Sanders amendment No. 2155.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. CRAPO. Madam President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. SANDERS. Madam President, I am distressed, although not surprised, by the objection. Apparently, the consumers of this country don't have the financial support to get their concerns onto the floor. So apparently we are not going to be discussing these items.

Madam President, I raise a point of order that the pending measure violates section 4106 of H. Con. Res. 71, the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2018.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TILLIS). The Senator from Idaho.

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, pursuant to section 904 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 and the waiver provisions of applicable budget resolutions, I move to waive all applicable sections of that act and applicable budget resolutions for purposes of S. 2155, and I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Idaho.

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, I am asking my colleagues to waive this budget point of order.

In order to offset the Congressional Budget Office's estimated increase in Federal deficits due to the enactment of the Economic Growth, Regulatory Relief, and Consumer Protection Act, the bill contains a provision that reduces the amount of discretionary surplus the Federal Reserve may maintain from $7.5 billion to $6.825 billion.

The Federal Reserve surplus funds have been used in the past to pay for bipartisan legislation emanating from committees that do not have jurisdiction over the Federal Reserve. Unlike those past instances, these funds will be used to offset costs of legislation emanating from the Banking Committee.

In order to provide meaningful relief for consumers, community banks, credit unions, midsized banks and regional banks, I urge my colleagues to waive this point of order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I ask my colleagues for support on the point of order, not only from the deficit perspective but to tell the Republican leadership here in Congress that we want a serious debate on the serious financial issues facing the American people; that we want the ability to bring forth amendments, not just my amendment—there are a lot of good amendments on both sides—that at this particular moment, rather than just deregulating some of the largest banks in America, we need to protect consumers, we need to protect ordinary Americans, and we need to have a real debate. So I would hope very much that Members of the Senate would support my point of order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, I spent 28 years in the private sector before entering public service. In fact, in 2010 I was working at RightNow Technologies in my hometown of Bozeman, MT. We were growing a technology company there. We were creating good, high-paying jobs in Montana—in fact, about 500 jobs there.

While I was working to grow jobs back home in Montana, President Obama and a Democratic majority in the House and the Senate were passing legislation that stifled job creation—in fact, costing our economy billions of dollars and penalizing small local banks and credit unions for the wrongdoings committed by bad actors on Wall Street.

I am talking about Dodd-Frank. Since Dodd-Frank's passage, the number of federally insured credit unions in Montana fell by over 10 percent. The number of Montana State chartered banks fell over 34 percent, from 64 to 44. This is no surprise because Dodd-Frank empowered more than 10 Federal agencies to write more than 400 new rules, imposing 27,000 mandates, many of which fell on these local banks and credit unions.

These small community businesses don't have the ability to keep up with the onslaught of these new rules, new regulations, and guidance constantly coming out of Washington following Dodd-Frank, and the customers are suffering.

Small local banks and credit unions are uniquely capable of knowing their customers and providing tailored financial services to meet their customers' individual circumstances. Dodd-Frank stripped this customer advantage away by making prohibitively difficult any loans that don't comply with the cookie-cutter regulations.

It is interesting that in that debate back in 2010, many Republicans warned our colleagues on the Democratic side about this, but virtually every Democratic Senator then voted for Dodd-Frank. This difficulty fell particularly hard on Montana's entrepreneurs, who are self-employed and don't typically have wage income. Entrepreneurship runs deep in Montana. These banks and credit unions are truly part of our community. They know their customers, and they are able to make loans for their needs. They can determine the risk and make sure they are making good loans. They serve up-and-coming small business owners, moms and dads working to keep the family business

afloat, and countless farmers and ranchers across Montana.

Dodd-Frank has suffocated Montana's rural banks and credit unions and, ultimately, it is the people of Montana who use these banks and these credit unions, and they are the ones who have been hit the hardest.

I wasn't here in 2010 when this bill was passed. Let me just state that had I been on this floor then, I would have voted no on Dodd-Frank's passage. Unfortunately, the vast majority of Democratic Senators voted yes—virtually every one of them. But I will state that I am really happy to be here now to help undo some of the damage caused to our rural communities and the people of Montana.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, on Friday I held a townhall in Springfield, MA. On Saturday we had another townhall, this time in Weymouth, MA. I met with kids at Weymouth High School who are forming a ''Never Again'' group and who want to pass some sensible gun regulations. I met with Dreamers who want to pass DACA. I met with people who fled the hurricanes in Puerto Rico and who want to get a comprehensive plan for rebuilding the island. I met with people who live along the South Shore and are deeply worried about rising oceans and the need for building resilience into our coastline housing and infrastructure. I met with people alarmed by the rising cost of healthcare and about Republican efforts to roll back ObamaCare, Medicaid, and Medicare. I met someone who wants to see us focus more on criminal justice reform.

There is so much Congress could do. There are so many problems the American people are asking us to solve, but not one single person at any of my townhalls, meetings, press interviews, or picking up pizza at Armando's asked for Congress to work on rolling back the rules on some of the biggest banks in the country so they will have a chance to crash the economy again, and that is what the bill on the floor of the Senate does—really. Don't just take my word for it.

The Congressional Budget Office experts say the bill will increase the chances that taxpayers will have to bail out the big banks again. CBO also says the bill could allow Wall Street banks, like Citigroup and JPMorgan Chase, to significantly reduce their capital requirements. Professor Jeffrey Gordon, an expert in financial regulation at Columbia Law School, says the bill ''will produce a race-to-the-bottom dynamic that will dramatically increase the chance of another financial crisis.'' The Wall Street Journal and Bloomberg both editorialized that the bill includes dangerous giveaways to big banks. Nobody back in Massachusetts asked for that.

Buried down in the details of the bill are even more landmines for American families. The bill guts protections for families who buy traditional and mobile homes, and it undermines our ability to enforce civil rights laws—and for what? So banks that are already making record profits can tack on a little more to their bottom line?

If the Senate is going to spend 2 weeks dealing with the big banks, we should be making the rules tougher, not easier. Today, I introduced the Ending Too Big to Jail Act, which would help make sure that big bank executives are hauled out of their corner offices in handcuffs the next time they break the law. That would do more for America's working families than anything in this bill, and I am going to fight to help make it law.

What does it say about Washington Republicans and Democrats who can't come together to support commonsense gun reforms or solutions for working families but can come together to deregulate big banks on the 10th anniversary of the start of the 2008 financial crisis?

Here is what I think it says: Washington has become completely disconnected from the real problems in people's lives. This place works great for people who can hire armies of fancy lobbyists and write big checks, but it doesn't work for anyone else.

This is personal for me. I grew up in Oklahoma on the ragged edge of the middle class. My family struggled, and when it looked like things were getting a little bit better, my daddy had a heart attack and he lost his job and we nearly lost our home. I was 12 years old, and I know what it feels like to hear your mother cry every night. I know what it feels like to wonder if you will have to change schools or move to another town because the bank is going to take your house away. I know it because I lived it.

When the economy collapsed 10 years ago, I would go to bed at night thinking about the millions of people across this country who worked hard, who played by the rules, and then had their dignity stripped away because somebody they never met gambled with their family's future and lost. I wondered back then about the kids. I wondered about their mothers. I wondered about their daddies. A foreclosure isn't just some dry financial transaction; it is the kind of event that can tear a family apart.

The American people aren't going to stand by while big banks and other giant corporations run this economy and this Congress for their own benefit. Soon—maybe not today, maybe not next week, maybe not even in the next election, but soon they will demand a government that works for the people.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, 10 years ago this month, we saw the first domino fall toward the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression. Some of our country's largest financial institutions were facing capital and liquidity crises, and it became clear that many of the biggest banks would need a massive injection of capital, in the form of a taxpayer bailout, to prevent what then-Chairman Bernanke called the ''chaotic unwinding'' of financial markets.

The near collapse of the U.S. financial system had a real and lasting impact on the prosperity of the United States, reaching the pocketbooks and kitchen tables of every American family and the stability of the world's economy across all sectors. We—and I do mean we—you, me and all tax-paying U.S. citizens footed the bill for the risky and cavalier behavior of our country's biggest banks, allowed largely by a poorly regulated system that brought our economy to its knees. American taxpayer dollars propped up our financial system to prevent its catastrophic failure, an economic collapse that would have wrought even more damage and misery on tens of millions of American households.

The crisis clearly exposed deep flaws in our regulatory system and a serious lack of oversight of the financial sector. It taught us that looking the other way and trusting the system to check and right itself will always result in a race to the bottom in terms of capitalization, risk-taking, transparency, and, too often, casual lending practices.

Big Banks and their executives took on untold and unnecessary risks, hid their financial well-being and, at best, misinformed their investors and, at worst, downright lied. This behavior was supported and left unchecked by a regulatory regime without the oversight to identify and teeth to prevent rampant risk-taking in the name of short-term profit.

We vowed we would never again put American taxpayers on the hook to bail out Big Banks. To that end, Congress passed the Dodd-Frank Act, the most sweeping, comprehensive reforms to our financial system since the 1930s. These changes, including new regulations and enforcement mechanisms, were necessary to prevent the recurrence of the systematic profit-driven actions of bad actors throughout our financial system. Dodd-Frank required Big Banks to meet capital requirements, pass stress tests, and make plans for their orderly liquidation in case of failure. All of these requirements were designed to prevent another taxpayer bailout, and they are working. By design, these standards are difficult to meet, but they have not prevented banks from profiting. Big Banks, in fact, are thriving. They continue to protect American taxpayers who are, rightly, wary of the behavior of Big Banks. Now is not the time to roll back these protective rules for Big Banks. They don't need it. No one except these big hanks will benefit, and it would all be at the risk of future bailouts. Without these standards, we will again see bank executives influenced by compensation packages that favor

risky short-term profits over sound investments and loan quantity over quality. If we roll back commonsense oversight of Big Banks, we should expect banks to take advantage of their newfound flexibility and reintroduce risky practices like failing to ensure they are adequately capitalized and mitigating risk.

Like most sweeping reforms, some pieces of the Dodd-Frank Act had unintended consequences. We talk a lot about banks that are too big to fail, but not about banks too small to succeed or perhaps too small to comply with the new regulatory regime. Authority was granted to new and existing agencies to mandate certain regulatory requirements intended to safeguard our financial system. Our small community banks and credit unions have done their best to comply with these one-size-fits-all regulations and rules, often to the great detriment to their businesses, their bottom lines, and their relationships with their community and customers. I have heard from community bankers who, instead of focusing on Vermonters' needs and tailoring their financial services in the honest and professional way that is a hallmark of doing business in a small community, must spend much of their time crossing Ts, dotting Is, and collecting data for fear of the consequences of minor errors. That is not how small community bankers should be spending their time and not how they maintain the flexibility necessary to meet the needs of their communities.

Our community banks and credit unions did not cause the financial crisis; yet they are still paying the price for it, and by extension, the consumers they serve. I am glad that this bill provides some regulatory relief for smaller and community banks. If regulatory relief for community banks and credit unions were its own bill, we would be lining up to support it—or even more likely, pass it by unanimous consent.

But what started out as an effort to help small community banks has been hijacked by Big Banks and their supporters in Congress. I am extremely disappointed that this essential relief has been coupled with some very significant changes to regulations on the biggest banks, banks that took hundreds of billions of dollars in taxpayer bailouts. This is the handiwork of savvy lobbyists pushing a deregulatory agenda and hiding it behind relief for our community bankers. They know community banks are the backbone of our communities and that they enjoy the support of their representatives. It is frustrating that we could not consider, debate, and pass a bill that would responsibly allow community banks to better serve and revert to relationship lending in their communities without revisiting these additional oversight measures on Big Banks that our constituents demand and deserve.

All told, this bill will substantially deregulate some 25 of the largest 38 banks and will require fewer stress tests which are effective ways to measure a bank's ability to withstand sudden or prolonged economic downturns. I do not believe this is an appropriate way to relieve our community banks and credit unions, and I am concerned that instead of safeguarding our economy, this legislation will instead open up our taxpayers to even more risk at the hands of bank executives. For these reasons, I cannot support the Big Bank protection act that this bill has become. I am disappointed that instead of passing what we said we wanted—relief for small banks that are being punished for something they did not cause—this bill will roll back the very rules that hold Big Banks accountable and that protect our economy and the American people.

To conclude, I ask unanimous consent that an opinion piece by Vermont Law School Professor Jennifer Taub, which appeared online at CNN.com, be printed in the RECORD. In it, she discusses the troubling flaws of this proposed legislation. Her words would be instructive to the Senate as we are poised to roll back some of the strongest protections we have against another financial crisis.

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

[From CNN, Mar. 5, 2018]

MITCH MCCONNELL'S BIG GIFT TO THE BANKS

(By Jennifer Taub)

This month marks the tenth anniversary of the $29 billion US government-backed bailout of Bear Stearns. The collapse of this giant investment bank in March 2008, under the weight of its bad mortgage-linked bets, marked the beginning of the global financial crisis.

To commemorate it, the US Senate plans to deliver a big gift to the banking sector by removing several safeguards for American families put in place after the meltdown.

Tin is the traditional tenth wedding anniversary gift. A bank deregulatory bill on the crisis anniversary is a fitting present from someone with a tin ear.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell has announced that this week the Senate, rather than respond to the plague of gun violence by considering gun law reforms after the Parkland shooting, will begin debating the rollback of financial reforms.

The bill, S. 2155, would considerably weaken the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act, the law President Barack Obama signed in 2010, which was designed to tame Wall Street, protect consumers and make our financial system less fragile.

Lifting the sensible limits imposed by Dodd-Frank would be a dream come true for the banking sector, but eventually a nightmare for the rest of us. This bill will hurt homeowners and allow giant banks once again to take big risks with taxpayer-backed, FDIC-insured customer deposits.

Who is calling for this bank deregulation? The pressure is not coming from clamoring constituents. Instead, it is the bank lobbyists, outside the public eye, who quietly orchestrated this effort. Acknowledging this provenance, the growing opposition has dubbed S. 2155 ''The Bank Lobbyist Act.''

To pass it, McConnell needs 60 votes, so he will require more than just his party's support. The bill already has 11 Democratic cosponsors. Unless the public speaks up, he may get those votes.

Here's why. The bill's sponsors on both sides of the aisle are counting on our fading memories. They think we have forgotten the terrible years after the toxic-mortgaged-backed meltdown, when many millions of families lost their homes to foreclosure. The bill's sponsors believe that the pain previously inflicted upon us by the financial sector is buried in the past. They are wagering that we have forgotten both the 1980s Savings and Loan debacle and its repeat performance in the more recent 2008 global financial crisis.

That is a bad bet. We remember.

We remember that banks and borrowers got into trouble with unaffordable mortgages. Yet this bill would essentially encourage banks with up to $10 billion in assets to once again offer predatory mortgage loans to millions of borrowers. This includes making mortgage loans to homeowners based on their ability to pay just an initial ''teaser'' rate, not the fully-amortized rate. This puts borrowers at risk of losing their homes if they cannot afford the higher long-term payments. It also puts banks at risk when these loans default.

As Boston College law professor Patricia McCoy detailed in the American Banker, Dodd-Frank ''required lenders to first determine that loan applicants are able to repay before making them home mortgages. Lenders who fail to make this assessment can be liable to borrowers.'' Yet the bill ''permits banks with total assets of up to $10 billion . . . to make unaffordable mortgages, with no liability to borrowers, so long as the banks hold the loans on their books.'' She adds that ''if the bill becomes law, Congress will excuse over 97% of US banks from having to verify applicants' income, assets and debts for mortgages they keep on their books.''

We remember that big banks got taxpayer-funded bailouts. That is why Dodd-Frank automatically subjects bank holding companies with more than $50 billion in assets to enhanced supervision by the Federal Reserve. Yet, under the Bank Lobbyist Act, that threshold would be raised to $250 billion. This is too great a risk. As former Fed lawyer Jeremy Kress explained in The Hill, raising the threshold to $250 billion is ''effectively deregulating 25 of the 38 biggest banks in the United States, accounting for nearly one-sixth of the assets in the banking sector.'' We remember that in 2008, several banks with under $250 billion in assets, including Countrywide, received billions in bailouts during the 2008 crisis. And even before the bailout funding was available, when IndyMac with just $32 billion in assets went bust, it cost the FDIC deposit insurance fund about $9 billion.

We remember that regional and community banks can cause a national meltdown. The bill's proponents are positioning it as harmless regulatory relief for regional and community banks. But we remember that during the savings and loan crisis during the 1980s, risky practices—including poor real estate loan standards, thin capital, risky assets, and dependence on short-term funding—led to the collapse of hundreds of savings banks. The resulting S&L bailout cost taxpayers hundreds of billions of dollars. As George Washington University law professor Art Wilmarth explained in the American Banker, ''Big regional banks and the largest money center banks have held highly correlated risk exposures during every US banking crisis since 1980. Those correlated exposures resulted from very similar business strategies that many large banks pursued during the boom leading up to each crisis.''

Yet this new Senate bill would allow regional and community banks to avoid prudential supervision, and also engage in high-risk trading with customer deposits.

We remember the bailout oath of ''never again.'' Upon signing Dodd-Frank, President Obama vowed we would ''never again be asked to foot the bill for Wall Street's mistakes,'' but that ''for these new rules to be effective, regulators will have to be vigilant.'' Yet with President Donald Trump's appointment of Mick Mulvaney to head the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, the deliberate gutting of consumer protections began.

Now with the ''Bank Lobbyist Act,'' our senators have a choice. Will they pile on with the Trump Team and pummel the already weakened financial reform law into submission? Or will they honor their promises made to the American people and protect us from a future financial meltdown?

Time will tell. We will remember.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I rise today to speak in support of the Senior$afe Act, which I am pleased is included in the Economic Growth, Regulatory Relief, and Consumer Protection Act. My good friend Senator CLAIRE MCCASKILL and I have been working on Senior$afe for several years now. This bill originated with testimony offered by Maine Securities Administrator Judith Shaw in a hearing before the Senate Aging Committee in 2015. I am the chairman of that committee, and Senator MCCASKILL was the ranking member at that time. We introduced the bill that year, and reintroduced it in January of 2017. Today, the bill is cosponsored by almost a third of this body, balanced nearly evenly on both sides of the aisle.

I am disappointed to learn that my colleague Senator WARREN has filed an amendment that would seriously undermine the Senior$afe Act by restricting its provisions just to liability that may arise under the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act. If this amendment were to pass, financial service providers that report suspected frauds against seniors could still face liability under other laws or causes of action, which would discourage providers from making these critical reports. I understand that the proponent of this amendment contends that Senior$afe could somehow shield a financial service provider from its own fraud. That is simply not correct.

In order to receive the protections of the Senior$afe Act, financial service providers must train their employees to spot suspicious activity that may indicate fraud targeting seniors, and make good faith, reasonable reports of that suspicious activity to the proper authorities. The bill is clear that it only shields reporting a suspected fraud; there is no protection for committing a fraud.

Combating financial abuse of seniors requires consumers, regulators, law enforcement, and social service agencies at all levels of government to work collaboratively with the private sector. The stakes could not be higher. According to the GAO, financial fraud targeting older Americans is a growing epidemic that costs seniors an estimated $2.9 billion annually. Stopping this tsunami of fraud is one of the top priorities of the Aging Committee. Over the years, we have held numerous hearings exposing an endless variety of financial abuses targeting our Nation's seniors. These range from the notorious IRS phone scam that burst onto the scene in 2015, to the incredible ''drug mule'' scam, where trusting seniors have been tricked by international narcotics traffickers into unwittingly serving as drug couriers, and then find themselves arrested and locked up in foreign jails.

Just last week, our committee heard the story of Stephen and Rita Shiman from Saco, ME, who lost more than $1,200 in the notorious grandparent scam. In this scam, fraudsters call a senior pretending to be a family member, often a grandchild, and claim to be in urgent need of money to cover an emergency, medical care, or a legal problem.

Sadly, not all scammers are strangers to their victims—in too many cases, seniors are exploited by someone they know well. Sometimes, that abuse is perpetrated by ''friends'' or family members who are handling the victim's affairs informally. Other times, the abuse is committed under the color of a fiduciary relationship, such as a power of attorney or guardianship.

No matter the scheme, one factor is common to all: The fraudsters gain the trust and cooperation of their victims. Without this, their schemes would fail. The scammers also push their victims to act fast and not to tell anyone what they are doing.

Unfortunately, due to the ruthless cunning of the scam artists, many seniors do not see the red flags that signal fraud. Sometimes they are too trusting or are suffering from diminished capacity, but just as often, they miss the signs because the swindlers who prey on them are extremely crafty and know how to sound convincing. Whatever the reason, a warning sign that can slip by a victim might trigger a second look by financial service representatives trained to spot common scams, who know enough about a senior's habits to question a transaction that doesn't look right. In our work on the Aging Committee, we have heard of many instances where quick action by bank and credit union employees has stopped a fraud in progress, saving seniors untold thousands of dollars.

Let me give you an example. In 2016, an attorney in the small coastal city of Belfast, ME, was sentenced to 30 months in prison for bilking two elderly female clients out of nearly a half a million dollars over the course of several years.

The lawyer's brazen theft was uncovered when a teller at a local bank noticed that he was writing large checks to himself on his clients' accounts.

When confronted by authorities, he offered excuses that the prosecutor later described as ''breathtaking.'' He submitted bills for ''services,'' sometimes totaling $20,000 a month, including charging her $250 per hour for 6 to 7 hours to check on her house, even though his office was just a 1-minute drive down the road.

In another example, a senior citizen in Vassalboro, ME, was looking to wire funds from his account at Maine Savings Federal Credit Union to an out-of-State location, supposedly to bail out a relative who was in jail. Something about this transaction did not sound right to the credit union employee. She asked the customer, and he said he had received a call from an ''official'' at the jail, but that official had instructed him not to speak to anyone about this. The official, of course, turned out to be a con artist.

Fortunately, the credit union worker recognized this as a scam, and her quick thinking saved her customer from falling victim and losing his savings.

These stories demonstrate the critical nexus that financial institutions occupy between fraudsters and their victims. Their employees, if properly trained, can be the first line of defense protecting our seniors from these criminals. Regrettably, various Federal laws can inadvertently impede efforts to protect seniors because financial institutions that report suspected fraud can be exposed to litigation. The Senior$afe Act encourages financial institutions to train their employees and shields them from lawsuits when they make good-faith, reasonable reports of potential fraud to the proper authorities.

There is no doubt that financial fraud and scams targeting seniors is a growing problem. In 2016, the Aging Committee heard testimony from Jaye Martin, the executive director of Maine Legal Services for the Elderly, who told the committee that her organization had seen a 24-percent increase in reports of elder abuse in just 1 year. Many of these cases involve financial fraud.

In a letter describing her support for the Senior$afe Act, Ms. Martin said that:

> In a landscape that includes family members who often wish to keep exploitation from coming to light because they are perpetrating the exploitation, the risk of facing potential nuisance or false complaints over privacy violations is all too real. This is a barrier that must be removed so that financial institutions will act immediately to report to the proper authorities upon forming a reasonable belief that exploitation is occurring. These professionals are on the front lines in the fight against elder financial exploitation and are often the only ones in a position to stop exploitation before it is too late.

I ask unanimous consent that Ms. Martin's letter be printed in the RECORD following my remarks.

Our bill is based on Maine's innovative Senior$afe program, a collaborative effort by Maine's regulators, financial institutions, and consumer and legal organizations to educate bank

and credit union employees on how to identify and help stop financial exploitation of older Mainers. This program, pioneered by Maine Securities Administrator Judith Shaw, also serves as the template for model legislation developed for adoption at the State level by the North American Securities Administrators Association, or NASAA. The Senior$afe Act and NASAA's model State legislation are complementary efforts, and I am pleased that NASAA has endorsed our bill.

I ask unanimous consent that the letter from NASAA regarding the Senior$afe Act of 2017 be printed in the RECORD following my remarks.

I am pleased that our bill has received bipartisan support in both houses of Congress. Besides receiving broad support in Congress, our bill has the support of a wide range of stakeholders, ranging from the State securities administrators and insurance commissioners to advocates for seniors, such as AARP.

The Senior$afe Act encourages financial institutions to train their employees and shields them from lawsuits when they make good-faith, reasonable reports of potential fraud to the proper authorities.

I am pleased the Senior$afe Act is included in the bill currently before the Senate, and I look forward to it finally becoming law.

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

LEGAL SERVICES FOR THE ELDERLY,
Augusta, ME, December 5, 2016.

Re Senior$afe (S 2216).

Senator SUSAN COLLINS,
Chair, Senate Special Committee on Aging, Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR COLLINS: I want to thank you for inviting me to speak with the Senate Special Committee on Aging about the serious problem of financial exploitation of seniors by guardians and others in a position of power. I also want to thank you for your leadership in working to ensure there is training of financial institution employees in reporting elder abuse and an improvement in the timely reporting of financial exploitation when it is suspected through passage of the Senior$afe Act. I strongly support this legislation that is based upon work done here in Maine.

I served for over two years on the working group that developed Maine's Senior$afe training program for financial institution managers and employees. It is a voluntary training program. Through that work I came to fully appreciate the very real concerns of the financial industry regarding the consequences of violating, or being perceived as violating, the broad range of state and federal privacy laws that apply to their industry. I also came to appreciate that absent broad immunity for reporting of suspected financial exploitation, privacy regulations would continue to be a barrier to good faith reporting of suspected financial exploitation. In a landscape that includes family members who often wish to keep exploitation from coming to light because they are perpetrating the exploitation, the risk of facing potential nuisance or false complaints over privacy violations is all too real.

This is a barrier that must be removed so that financial institution employees will act immediately to make a report to the proper authorities upon forming a reasonable belief that exploitation is occurring. These professionals are on the front lines in the fight against elder financial exploitation and are often the only ones in a position to stop exploitation before it is too late.

I want to add that tying the grant of immunity to required training for not just supervisors, compliance officers, and legal advisors, but to all who come in contact with seniors as a part of their regular duties, will have the direct result of bringing more cases of exploitation to the timely attention of the proper authorities because it will significantly increase the knowledge and awareness in the industry of the red flags for elder abuse. In Maine, where our training program is entirely voluntary and carries no legal status or benefit, we have already seen what a difference training can make.

Senior$afe is a much needed step in the fight against financial exploitation of seniors and there is no doubt it will make our nation's seniors safer. I thank you again for your leadership in this important area.

Sincerely,

JAYE L. MARTIN,
Executive Director.

NORTH AMERICAN SECURITIES ADMINISTRATORS ASSOCIATION, INC.,
Washington, DC, January 24, 2017.

Re The Senior$afe Act of 2017.

Senator SUSAN COLLINS,
Chair, U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging, Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR COLLINS: On behalf of the North American Securities Administrators Association (''NASAA''), I am writing to express strong support for your work to better protect vulnerable adults from financial exploitation through the introduction of the Senior$afe Act of 2017. Your legislation will better protect persons aged 65 and older from financial exploitation by increasing the likelihood it will be identified by financial services professionals, and by removing barriers to reporting it, so that together we as state securities regulators and other appropriate governmental authorities can help stop it.

Senior financial exploitation is a growing problem across the country. Many in our elderly population are vulnerable due to social isolation and distance from family, caregiver, and other support networks. Indeed, evidence suggests that as many as one out of every five citizens over the age of 65 has been victimized by a financial fraud. To be successful in combating senior financial exploitation, state and federal policymakers must come together to weave a new safety net for our elderly, breaking down barriers for those who are best positioned to identify red flags early on and to encourage reporting and referrals to appropriate local, county, state, and federal agencies, including law enforcement.

The Senior$afe Act consists of several essential features. First, to promote and encourage reporting of suspected elderly financial exploitation by financial services professionals, who are positioned to identify and report ''red flags'' of potential exploitation, the bill would incentivize financial services employees to report any suspected exploitation by making them immune from any civil or administrative liability arising from such a report, provided that they exercised due care, and that they make these reports in good faith. Second, in order to better assure that financial services employees have the knowledge and training they require to identify ''red flags'' associated with financial exploitation, the bill would require that, as a condition of receiving immunity, financial institutions undertake to train certain personnel regarding the identification and reporting of senior financial exploitation.

The Senior$afe Act's objectives and benefits are far-reaching. Older Americans stand to benefit directly from such reporting, because early detection and reporting will minimize their financial losses from exploitation, and because improved protection of their finances ultimately helps preserve their financial independence and their personal autonomy. Financial institutions stand to benefit, as well, through preservation of their reputation, increased community recognition, increased employee satisfaction, and decreased uninsured losses.

In conclusion, state securities regulators strongly support passage of the Senior$afe Act of 2017. Please do not hesitate to contact me, or Michael Canning, NASAA Director of Policy, if we may be of any additional assistance.

Sincerely,

MIKE ROTHMAN,
NASAA President and Minnesota Commissioner of Commerce.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, today I wish to speak on the importance of helping our community banks and credit unions. These institutions are on the ground daily helping our families and small businesses. They deserve recognition. They also deserve our careful consideration of regulatory adjustments that will help them continue their work.

Let me be clear: There are parts of S. 2155 I disagree with, as do many of my colleagues, but what I think that we can all agree on is the good works that our local credit unions and banks do for our communities.

Community banks and credit unions anchor our towns, helping our workers and businesses. These institutions provide more than just savings and checking services. Many provide credit counseling and financial management. They help individuals save for education or for a financially secure retirement. They provide the mortgage loans that make homeownership a realistic goal for many families. They get to know our small businesses and provide them with much-needed financial support. Most importantly, they do so in a way that is tailored to their communities.

I would like to emphasize the role that community banks and credit unions play with respect to small businesses especially. We talk a lot about Main Street businesses in this body. As the ranking member of the Small Business Committee, I am keenly aware of the need to provide our small businesses with adequate resources and support, including through access to capital. This is especially the case for underserved communities, where the bigger banks simply don't have a presence.

There are provisions in this bill that will help. For example, for credit unions, the bill changes the designation of certain real estate loans which have previously been classified as business loans. This will free up capital for small business lending. It is through changes like these that we can carefully tailor regulations, address regulatory unfairness or duplication, and help our local lenders.

In Maryland, we are fortunate to still have a good number of these local institutions. We have almost 90 credit unions in Maryland who have about 1.9 million members. These credit unions serve many of the Federal workers that we in Congress work with every day. They provide services and support for our Department of Defense employees, our Library of Congress employees, our National Institutes of Health employees, and our State and county workers who keep our communities going. Because of their close ties with their membership, these credit unions and others like them are able to offer special services that big banks may not have the incentive to provide.

Similarly, our community banks remain strong. There are 54 community banks chartered in the State. Our community banking sector employs over 35,000 Marylanders. These banks have withstood the Great Recession and even the Great Depression. For instance, Eastern Savings Bank in Baltimore was established in 1905, pulled through the chaos of the Depression in 1929, and still operates four service branches throughout Maryland today, with a customer base of primarily local residents. All of our Maryland community banks are essential to our urban, suburban, and rural communities. They are critical to economic growth in my hometown of Baltimore. They provide nearly half of the industry's small business loans, despite making up less than 20 percent of the banking industry's assets.

It would be naive to ignore the fact that the number of these institutions is shrinking. They have a difficult market to navigate. One-size-fits-all regulations can exacerbate this trend. This doesn't mean that we should not provide oversight of this sector of our economy; however, I think carefully considering ''tailoring'' our approach to regulating is more than appropriate here. I think we can all agree on this principle. Many of the credit union and community bank provisions we are considering, standing alone, have broad bipartisan support. If those provisions stood alone, my vote on such a bill would be a yes.

S. 2155, of course, contains more than community bank and credit union provisions, and I share some of the concerns voiced by my colleagues on this bill, especially regarding consumer protections in certain industries. At the same time, I cannot stress enough how important it is to strengthen our credit unions and community banks. I look forward to continuing to work on these issues, especially on small business lending, with my colleagues going forward.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, today I wish to discuss the Economic Growth, Regulatory Relief, and Consumer Protection Act.

While I would welcome regulatory reform for the small banks and credit unions in Minnesota that didn't cause the financial crisis, I'm concerned that this bill is a missed opportunity to improve consumer protection and that it reduces the regulatory oversight of larger banks, which could increase systemic risk in the financial system and put taxpayers on the hook for future bailouts.

I have long believed that Minnesota's community banks and credit unions play a vital role in our communities and are deserving of regulatory relief. I was one of the first Democrats to support legislative action in past Congresses and helped develop and champion numerous proposals for reform for the community banks and credit unions.

Unfortunately, title IV of the bill, especially section 401, which raises the asset threshold for enhanced supervision from $50 billion all the way to $250 billion, goes too far and threatens to increase systemic risk. The community banks and credit unions in Minnesota with which I have spoken in recent weeks have acknowledged they would have preferred a bill that was limited to regulation that directly affected them, and I would have welcomed the opportunity to cast a vote in favor of such a bill, but I will not vote in favor of this bill.

Thank you.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, today I wish to speak about some specific provisions S. 2155.

I was proud to be one of the original drafters of Dodd-Frank legislation. We didn't get everything right in that bill. With the benefit of 8 years of hindsight, we have been able to see what has worked and what hasn't.

Most of what hasn't worked well has been the excessive burdens put on community banks. The bill the Senate considered today, one that I am a proud cosponsor of, the Economic Growth, Regulatory Relief, and Consumer Protection Act, does a lot of good for community banks and many regional banks by reducing some of the compliance costs these banks face, so that they may better compete and end the phenomenon of ''too small to survive.''

Since the crisis, however, what has worked best is increased capital requirements and an updated capital planning regime for medium and large-sized banks. Put simply, no amount of prudential regulation on products or business lines can substitute for requiring banks to keep robust capital cushions. Ensuring that banks hold significant loss absorbing, capital is the best protection we have against the failure of banks during a crisis. It is also the best tool we have to make sure that even in an economic downturn, banks still have the ability to lend to creditworthy borrowers, so that we can rebound quickly from a downturn.

Critically, S. 2155 makes no changes to the risk-based capital regime for regional and large banks that has been the centerpiece of the Federal Reserve's post-crisis work.

The international Basel III capital accord was agreed by banking regulators in 2010 to 2011. As implemented in the US, Basel III requires a minimum Common Equity Tier 1, CET1, ratio of 4.5 percent, up from 2 percent in Basel II. Minimum tier 1 capital increased from 4 percent in Basel II to 6 percent in Basel III, which includes additional 1.5 percent on top of the required CET1 ratio. The U.S. has finalized rules to implement two additional capital buffers on top of this 6 percent baseline tier 1 capital requirement: a mandatory capital conservation buffer, as adjusted by a risk-weighted capital surcharge on U.S. G-SIBs, and a discretionary countercyclical buffer, which the Fed can use to require additional capital during periods of high credit growth.

These risk-based capital requirements, as implemented by the U.S. banking regulators, have formed a core part of the U.S. bank regulatory response to the financial crisis. S. 2155 changes none of these requirements for regional and large banks.

An important complement to risk-based capital requirements is supervisory stress testing. Stress tests help make sure that banks have adequate capital to absorb losses and more still to lend even in a serious recession so that they will be able to continue to lend to households and businesses. S. 2155 did not modify the requirement that banks larger than $250 billion must continue to undergo annual supervisory stress tests. Regional banks between $100 billion and $250 billion must also continue to undergo what Chair Powell called before the Banking Committee meaningful, strong, and frequent stress tests.

Let me make clear: S. 2155 uses the same language as Dodd-Frank to describe the stress test that should apply to banks between $100 billion and $250 billion because we believe the stress tests applied to those banks should continue to be meaningful assessments of the capital adequacy of those institutions under severely adverse conditions. The requirement in section 401 to conduct stress tests of those banks would be satisfied by continuing to apply the section 165 supervisory stress tests to those banks. We have chosen to single out stress tests for banks between $100 billion and $250 billion because we believe it is the most important enhanced prudential standard in section 165 of Dodd-Frank.

We believe it is prudent for the Federal Reserve to have discretion to apply the other enumerated enhanced prudential standards in section 165 to those or a subset of those banks as part of the strong and tailored regime that should apply to those banks going forward. Indeed, under the bill, the Fed can apply an enhanced prudential standard to those banks for financial stability reasons or simply to ''promote the safety and soundness'' of a bank, which is a low standard. Although the Fed is the entity that is best positioned to make the determination for many enhanced prudential

standards, Congress believes that meaningful, strong and frequent stress tests are non-negotiable.

Supervisory stress tests alone, however, do not set any capital ratios or limit any capital actions by the banks. The Federal Reserve's Comprehensive Capital Analysis and Review, CCAR, framework, however, integrates supervisory stress testing with risk-based capital requirements to assess the overall capital adequacy of banks, making it the most important supervisory tool the Federal Reserve has for larger banks. Specifically, CCAR requires evaluations of whether each bank's capital provides an adequate buffer for the losses that would be incurred during the stress scenarios, whether its risk management and capital planning processes are appropriately well-developed and governed and how its dividend or buyback plans could affect its ability to remain viable in stressed conditions. The Federal Reserve may object—and has objected—to a capital plan based on quantitative or qualitative concerns. If it does, the bank is not permitted to make any capital distribution without Fed authorization.

The Federal Reserve, without direction from Congress, has taken actions under both former Chair Yellen and Chair Powell to refine the CCAR process to reduce regulatory burdens. For example, in 2016, the Fed announced that smaller banks subject to CCAR would not need to be subject to the same qualitative requirements as larger, more complex banks. That was a sensible change.

Congress has shown it knows how to exercise its article I prerogative in many places in S. 2155 to adjust, tailor, and modify thresholds for applicability for rules that apply to banks that have $50 billion or more in assets, but Congress has not made any changes to CCAR in S. 2155. The omission of CCAR and the capital plan rule from the changes that S. 2155 has made to section 165 and some regulations affecting some banks is intentional and reflects the continued importance this Congress places upon the continued existence of a robust CCAR process and the premise that the Fed will continue to use this most important supervisory tool appropriately.

That covers risk-based capital, but let me reiterate a point I made in my prior floor speech on this bill, about the importance of the leverage ratio. Basel III requires 3 percent tier 1 capital divided by the bank's average total consolidated assets. The U.S. implementation goes further and requires a minimum leverage ratio of 6 percent for SIFI banks and 5 percent for their bank holding companies. That is generally a good thing. One of the many lessons of the financial crisis was that regulators and bankers alike should approach risk modeling with a degree of humility. A strong leverage ratio is an important backstop to risk-based requirements that depend on banks and regulators' abilities to predict the future.

Current and former Federal Reserve officials from Governor Tarullo, to former Chair Volcker, and former Chair Yellen, to Chair Powell have said that the leverage ratio should in general not be the binding capital constraint for banks, as it tends to be for the custody banks today. The leverage ratio is meant to be, in the words of Jay Powell, ''an important backstop to the risk-based capital framework,'' but noted that ''it is important to get the relative calibrations of the leverage ratio and the risk-based capital requirements right'' because ''doing so is critical to mitigating any perverse incentives and preventing distortions in money markets and other safe asset markets.''

Let's be clear. Section 402 provides relief to only three banks: Bank of New York Mellon, State Street, and Northern Trust. I have seen some raise the concern that the language in section 402 could be read to provide relief to a broader set of banks. That is not a credible reading of the statutory language or our legislative intent. Section 402 says that, in order to receive relief, a ''custody bank'' must be ''predominantly engaged in custody, safekeeping, and asset servicing activities'' to gain the benefit of this provision. This provision does not mean that, if a bank has a large custodial business, it should get relief, nor is this an invitation to exclude other assets from the calculation of total assets for purposes of the leverage ratio. This is a targeted fix for a narrow problem.

So what is the net result of all this technical capital planning and stress testing work that the Federal Reserve and other banking regulators have developed since 2008? Today, U.S. G-SIBs are have two times the amount of capital than they had precrisis. Even if we went through an economic downturn worse than the financial crisis, banks would have 50 percent more capital after absorbing losses than they did in 2008. The substantial increase in capital extends to banks that are smaller than the G-SIBs. The common equity capital ratio of the 34 bank holding companies in the 2017 CCAR has more than doubled from 5.5 percent in the first quarter of 2009 to 12.5 percent in the first quarter of 2017. This reflects an increase of more than $750 billion in common equity capital to a total of $1.25 trillion by the first quarter of 2017.

That is exactly where we should be.

I am proud to have contributed significantly to both Dodd-Frank and the Economic Growth, Regulatory Relief, and Consumer Protection Act. S. 2155 is in many ways as notable for what it doesn't do, particularly with respect to capital requirements, as much as what it does do.

Mr. SCOTT. Mr. President, today I want to make a few remarks on S. 2155, the Economic Growth, Regulatory Relief, and Consumer Protection Act.

Section 213 of S. 2155, making online banking initiation legal and easy—the intent of this provision, which I introduced as an amendment during Committee consideration of S. 2155, is to facilitate the ability of financial institutions to reach new and potentially underserved consumers by making it possible to offer products and services to consumers through online and mobile applications. I would like to clarify that, with respect to references in this provision to ''copies,'' ''scans,'' or other reproductions of a consumer's government-issued identification, this is, intended to apply to all methods of obtaining information from an identification card, including color and black-and-white copies.

Section 215 of S. 2155, reducing identity fraud—with respect to section 215 of the bill, ''reducing identity fraud,'' the intent is to provide options for permitted entities to crosscheck consumer information with the Social Security Administration, SSA, in such a way that is efficient for those entities, as well as the SSA. In particular, the intent of this provision is to allow a service provider or other permitted entity to contact the SSA's Consent Based Social Security Number Verification database pursuant to appropriate consent provided to a permitted entity—such as a creditor—and to then provide the ''yes/no'' response from SSA to permitted entities who request such information in the future. In this way, creditors can receive the important validation of a name, date of birth, and Social Security number as part of the consumer report they receive when underwriting a credit application. This would result in fewer inquiries made to and received by the SSA. Furthermore, as mentioned, this provision would require consumer consent as part of the normal credit application process, similar to how creditors request consumer consent to obtain consumer credit reports in connection with an application. Under section 215, consumer consent can now be given via electronic signature obtained by the creditor or other permitted entities. Nothing in this provision would require consumers to fill out extra forms, provide extra signatures, or do anything that would significantly alter their expectations for a seamless application experience. The goal is to inform consumers of the possible inquiry to the SSA and allow them to provide consent via the chosen method by the creditor, which now includes electronic signature.

The second point I would like to clarify regarding section 215 is the importance of ensuring the SSA will implement this section with all deliberate speed, with no unreasonable delay to the process. As the author of this provision, it is my expectation that the SSA will have the database described in this section operational within 1 year of the bill's enactment, assuming the appropriate reserve of user fees. Every day that goes by without the

SSA implementing the changes called for in section 215 will lead to more children unknowingly becoming victims of synthetic identity theft and having their credit ruined.

Section 310 of S. 2155, credit score competition—the word ''competition'' in the title of section 310, ''credit score competition,'' is the heart of the intent of this part of the bill.

When enacted into law, Section 310 will put in place a mechanism by which credit score model developers may submit their models to Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac for validation for use by the enterprises, if the models meet validation criteria that Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac have established. Lenders will be able to choose the model that they wish to use. The end result of enactment of section 310 of S. 2155 will be a competitive market between the developers of empirically derived, demonstrably predictive, and statistically sound credit scoring models, with appropriate regulatory oversight from the Federal Housing Finance Agency under which both consumers and lenders would benefit. A lack of such a market thus far in the mortgage finance arena has stifled innovation in credit scoring.

Section 310 allows for more than one credit score model provider to have a validated model for use by the enterprises. The Director of the FHFA is given the responsibility to see that the validation process is undertaken in a timely manner for all applicants and that the methodology and results behind each validation decision is released to the public.

Unlike the request for input the FHFA issued in December 2017 on this subject, section 310 does not make specific reference to any credit score model provider. That is deliberate. Section 310 opens the enterprises up to use any model that is able to pass the validation process.

Some critics have raised the specter that providing mortgage lenders the opportunity to choose among credit scoring models validated and approved by Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac might trigger ''a race to the bottom.'' That is prohibited under section 310, as validated models are first deemed to not threaten the safety and soundness of the enterprises in order to be used.

Ms. WARREN. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

CLIMATE CHANGE

Ms. HASSAN. Mr. President, I rise to discuss the devastating impacts of climate change in my home State of New Hampshire and across our country. I want to start by commending our colleague Senator WHITEHOUSE, who has been a fierce advocate for this issue and, as of yesterday, had taken to the floor 200 times to call on Congress to wake up and protect our environment.

I am proud to represent a State whose beautiful natural resources strengthen our economy, create jobs, and support our high quality of life, but we are already seeing the real impacts of climate change in New Hampshire—impacts with major consequences.

Last year, the ''National Climate Assessment'' report reinforced what has long been clear: Human activity is the driving force behind our changing climate, and the United States is experiencing more extreme weather events, including dangerous heat, heavier rainfall and more flooding, and larger wildfires as a result, threatening both our long-term economic growth and the well-being of our citizens.

Many people in New Hampshire, particularly on our sea coast, are concerned about what these stronger and more frequent storms will mean for their families, their homes, and their businesses. Rising sea levels and greater precipitation have heightened the risk of flooding on our coasts. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association estimates that New Hampshire sea levels are expected to rise between six-tenths of a foot and 2 feet by 2050 and between 1.6 feet and 6.6 feet by 2100. In just the last 2 weeks, our State has been hit by three nor'easters. This is not normal.

You can see here, the flooding that impacted streets and homes in Portsmouth, NH, during one of these storms. This chart depicts a photo. We have to help our people adapt to these changes, these direct threats they face. This starts with focusing on efforts like coastal resiliency to help vulnerable communities prepare, improving our infrastructure, and developing resilience strategies to help plan ahead of storms and extreme weather events. At the local level, people on New Hampshire's seacoasts are already doing great work to be proactive and address these challenges head-on, so we must support their efforts.

We must also keep working to mitigate climate change, which is why I am continuing to push to cut carbon emissions, conserve and protect our natural resources, and build a stronger clean energy future.

Unfortunately, President Trump has been focused on an agenda that is based on climate change denial and has stacked his administration with climate change skeptics who have placed the priorities on big oil companies over the protection of our natural resources.

According to a recent Politico report, President Trump has chosen at least 20 people to serve as agency leaders and advisers who have publicly disagreed with the settled science on climate change. He has left key positions vacant, including a science adviser at the Office of Science and Technology Policy—an unprecedented move over the last several decades in which the office has existed. This clear disdain for science and failure to acknowledge the reality of the dangers of climate change are seen throughout the administration's policies.

Last year, President Trump recklessly withdrew the United States from the Paris climate agreement—failing to listen to the voices of environmental and business leaders who supported this agreement. The United States of America now has the distinction of being the only country in the world that is not supporting it.

EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt is working to repeal the Clean Power Plan, which is critical to reducing our dependence on fossil fuels and helping our citizens, our businesses, and our economy thrive. We have seen several clean air and clean water protections rolled back.

In addition to reversing environmental protections, the administration is taking further steps that can carry extreme risk for our environment. This includes the irresponsible plan to open up 90 percent of our Nation's coastal waters—including New Hampshire's seacoast—to the dangers of offshore drilling.

We are clearly seeing the impacts of climate change. Our citizens are calling on us to act, but the lack of leadership from this administration and the actions they have taken that exacerbate our climate and environmental challenges are—to put it mildly—irresponsible.

We need to take proactive steps to protect our environment, not roll back key protections. We need to help communities threatened by a changing climate, not put the profits of Big Oil first. We need to stand up for science, not deny it.

I will keep working to address climate change and to achieve a cleaner environment and stronger energy future that will help our citizens, our economy, and our businesses thrive. I urge my colleagues to do the same.

RECOGNIZING SPAULDING HIGH SCHOOL

Mr. President, I am proud to recognize not just an individual but the entire Spaulding High School community as our Granite Stater of the Month for the compassion and commitment to helping others that they displayed following the horrific shooting in Parkland, FL.

In the wake of the senseless violence in Parkland, Spaulding music staff and students met to discuss how they could help survivors and memorialize the 17 lives which were taken at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School.

During this dark time, the Spaulding students wanted to focus on expressing their love and how to best send comfort to their peers in Florida. This led Spaulding students, teachers, and faculty to start an initiative—with the members of the band, the color guard, and the Junior ROTC playing a leading role—to collect money to support the Stoneman Douglas community.

In the days that followed, students passed around buckets to collect donations, with each student giving what he or she could. In an enthusiastic show of support, the Spaulding community raised $3,271 in just 2 days.

Students wanted to do more, so they also presented the Spaulding High School Music Department Glass Eagle Leadership Award to the Stoneman Douglas Music Department, as that is also the mascot of their school. The Junior ROTC group also sent one of its Challenge Coins to acknowledge the Parkland students' bravery and resolve.

Two of the school's music teachers—Joanne Houston and Cheryl Richardson—recently flew to Florida to present the gifts to Stoneman Douglas's principal and vice principal.

The selfless support for Stoneman Douglas by the Spaulding High School community exemplifies the compassion of the Granite State.

In New Hampshire and throughout our country today, school communities are engaging in walkouts and demanding action to prevent future acts of gun violence. I know members of the Spaulding student body are planning a walkout, too, and I am profoundly grateful to see our young people speaking out and being powerful forces for change.

I am incredibly proud of these young leaders. We, as a country, must meet them in this moment.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

THE ECONOMY

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, this week we are debating an important piece of legislation that is going to streamline and simplify government regulations. We are going to make it easier and cheaper for families to get access to loans from their local banks. This legislation is good for communities, and it is good for the American economy.

This is just the latest action we have taken in Congress over the past year to help give the American economy a boost. The economy is responding, and the American people are doing better because of it.

Here is a headline from the New York Times on Friday: ''The Economy is Looking Awfully Strong.'' That is the headline in the New York Times—''The Economy is Looking Awfully Strong.'' This article was about the jobs report that came out last week. It said that the report ''can be summed up in four words: The economy is humming.''

The U.S. economy has already created over 552,000 new jobs in just the first 2 months of this year—over half a million new jobs in the first 2 months of this year. There are half a million more people working today compared to when Republicans passed this tax relief law. If we want to go back a little, there are more than 3 million new jobs since President Trump was elected in November of 2016. That is a real number to look at. That is the moment when people said they had enough of slow-growth policies from the Democrats in Washington and elected Donald Trump President. That is the moment when businesses realized things were going to be different with Republicans in charge.

More people are working now. And do you know what else? They are being paid more. According to the Commerce Department, the take-home pay of working people in America increased by $40 billion in January. They say it is directly because of the tax relief law that Republicans passed last December.

More than 4 million workers are also getting a bonus or a pay increase. Four hundred companies have said that is because taxes went down. They are sharing the savings with their workers. These are people who work at Home Depot, Lowe's, Walmart, Starbucks, and other businesses that have familiar names all across America. They are also people who work in smaller businesses, like the Jonah Bank in Wyoming, at branches in Casper and in Cheyenne. It is not a nationally known bank, but it is very important in our State and in our communities. Some people who are getting bonuses work at places like Taco John's. That is another business that is important to the people of Wyoming. When I was in the State senate, Taco John's was a place I went regularly to eat lunch. It is one of many Taco John's facilities around the State of Wyoming and around the West. Republicans cut taxes, and working Americans are seeing more money in their paychecks as a result.

This is what we see in terms of confidence. This new survey came out recently where they talked with the heads of midsized companies all around America, and this is what they say: 89 percent of the business leaders are confident in the U.S. economy and the economy's prospects for the year. U.S. economic confidence soars—in 2016, 39 percent; in 2017, 80 percent; and in 2018, now 89 percent. The American people realize we have now beaten back 8 years of bad policies from Democrats in Washington. As soon as President Trump took office, we saw confidence soar, and I don't know that it has ever been higher.

Americans are feeling better about the U.S. economy. They are also feeling better about their own personal situations. That is the key—people's own personal situations. That is certainly the case in my home State of Wyoming.

The polling company Gallup looked at overall economic confidence State by State. They found that Wyoming is the most confident State in the country when it comes to America's economy. Attitudes about the economy turned positive immediately after Donald Trump was elected President in 2016. You could feel it. You could feel the confidence. You could feel the optimism. You could feel the positiveness in the people of Wyoming. People living in 43 out of the 50 States now have a positive view of the economy, and Wyoming, of course, is No. 1.

People I talk to at home—I was in Cody, WY, this past weekend, as well as in Sheridan and Riverton and Casper and around the State talking to people in various communities. The people I talked to about the economy will tell you it is because businesses are hiring again. People are doing better. They see their take-home pay going up. They see their taxes going down. They see that Republican policies are making their lives better. They see that Republican policies are also making the economy stronger. They see that Republican policies are making it easier for people to achieve their dreams and to enjoy their lives. It comes from tax relief. It comes from cutting regulations, as we are doing this week.

What are the Democrats offering? Well, last week, the Democratic leader came to the floor and said he wants to raise taxes by $1 trillion. That is what the leader of the Democratic Party said on the floor of the Senate last week. He wants to raise taxes by $1 trillion. Is he serious? A trillion dollars? Raising taxes? Taking away from people the tax cuts they have just started to enjoy?

More people have jobs. The economy is humming. The New York Times says the economy is humming. Ninety percent of working Americans have increases in their take-home pay. That is because of the tax cuts this body passed. Democrats want to reverse it all. That is what we hear on the floor of the Senate. They want to take back the money. They want to roll back the progress we have made. That is their plan—raise taxes. That is what we hear from the Democrats.

Senator SCHUMER came to the floor of the Senate, and he said: ''There are much better uses for the money.'' That is what he said on the floor of the Senate. That is what the Washington Democrats always say. They have better uses for the money than the American people do. They have a better idea, they always say, about how to use somebody else's money. They want higher taxes. They want more Washington spending because they think they know best. They don't think the money should go to pay increases or bonuses for working Americans. Really? They think it should go to Washington? I think American families know how to spend their paychecks better than any Washington Democrat ever will.

Democrats say they want to use this $1 trillion in new taxes to pay for infrastructure. We all know that America's infrastructure—our roads, our bridges,

our dams, our waterways—are in desperate need of attention, but as chairman of the Environment and Public Works Committee, I can tell you that I am committed to improving this situation by working with the President and working on both sides of the aisle. If Democrats want to talk about a robust and fiscally responsible infrastructure plan that is going to help the American economy, then I am ready to have that conversation, but if all they want to do is talk about raising taxes on American families, they are wasting their breath.

There is a very big difference between Republicans and Democrats in Congress: Republicans want the American people to keep more of their hard-earned money. Democrats want Washington to take more of people's money. Republicans want new policies that grow the economy, create jobs, and inspire confidence in a brighter future. Democrats want the same old tax-and-spend policies that have failed for years. Their policies have led to slow growth, stagnant wages, and a terrible lack of confidence in our economy.

Republicans promised that our ideas will do better, and the results from the tax cuts and the tax relief speak for themselves. The economy is strong. Confidence is off the charts.

The American people deserve this chance to have a brighter future. That is what Republicans are offering, and that is also what Republicans are delivering.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, I want to associate myself with the comments of the esteemed Senator from Wyoming. I think he described very well the extremely positive impact that tax relief is having on our country, on economic growth, on job creation, and on higher wages and incomes for hard-working Americans.

I rise today, however, to talk about the Economic Growth, Regulatory Relief, and Consumer Protection Act and the important reforms we are making to spur economic development, facilitate more lending, and reduce burdensome regulations on our community banks and credit unions.

The Dodd-Frank Act was enacted in 2010 following the financial crisis in an attempt to reduce systemic risks the financial sector posed to the economy. This far-reaching law touched every aspect of the financial system, including many small community banks and credit unions around the country and in my home State of North Dakota and across this Nation, in North Carolina and in every State in the Union. These community banks and credit unions are not what pose the systemic risks that Dodd-Frank was passed to address.

At almost 850 pages long, Dodd-Frank required more than 10 regulatory agencies to write almost 400 new rules, which added more than 27,000 new Federal restrictions on American businesses. Think about that regulatory burden—more than 27,000 new Federal restrictions on American businesses.

Compliance costs to implement these Dodd-Frank rules have exceeded $36 billion—I repeat, $36 billion—which is ultimately passed on to consumers. It required nearly 73 million paperwork hours. In fact, agencies were still writing Dodd-Frank regulations after the law was passed. These costs hit small banks and credit unions especially hard, harming the driving forces of economic growth in rural areas and in our underserved areas. These financial institutions provide critical funding for credit for families and small businesses, especially in rural areas and in underserved areas. Rural States particularly feel that impact, like my home State of North Dakota.

Because of their small size, community banks and credit unions have a more difficult time complying with excessively complex reporting and paperwork requirements. Compliance costs have hastened bank closures in small towns, leading to a growing number of places with no bank branches—meaning, not having financial services for consumers.

Nationwide, more than one in five U.S. banks have disappeared; that is more than 1,700 institutions—or more than one small bank or financial institution every business day—that have shut down since Dodd-Frank was enacted. That means less access to financial services for consumers across this country, particularly those who don't live in our large urban areas.

Since Dodd-Frank was signed into law, North Dakota has lost over one-fifth of its credit unions, with the number of credit unions in North Dakota declining from 47 in 2010 to 35 today. The number of community banks in North Dakota similarly dropped from 90 in 2010 to 74 today. These institutions have been forced to merge and consolidate due to the overly burdensome regulatory compliance costs associated with Dodd-Frank.

The ultimate loser, of course, from these increased regulations, compliance costs, and the subsequent consolidation ends up being the very consumer that Dodd-Frank was intended to protect. Whether you are shopping for a loan to fund an innovative start-up business, operating capital for your family farm, or seeking a mortgage to purchase your first home, fewer banks and fewer credit unions means fewer options for consumers.

In North Dakota and in rural communities Nationwide, our community banks and credit unions serve just that—the communities. They serve their local communities. They are not only savings and lending institutions for hard-working neighbors, local businesses, farmers, ranchers, and community members, but they are willing to work with borrowers facing circumstances unique to their rural community. They know their customer. They know their community. They know their service area.

Rural community banks and credit unions typically make loans that don't fit the standard mortgage mold. Properties that are not cookie-cutter residential properties are very common in rural markets. Rural lenders tend to use their knowledge of the market and the customer to structure loans that work for both the borrower and the bank. In other words, they make a loan fit the customer, rather than trying to make the customer fit a one-size-fits-all loan program with too much regulation. That might require using multiple pieces of property as collateral for the loan or utilizing a short-term loan to assist with a renovation that is paid off with the sale of a crop.

Documenting assets and cash to close a loan may look very different. For example, livestock in a feedlot waiting for sale or crops ready for harvest or in storage silos may substitute for cash in the bank that would typically get a borrower to qualify for a loan under the standardized approach where one size is supposed to fit everyone.

The fundamental purpose of community banks and credit unions is to serve their local communities. In North Dakota, they do this by forging personal relationships with the small businesses, farmers and ranchers, and individuals in their communities. By knowing their customers, they are able to offer products tailored to each individual who comes into the bank.

Dodd-Frank undermines this fundamental purpose by forcing banks and credit unions to fit their customers into a one-size-fits-all mortgage lending product called ''qualified mortgages.'' While this may work for urban and suburban lenders who sell their mortgages to the largest Wall Street banks, we have seen that it does not work in our rural States and our rural areas.

The bill we are now considering provides relief to rural customers by deeming certain mortgages held by lenders with less than $10 billion in assets as qualified mortgages, allowing community banks and credit unions to expand the types of mortgages they offer while maintaining critical consumer protections—meaning more choice and more opportunity for financing for consumers across the country. This means that our community banks and credit unions in our State and across the Nation will be able to offer a wider range of credit products and better serve the small businesses, farmers and ranchers, and hard-working individuals in our communities.

Another important issue facing our rural communities is a critical shortage of appraisers. The appraisal is a key component of the home-buying process and is important to both borrowers and lenders. The bank wants to know that the home financing they provide can be supported by the collateral, and the borrower wants to make

sure they are not paying more than the home is worth.

In rural areas, including my State and many others, conducting appraisals can be more complex than in suburban and urban areas because there are fewer sales and fewer comparable properties. This makes it vitally important that there are local appraisers who are familiar with the area they are working in. However, we are seeing a dramatic shortage of appraisers right now in our State and I know in other States as well. For example, of the 53 counties in our State, 29 have no resident appraisers. This means that all properties sold in those counties are appraised by appraisers from outside the county, sometimes from across the State. This can lead to significant wait times for an appraisal to be completed, as well as the potential for inaccurate appraisals.

This bill provides relief for home buyers in rural areas by exempting rural mortgage portfolio loans of less than $400,000 from being required to have a certified appraisal if the lender is unable to find a State-certified or licensed appraiser to perform that certified appraisal within 5 days. This will help reduce the cost to consumers and streamline the already time-consuming home-buying process.

Additionally, this bill helps further protect consumers from identity theft and other predatory practices by requiring credit bureaus to provide consumers with one free freeze alert and one free unfreeze alert per year. These tools will empower consumers to take more control over their credit and better protect themselves from potential fraud.

This legislation also includes a provision I cosponsored that would provide protections for bank employees who disclose the suspected exploitation of a senior citizen to a regulatory or law enforcement agency. This will encourage whistleblowers to come forward and protect senior citizens from financial exploitation.

Additionally, I have filed an amendment, which I am urging my colleagues to support, that would help our farmers weather the low commodity prices and economic downturns in farm country. I have heard from many farmers and bankers across the country that the current Farm Service Agency, or FSA, loan program levels are outdated and do not reflect the current ag economy.

My amendment would increase the maximum direct loan amount for the Farm Operating and Farm Ownership Programs to $600,000 from the current level of $300,000. It would also increase the maximum guaranteed loan amount for these programs from $1.39 million to $2.5 million. This would allow new and beginning farmers to purchase land and equipment or provide necessary operating capital to help farmers endure through the downturn in commodity prices. I will continue to work with my colleagues on that amendment.

In conclusion, the Economic Growth, Regulatory Relief, and Consumer Protection Act provides real regulatory relief to our community banks and credit unions. I believe this will benefit consumers across this country. It empowers lenders to sell products tailored to their customers, assists rural communities impacted by the shortage of certified appraisers, and provides enhanced consumer protections from identity theft, fraud, and predatory practices.

It is past time that we provide regulatory relief to the community banks and credit unions across this Nation. Passing this bill will further economic development, increase lending in rural communities, and alleviate the onerous requirements placed on our small community financial institutions by Dodd-Frank. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

I yield the floor to the distinguished senior Senator from the great State of Alabama.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COTTON). The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, I rise today, as my colleague from North Dakota has just done, to speak in support of Senate bill S. 2155, the Economic Growth, Regulatory Relief, and Consumer Protection Act.

In response to the 2008 financial crisis, many individuals overreacted to the role that smaller institutions played. In the rush to react, these institutions became overregulated. But since the drafting and enactment of Dodd-Frank nearly 10 years ago, Congress has looked for ways to lessen the damaging effects it has had on our financial system in America. As a result of the Dodd-Frank Act, thousands of pages of Federal mandates were imposed upon even the smallest of financial institutions.

Community banks all across the country are the key source of lending and other financial services on Main Street throughout this Nation. I believe we should not, and must not, continue to require them to comply with the same regulations as our largest financial institutions that are, perhaps, subject to systemic risk.

This bill before us today fixes that by offering a commonsense approach to ensure that our small and medium-sized financial institutions are no longer subject to excessive regulation that has choked the life from them in the country.

Senate bill S. 2155 is a result of almost 10 years of negotiations among Members of both parties. This legislation was negotiated in good faith between Republicans and Democrats to find common ground. In a time when partisan politics have derailed many efforts, the bill before us moved through regular order out of the Banking Committee, where a lengthy and robust amendment debate occurred. Many of us in this body, including the Presiding Officer, have spent hours upon hours negotiating since the enactment of Dodd-Frank to get to this point today. This is a bipartisan bill. This is a good product.

Time and again, I have advocated for conducting thorough cost-benefit analysis on financial regulations. I believe it is Congress's role, when tasked with oversight authority, to ensure that the costs of rules from Washington do not outweigh the benefits for consumers. However, even a simple examination of the activities of small and medium-sized banks shows that their practices provide no systemic risk to our financial system.

Many Dodd-Frank regulations are inappropriate for these institutions in the country. This has become abundantly clear to most of us. As regulatory overreach progressed, community banks and, in turn, local economies began to fall on hard times.

In the 115th Congress, I believe the dynamics have shifted. Beginning with our work to reform our Nation's tax system, the economy has been performing well. Unemployment has dropped; the total number of individuals returning to the workforce has increased. In the Senate, we now have a unique opportunity to unlock the chains of stagnation that have halted the growth of a lot of our small business.

Community financial institutions provide more than 60 percent of small business loans in this country. Too often, it is easy to forget that the personalized touch of community banks has been what started the process for success of some of the most accomplished businesses in the United States of America. I believe we must pass this bill if we want that to continue—if we want to keep creating jobs in this country and opportunities for our people.

In response to my friends from the other side of the aisle who oppose our efforts here, I have one simple message: The Economic Growth, Regulatory Relief, and Consumer Protection Act—the bill we have before the Senate now—is a thoughtful, bipartisan effort to correct and rightsize regulations that were hastily prepared. This product is designed to help Main Street, not Wall Street.

This is a good bill. I hope my colleagues will join me and others in support of it.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, I want to address two issues today. One, briefly, is the issue of guns about which many of our Democratic colleagues have come down to speak. Then I want to speak about the financial services regulatory reform bill we will be voting on later today.

GUN LEGISLATION

Mr. President, first, on the former topic, a number of our Democratic colleagues have been down here, and we have heard a real passion and concern about the victims of gun violence in our country. I certainly understand and respect their passion. I have spent a lot of time working to find sensible measures that will help address this in ways that do not infringe on the Second Amendment rights of law-abiding citizens. It does feel like we are at a somewhat different moment here, so I hope we can choose to get something done—something constructive—and stop talking past each other and find where there is common ground. I suggest four steps by which we ought to be able to find reasonable consensus in the Senate, ought to be able to get to 60 votes, and be able to at least modestly make some progress in this space.

One is a bill that has been introduced by Senators CORNYN and MURPHY, a bipartisan bill that is called Fix NICS. The fact is, our background check system is only as good as the data that is in the system, and we have an inconsistent quality of data. The data is provided, generally, by the States. Some States provide excellent, comprehensive, up-to-date data—other States, not so much. The Cornyn-Murphy bill would encourage better compliance and better data from the States. Better data means we would have a better NICS system.

A second piece of legislation is a bill I have introduced with Senator COONS, and the sort of nickname for this legislation is ''Lie and Try.'' Our legislation would make it possible for more States to prosecute people who commit felonies when they attempt to purchase firearms; that is to say, it is those people who knowingly lie about their own criminal backgrounds—who deny their criminal histories—in the hope that they will be able to somehow circumvent the NICS system and buy firearms. It actually happens every day in America that convicted felons, who obviously know they are convicted felons, deny that and attempt to buy firearms they are not entitled to.

Our legislation would simply require the FBI, when it discovers that someone has committed this sort of felony, to inform the law enforcement in the State from which that person comes so the State would be able to prosecute, if it would choose to. It is only about enforcing the laws on the books. I often hear from my friends who are Second Amendment supporters, as I am, that we ought to do a better job of enforcing the laws on the books. This is an opportunity to do exactly that.

A third opportunity for us is to recognize that the people whom we deem to be so dangerous that we will not allow them to fly on planes—the people on a terrorist watch list who could show up at airports with valid IDs and boarding passes, and we will not let them get on a plane as we think they are that dangerous—should also not be allowed to walk into gun stores and buy firearms. Senator COLLINS and Senator HEITKAMP have introduced legislation. I am a cosponsor of it. It states that if someone is so dangerous that we believe them to be a terrorist and we won't let them fly, then we also will preclude them from legally buying a firearm.

Lastly, Manchin-Toomey is legislation that Senator MANCHIN and I introduced some years ago, and the idea behind this legislation is simply to require a background check on commercial gun sales. Whether they occur at a gun show or over the internet, these commercial-scale transactions ought to be subject to a background check so that we can determine whether the prospective buyer is somebody who we all agree shouldn't have a firearm—a dangerously mentally ill person, someone who has committed a violent criminal act, someone who is otherwise simply disqualified from having a firearm. The only way we can actually achieve that is if we have some mechanism to determine whether a person is disqualified in this fashion. So Senator MANCHIN and I have legislation that will do that without infringing on the absolutely essential constitutional rights of law-abiding citizens.

These four items would be very constructive—fix NICS, ''Lie and Try'' legislation, a ''No Fly, No Buy'' bill, and the Manchin-Toomey legislation. I hope we are going to make some progress in this space, and those would be candidates for doing so.

Mr. President, let me shift to S. 2155, the legislation we will be voting on later today. This legislation is long overdue.

Let me be very clear about this. The financial crisis we experienced is a decade behind us now. The Dodd-Frank financial services regulatory bill—a massive construct that wildly overregulates financial services—was signed into law 8 years ago, and we have done nothing really meaningful to roll that back over these last 8 years.

This bill is the result of years of bipartisan work, an untold number of hearings, and an extraordinary amount of testimony, and now we have a product that we are going to, I hope, pass later today to begin to roll back some of this excessive regulation.

I thank all the Democratic and Republican Members who worked to get this product to where it is today. Senator SHELBY, when he was chairman of the Banking Committee, laid much of the groundwork for this. Chairman HENSARLING in the House, the chairman of the House Financial Services Committee, has done great work in this space. Of course, Chairman CRAPO, as chairman, has done an outstanding job.

We are at a point where we are very close to finally making some progress on this overregulation.

I will disclose up front that I have my own personal experience and bias in this space, having worked with a great group of men and women in eastern Pennsylvania and western New Jersey. We launched a community bank back in 2005, and it was an amazing experience, a great experience. It was a very successful bank.

Back in 2005 when we launched, I was shocked to learn how heavily regulated a small, tiny, startup, brandnew community bank was. It seemed to me that we needed permission from the regulators to change the color of the drapes in the lobby of the bank, and this was all before Dodd-Frank was passed. Dodd-Frank came along several years later and made things much, much worse—way too prescriptive, way too much discretion of power in the hands of regulators, a terrible trickle-down effect whereby extensive regulations that were purportedly meant to constrain large financial institutions also imposed huge costs on small banks. We have gotten to the point where, arguably, small banks are now too small to succeed.

Thirty years ago we had 14,000 banks in America, and today we have fewer than 5,000. The trend toward consolidation in banking was underway before Dodd-Frank, but Dodd-Frank dramatically worsened it. One data point makes it very clear. Before the financial crisis, before Dodd-Frank came along, we used to routinely launch, on average, over 100 banks per year across America. It was an ordinary thing for a group of business folks to come together and decide they were going to launch a bank to serve their community. It is a great thing when people do that because it introduces new competition, new choices for consumers, and new access to capital. There were over 100 per year routinely for decades. From the time that Dodd-Frank was passed up through to this year, we have had five new banks start up in America. We have completely destroyed the entire de novo banking industry, and there is a price for that. There is a price to communities, there is a higher cost of credit, there is less available capital, and that doesn't serve anyone well.

Our legislation, this bill we are going to vote on later today, is going to improve the overall regulatory environment. At the same time, it is going to make improvements for consumers. Let me touch on a few of the features.

One is designed to improve access to mortgage credit. Section 101 of the bill provides regulatory relief for financial institutions if they originate a mortgage and keep that mortgage on their portfolio.

When a financial institution originates a mortgage and sells it, which is a very common practice, there is this sense that the financial institution doesn't care about the borrower's ability to repay. It happens not to be true, but there are very, very extensive regulations that are very onerous, and they make it more difficult for borrowers to meet the criteria that are acceptable. Well, if the bank is keeping the loan on

its own books, then it should be obvious to everyone that the bank has every incentive to make sure the loan is made to someone who can repay it. So this section provides some relief and some more flexibility so that the bank can actually make a loan that works for that consumer rather than one that works for whatever bureaucrats have decided.

Section 107 allows relief from some of the regulations in the manufactured housing space. It is based on legislation that I introduced with Senator DONNELLY. This will help consumers who are using manufactured housing, which is one of the most affordable ways of having a home.

There are consumer protections like section 301, which protects consumers' credit by giving consumers greater control over their credit reports.

There is section 302, which protects veterans' credit by helping prevent medical debt from improperly harming a veteran's credit report.

There is help for community banks—the very small banks that are not systemically important to their neighborhood, much less the entire economy. They are wildly overregulated. This diminishes that burden modestly. It simplifies, for instance, their capital requirements.

Section 202 exempts very small community banks from the Volcker rule. Why would we need to exempt them from it? Not so they can engage in the proprietary trading or the kinds of investments that the Volcker rule precludes, but it recognizes that community banks don't do that anyway. They have never done that. They end up, instead, having to spend a whole lot of money proving that they don't do that which they have never done. It doesn't make any sense. This regulation relieves them of some of that burden.

Section 210 will allow very small banks to have a little bit more time between the onerous exams they are subject to periodically. It is still very onerous, but at least there is some relief here.

There is a change in how we treat bank holding companies. We have, unfortunately, as a result of Dodd-Frank, this concept of too big to fail. We have enshrined it in law by creating what we call SIFIs, or systemically important financial institutions. These are officially designated ''too big to fail.''

Frankly, no institution should be too big to fail, but it happens under Dodd-Frank automatically when a bank hits $50 billion. That is a ridiculously low threshold, so this bill takes that automatic SIFI designation up to $250 billion. Frankly, it shouldn't be automatically based on the size of the institution; it should be driven by the conduct of the institution, the kind of business they do. But at least we are raising the threshold from $50 billion to $250 billion.

By the way, this is problematic, actually, for banks that are a little larger than $250 billion. They still have this onerous, complex, expensive regime that they have to comply with, while their competitors, which might be just a few billion dollars smaller, are relieved of this burden. So there is an unfairness in this. I intend to work with regulators to basically have this SIFI designation reflect the activity of the institution rather than just the size.

There is another provision, section 402, which deals with the supplementary leverage ratio, which goes by the acronym SLR. The SLR is basically a minimum capital ratio. It takes a look at the entire balance sheet of a bank and says: Regardless of what those assets consist of, we are going to have a minimum capital requirement. That, of course, is in addition to all the specific capital requirements that are associated with the various category of assets. That whole regulatory regime remains in place, so we have both simultaneously.

This legislation has a very, very narrow exception for this secondary SLR capital requirement. It simply holds that for those handful—there are really only three custody banks, banks that have as their principal activity the custody of securities for other financial institutions. When they take custody-related cash and they put it on deposit with the Fed or another central bank, that is a risk-free transaction. There is no risk to an American bank having a dollar-denominated deposit with the Fed; therefore, this legislation recognizes that you should not have to be hit with an additional capital requirement for such a transaction. That is a constructive feature.

Some have mischaracterized this and suggested that, oh my goodness, we could have deposits with the Turkish central bank or the Greek central bank. That is clearly factually wrong. The criteria for eligibility is very, very narrow, and it is only at the most secure central banks in the world, and by the way, mostly it is the Fed.

A quick additional word about this too-big-to-fail doctrine. I feel very strongly that no institution should be too big to fail, and no institution should get a taxpayer bailout. Some of my colleagues seem to agree with that and have been very critical of a bailout that would occur for a financial institution.

I would suggest that the best way to avoid taxpayers having to bail out a financial institution is not to attempt to prescribe every conceivable activity through massive regulation but, rather, have a bankruptcy code that allows the failure to be resolved in bankruptcy. The people who should be wiped out in the event of a failure of a financial institution are the shareholders and unsecured creditors, not taxpayers.

So for those of my colleagues who have come down here and expressed great concern about potential bailouts, join me in my legislation, which adds a chapter to the Bankruptcy Code so that we can successfully resolve even a very large and complex financial institution where we should, which is in bankruptcy, and not pose a risk to American taxpayers. Senator CORNYN and I have legislation that would do that. It really, over time, can completely end the debacle of too big to fail, and that would be a very constructive development as well.

Let me conclude by saying that this bill, S. 2155, which is called the Economic Growth, Regulatory Relief, and Consumer Protection Act, is very aptly named. The goals expressed in the title are actually achieved in this legislation. I am confident we will make progress on all of these fronts if and when—and I think we will—we pass this legislation later today.

I certainly urge my colleagues to support this, but my last plea is that this not be the last word on financial regulatory reform. This is a constructive step in the right direction, but it is a modest step forward. Much more needs to be done if we are going to have a safe but robust competitive financial system that is capable of fueling the economic growth that our economy is capable of.

With that, Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The assistant Democratic leader.

GUN SAFETY

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, most people cannot remember what happened in the first grade—I have vague memories of being a first grader—but there are certain things that may happen even at a young stage in your life that will be remembered.

My 6-year-old granddaughter, who attends first grade in Brooklyn, NY, a few weeks ago was told by her teacher what to do if a shooter, if a gunman came into the first grade classroom. My little granddaughter was told: Don't stand by the window; you could get shot. If they enter the classroom with a gun, get down on the floor.

Is there any sane person in America who believes that is what the Founding Fathers had in mind when they wrote the Second Amendment to the Bill of Rights—the right to bear arms—that we would have reached a point in America where the prospects of gun violence in the first grade classrooms and all the way through school, through high school, and college would become a reality in America? I can't imagine anyone in their wildest dreams would have imagined that possibility.

Today is March 14. On February 14, a gunman went into a high school in Parkland, FL, and killed 17 people—14 students and 3 members of the faculty. It is not the first, by any means. Ten years before it, at Northern Illinois University, a gunman killed five there and injured many others. The list goes on and on and on.

This gunman who went into Parkland, FL, wasn't carrying a handgun. He was carrying an AR–15. It is a semi-automatic weapon that he was able to embellish with a high-capacity magazine that could kill 30 people at a time.

Why? Why on Earth would that man, 19 years of age, be allowed to buy a weapon that was created to be used by the military—a military assault weapon, a weapon that sometimes our police may need, but hardly ever an individual American could need or want to buy for a legitimate sporting or hunting purpose?

But he did, and 17 were dead after that rampage.

There has been a lot of reaction to that—more than I expected, I will be honest with you, because mass killings have become way too common in America. Something happened there—something we saw across America today. High school students in that high school came out and said: Enough, we are fed up with the laws of this land and the politicians who refuse to change them. We are fed up with the fear that comes with just going to school in America. We are fed up with those who say the Second Amendment requires us to live in fear.

They have marched in towns across America today. They have marched on Washington. They have come to my office and visited with me. I believe they have become a major force in the national debate. I commend them. I encourage them. I hope they will continue.

What can we do? You know, politics is tough. It ain't beanbag, as they used to say. There are forces like the National Rifle Association and the gun lobby that threaten the political existence of Members of Congress if they vote the wrong way. I know they came after me when I was a Member of the House. They almost got me. It was a tough election year. I managed to survive it, but they poured money in and tried to beat me. I have never had their support since, and that is OK with me. But for a lot of Members of Congress, they are just not willing to risk it, not willing to anger the National Rifle Association.

Do you remember when President Trump had the meeting 2 weeks ago? He called in the students and parents and others. He let the cameras roll, and they continued the meeting so America could witness it. He admonished the Members of Congress there: Don't be scared of the National Rifle Association. Don't be petrified by the NRA. We have to do something.

President Trump came out for universal background checks. In a way, it is not a very bold and courageous position because 97 percent of the American people agree with it. Even gun owners agree with the premise that we should do everything in our power to have a background check to keep guns out of the hands of convicted felons and mentally unstable people. The President came out for that 2 weeks ago, and he also said: Why in the world do we let someone 19 years of age buy a military assault weapon? We don't need these assault weapons.

I thought to myself: What a break; here is a Republican President who is finally standing up to the gun lobby and supporting positions that are overwhelmingly supported by the American people.

My fellow Senator who is now presiding over the Senate has shown that on a bipartisan fashion we can move forward on universal background checks. He came together with Senator MANCHIN of West Virginia on a measure that I supported and one that I think we should revisit. I felt so encouraged 2 weeks ago.

Well, what has happened since? That group left the White House and a couple of days later, the National Rifle Association came in for lunch and the President reversed his position. It is nothing new. I saw him do exactly the same thing on DACA and Dreamers. He reversed his position and now, instead of universal background checks that will keep guns out of the hands of those who would misuse them, they are supporting a bill that is good but is not all we need, called Fix NICS, which fills some of the information in the background checks for purchasing firearms.

The 17 lives in that high school in Parkland, FL, are worth more than this weak response by President Trump and by some in Congress. We must do better.

Let me tell you that the issue here is more than just the safety of high schools. A few weeks ago—in fact, a day before the shooting in Parkland, FL—an amazing member of the Chicago Police Department, Commander Paul Bauer, was downtown for a training session and heard on his radio an alert that there was a fugitive escaping. Being a man of duty, he responded to join in the pursuit and was cornered in a stairwell by a man who pulled out a gun with a high-capacity magazine, shot him six times, and killed him right in that stairwell. This was an amazing police officer with a great wife and daughter, from Bridgeport, in the city of Chicago. Our whole city was in grief over that loss.

They tried to figure out where the gun came from? Where did that criminal get that gun? It was purchased legally outside Madison, WI. It was then sold, without a background check, to another person who, in turn, sold it on the internet with no background check to a person with a record of felony arrests and convictions. It completely defied the system and made the argument again, sadly, of why universal background checks—not just at Federal licensed dealers but also at gun shows and on the internet—are absolutely essential. The Fix NICS bill does not solve that problem. We must solve that problem.

Secondly, on the military assault weapons, today at the Senate Judiciary Committee, we talked about the impact of an assault weapon and a bullet that is fired. Senator BILL NELSON of Florida, who has followed this terrible incident in Parkland and has spoken out so eloquently, reminded us that firing a bullet in a handgun may mean that that bullet passes through your body and injures an organ. Firing a long gun, a rifle, or a semiautomatic weapon like the AR–15 does dramatically more damage. The bullet may enter your body in a small way, but it comes out on the other side with a wound the size of an orange and, in the process, tumbles through your body, ripping through tissue, ripping through arteries, ripping through organs, and creating a situation that is difficult and sometimes impossible to repair.

Why would anyone need a weapon like that? You sure don't need it to go hunting. If you need an AR–15 to go shoot a deer, for goodness sakes, you ought to stick to fishing. You obviously don't have the skill necessary. To own it just to own it? Some do. They are collectors, I imagine. But opening those sales to 18-, 19-, or 20-year-olds makes no sense whatsoever, and that is what the students from Parkland and around the country are saying today. I couldn't agree with them more.

As for high-capacity magazines, why do you need 30 rounds? Why do you need 60 rounds? What is that all about? It is being used in weapons that are designed to kill other human beings—not just a few, but many.

As for bump stocks, I never heard of a bump stock until a few months ago, when the Las Vegas mass shooting occurred, killing innocent people at a country and western concert. We have banned machine guns in America for decades. Well, leave it to the firearm manufacturers. They found a way to create a mechanism that takes a semiautomatic weapon—meaning that you have to pull the trigger each time for each round—and turns it essentially into an automatic weapon, where you can hold the trigger and use the recoil and it just sprays the bullets until you empty the magazine, with something called a bump stock.

I can't imagine why we haven't just flat out passed a bill to ban bump stocks after what happened in Las Vegas, but this Congress, this Senate is frozen by the gun lobby.

All across America today, young people are stepping up. I asked a teacher, Ms. Posada, who testified before the Senate Judiciary Committee today: What is it about the students in your school? Why have they become such national leaders, outspoken on this issue and inspirational on this issue to me?

She said: That is the way we trained them, to be part of an America where they can participate and be a leader, and they are.

I encourage them to continue to put the pressure on all of us, starting with President Trump, who may switch his position again. He went from all for gun safety to the gun lobby position in a matter of days. Maybe he will come back again to some more reasonable position.

Put the pressure on Congress too. We have run out of excuses, haven't we?

More and more innocent Americans have been killed, and the best we can come up with is that over 200 years ago, when some men sat down to write our Bill of Rights, that Second Amendment gave the authority to individuals to buy any and everything they want to buy in the name of the right to bear arms. I don't think that is what they had in mind at all.

We cannot continue to let the NRA and the gun lobby have veto power over gun policy in America. We are facing an epidemic of violence with hundreds of Americans shot every day—from Commander Bauer in Chicago; to the kids in Parkland, FL; to Las Vegas; to DeKalb, IL. The list goes on and on and on. We have to put the safety of our kids and our neighborhoods ahead of the gun lobby's agenda, which is just to sell more guns.

We have to have the courage as a Senate to bring a bill to the floor and to open it to amendments. We don't do that anymore in the Senate. There was a time when the Senate was a great deliberative body, and now the Senate is not. The silence of the Senate, when it comes to this gun safety issue, is deafening. Americans know it well, and the question now is whether we will do everything within our power to reduce the number of shootings, to keep our communities safe, and to spare more 6-year-old first graders that horrible lesson they may remember forever—to hit the floor when the shooter comes in the classroom.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TOOMEY). The Senator from Texas.

FIX NICS BILL

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I have listened to the remarks of our distinguished colleague from Illinois who is the Democratic whip. I agree with a number of things he says and disagree with some others, but I do think we need to keep this in the appropriate context. We are, in fact, talking about a provision of the Bill of Rights, the Second Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, and I hope we would never treat any of those essential guarantees of American rights that precede the creation of our government casually. It is important that we protect all of our rights. The right to worship according to the dictates of our conscience, the right to petition our government for the redress of just grievances, the freedom of association, and the freedom of the press are also part of the Bill of Rights, just like the Second Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

There are a number of things that we can agree on, and I have been talking about one of them for some time now—the so-called Fix NICS bill. It is probably not very well-labeled or branded because ''NICS'' is short for the National Instant Criminal Background Check System. Basically, what it does is fix the broken background check system to make sure that convicted felons, people who have been dishonorably discharged from the military, people who have been adjudicated mentally ill, people who have committed acts of domestic violence—and a number of other categories—cannot legally purchase firearms. Why? Because current law prohibits it.

We have already passed those laws, but as we saw in Sutherland Springs, TX, one Sunday morning not long ago, 26 people lost their lives and 20 additional lives were forever changed when they were shot by a gunman who had lied and obtained firearms when he was disqualified under the law from purchasing them.

The FBI maintains the background check system, and it wasn't their fault because the background check system is only as good as the information that is uploaded into the background check system. When somebody goes into a store and tries to purchase a firearm and lies, the background check system catches them and they are denied that purchase. That is how it is supposed to work.

Recently, the attitude among some here in Washington seems to be that this bill somehow doesn't go far enough. There are other ideas I am more than willing to debate and vote on, some of which I actually agree with, but none have the bipartisan consensus and support that this particular Fix NICS bill has.

I was just told that now we are up to 70 bipartisan cosponsors. In other words, 70 out of 100 Senators, on a bipartisan basis, support this fix to our broken background check system because they know that if it had been working the way Congress had intended, 26 people would still be alive in Sutherland Springs, TX, and 20 more who were shot and wounded would not have had to suffer those grievous injuries and the painful recovery.

For example, as the Democratic leader—as well as some others—has said: ''If we only pass Fix NICS, we'll be right back here after the next shooting, in nearly the same place.'' He said that ''we won't have done our job.''

Well, as I said, if there are other things that enjoy broad bipartisan consensus, let's get them done. But if the attitude is that we will not even vote on what we agree on because we want to do more, we will never get anything done around here. Why not vote on what we have agreed on, what people are supporting, and then, in addition, we can work on other ideas.

As I said, at least 36 Senate Democrats have already cosponsored the Fix NICS bill. That is 75 percent of the Democratic caucus, and the numbers have been steadily rising. I hope they will go even higher.

I am grateful to the Democratic leader from New York. He, himself, is a cosponsor of the bill, as is the Senate majority leader, Mr. MCCONNELL. I have never seen a piece of legislation involving a controversial subject like gun rights get such broad bipartisan support. It is truly unique. We ought to be grateful we have found a place where we have such broad bipartisan agreement and, more important than that, a provision that will save lives in the future.

If the shooter at Sutherland Springs had gone into the gun store to purchase a gun and he lied, had the background check system worked as it was supposed to work, he would not have been able to legally purchase a gun because it would have revealed the fact that he was disqualified from doing so.

Each of these tragedies involves different circumstances. The shooters are always different. They obtain firearms in particular ways and use them to perpetrate their crimes according to different plans and in different settings.

I have already talked about the shooter in Sutherland Springs, who actually was convicted of a felony after choking and kicking his wife and cracking his stepson's skull. He was discharged dishonorably from the military. He was detained in a mental health facility because he was mentally ill. Yet he was able to lie his way into possession of these firearms, forever changing the world of innumerable families in Sutherland Springs, TX.

Under Federal law, he should have been prevented from purchasing these firearms. Were it not for the breakdown in our background check system, he wouldn't have obtained them. He would have been caught lying when trying to buy these firearms and possibly prosecuted, and 26 people would still be living their lives, and the people who were worshipping that Sunday morning at the First Baptist Church in Sutherland Springs would still be doing so in that same location. It has now been turned into a memorial for those who lost their lives that day.

This is preventable loss of life. That is more than enough reason to pass Fix NICS. I disagree with those who say that it doesn't do much. If it saves lives, it does plenty. If our system had worked properly—and ensuring it does in the future is what my bill aims to do—Annabelle Pomeroy, the 14-year-old daughter of the pastor at First Baptist, would still be here, and Ryland Ward, a 6-year-old boy who survived, would not have been shot five times.

It is simply incorrect to characterize this bill as a pittance. It is inaccurate to suggest that it really wouldn't do anything, that it somehow is just window dressing or maybe a political fig leaf. That is demonstrably false. Tell that to the families who lost loved ones that day. They wish our background check system had stopped the gunman. Each of them suffered a terrible trauma because it didn't.

It is also not true to say that Washington has been feckless or absent in the wake of not only Sutherland Springs but Las Vegas, Parkland, and all the rest.

On the issue of bump stocks, I agree with the Democratic whip, the Senator from Illinois. These attachments to a semiautomatic rifle turned it into an

automatic rifle. I have never heard of such a thing before, but if automatic weapons are already illegal, why in the world would we want to allow an appliance attached to a gun to turn a semiautomatic weapon into an automatic weapon? I am glad the President has said that those should be regulated by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms and be unavailable.

We know that a lot of people lost their lives in Las Vegas; 58 concertgoers in Las Vegas lost their lives because of a man in a hotel room, shooting down into a country music concert. There were 851 people injured. The scope of the carnage was unbelievable.

We have also learned that mental health problems are some of the reasons people do these sorts of things. We passed a law, most notably last December, called the 21st Century Cures Act, which provides new authority for families, when their loved ones are becoming a danger to themselves or others, to apply to a court to get assisted outpatient treatment to make sure they follow their doctors' orders and take their medications. Then we train law enforcement on how to save lives in the event of an active shooter incident.

We know the problem at Sutherland Springs was that the Federal Government hadn't uploaded the information into the background check system, which would have prevented the purchase of the firearm. But we know the problem is present, as well, in the States.

In Ohio, we learned that there have been failures to upload conviction records from at least 90 municipal courts—one that may have allowed those barred from owning weapons to purchase them in violation of the law.

Since the shooting in Texas, the Department of Defense has retroactively uploaded 4,000 additional records of those dishonorably discharged from the military into the background check system. Under current law, these are people already prohibited from purchasing firearms, but, of course, if the military didn't upload them, no one would ever know, and they would be able to lie and purchase firearms.

One news account stated that since 2015, the number of people barred from owning firearms because they were dishonorably discharged has hovered at around 11,000 people, according to FBI statistics. Now it stands at over 15,000. It is clear evidence that the background check system isn't working the way it is supposed to. We need to make sure that Federal agencies are uploading these records in real time, as they are required to do.

We are taking action in other ways. I am also cosponsor of a bipartisan bill called the NICS Denial Notification Act. It is sponsored by a bipartisan pair of Senators—the Senators from Pennsylvania and Delaware. This bill will alert State law enforcement about people who lie and try to buy guns. If people go in and lie, the background check system catches them, and then they are turned away. Under current practice, that is never reported to the law enforcement agencies, but it would be if that legislation were passed. When people do this, their actions may be indicative of criminal behavior. That is why the bill would insist that Federal authorities notify State police within 24 hours if it is determined a person has lied in an attempt to buy a gun.

Meanwhile, the Attorney General has announced that U.S. attorneys will be instructed to more aggressively enforce laws that criminalize gun buyers who lie on their background checks. I think all of this will help be a deterrent, and, yes, I do think it will contribute to the saving of lives.

The Justice Department will also increase the presence of law enforcement officers at schools and review the way they respond to public tip-offs with regard to safety threats.

We know the shooting in Parkland, FL, was a catastrophic failure at almost every level—from the public education system, to local law enforcement, to the FBI, to mental health providers. Looking back at this shooter, local law enforcement actually intervened with him about 40 times. This was a blinking red light. People should have paid attention and done something about it. We are now trying to make sure they have the resources and the training necessary to intervene when people are obviously a danger to themselves and others.

One way we are going to do that is with the bill offered by the senior Senator from Utah, Mr. HATCH—the STOP School Violence Act. This bill would authorize $50 million annually for safety improvements, including teacher training and training students on how to prevent violence and developing anonymous reporting systems for threats of school violence. It would give schools money for physical improvements, such as metal detectors or bulletproof windows or doors. This is a great step. It is not controversial, and we ought to get it done and get it done now.

As the President has said: ''We cannot merely take actions that make us feel like we are making a difference. We must actually make a difference.'' One way we can do that is by passing Fix NICS.

Just this afternoon, a diverse community of victims' rights groups, law enforcement officers, gun violence prevention groups, and prosecutors sent a letter to the minority and majority leaders, asking them for a vote on a clean version of Fix NICS before the upcoming Easter recess. They said it would ''improve key elements of the background system, particularly domestic violence criminal history and protective order records.'' That is really an important point because so much of the gun violence we see in America is in the context of domestic violence—people violating protective orders, people assaulting the person they are married to or living with. We need to focus on this and do something about it.

This group of victims' rights advocates, law enforcement officers, gun violence prevention groups, and prosecutors call the Fix NICS bill a bipartisan, bicameral, commonsense, and noncontroversial bill. So why can't we pass it? Why can't we do it today?

They made a point to note in their letter that the vote should be clean; in other words, not conditioned upon or attached to other controversial measures we can't pass. I think they are absolutely right. I hope all of us will listen to this good advice and get this done.

We tried to get an agreement a couple of weeks ago to take up the bill and vote on it. If we did it today, it would pass this afternoon, but there was an objection to doing so, saying, well, there are other things we need to do too. Perhaps that is true, but to condition what can pass—what does enjoy broad bipartisan support and what will save lives—on things that will not pass and that aren't achievable means we have a strategy of either everything or failure. That usually ends up with us going back home emptyhanded, having nothing to show for our efforts.

The people we represent deserve better. This institution should step up and listen to those who are calling upon us to do something, and doing something that will save lives, while respecting the rights of all Americans under the Constitution.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, 10 years ago today, March 14, Bear Stearns was on the verge of collapse. Despite its 85-year history, despite its relationship with nearly every bank on Wall Street, the bank suddenly found itself on the brink. On this very day, March 14, Bear Stearns lost $3.5 billion in market value. The bank was in the midst of a free fall. In the course of one week, Bear Stearns went from trading for $65 per share to being bought for $2 a share in a sweetheart deal orchestrated by the Fed over the course of a weekend. Nearly overnight, one of Wall Street's most prestigious, almost 100-year-old banks fell apart.

Across the country, families sat at their kitchen tables and started to wonder: Will one of us lose our job? Will we have to move? Will we be able to retire? Will we lose our house? Will we be able to send our kids to college? On this day 10 years ago—March 14, 2008—a headline from CNN read: ''Job Losses: The Worst in Five Years.'' The story talked about how the economy was hemorrhaging jobs. The article warned that the crisis was building, quoting one analyst who said the real estate and credit crunch ''was whipping its way through the U.S. economy like a Midwestern tornado.''

In hindsight, we know that things would get a lot worse before they got better.

Some people say nobody could have possibly seen this coming. Some people say the 2008 financial crisis was like the weather—like that Midwestern tornado—something out of control that we wouldn't have seen, but we know better.

Advocates in communities—the people who are actually dealing with the consequences of this crisis—were sounding the alarm. For years before the crisis, they predicted what would happen if Washington didn't rein in Wall Street, and clearly they were right.

A few people in Washington, like Ned Gramlich, saw the problem for what it was; that Washington didn't stop the crisis, after it began, after it intensified—Congress at least responded. We passed a law that created important protections for the financial system, for taxpayers, for homeowners to hold banks and watchdogs accountable to prevent another crisis, but Wall Street wasn't even close to being ready to quit. There was no contrition. Nobody went to jail. In fact, on the day that President Obama signed Wall Street reform—what we know as Dodd-Frank—on the day that bill was signed into law, the top financial service lobbyists in this town said: Now it is half time.

Now, what would that mean: Now it is half time? It meant they lost the first half. They lost the battle where people in this Congress actually had the guts and the backbone and sloughed off their campaign contributions and were unwilling to listen to bank lobbyists tell them what to do. They stood up to the bank lobbyists and stood up to Wall Street and they did the right thing, but this lobbyist said it was half time. So the lobbyists lost the first half, but they were back at it, going to the regulators, trying to convince the regulators to weaken the rules and not implement the bill.

Not long ago, another bank lobbyist told us their game plan: ''We don't want a seat at the table, we want the whole table.'' This bill gives them that. The same group that warned us about the last crisis—this is what I ask my colleagues to listen to. The same group that warned us about the last crisis or that were the regulators who tried to fix the last crisis—those same people are opposed to the bill the Senate is considering today. That doesn't seem to matter to about 65 of my colleagues.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the list of the range of civil rights, labor, and consumer advocacy groups that oppose S. 2155.

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

LIST OF CURRENT AND FORMER REGULATORY OFFICIALS AND EXPERTS OPPOSED TO S. 2155

Former Senate Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee Chairman Christopher Dodd,

Former Federal Reserve Chair Paul Volcker,

Former Federal Reserve Governor Daniel Tarullo,

Former Federal Reserve Governor and Deputy Secretary of the Department of the Treasury Sarah Bloom Raskin,

Former FDIC Chair Sheila Bair,

Former Department of the Treasury Assistant Secretary for Financial Institutions Michael Barr,

Former Special Advisor for Regulatory Policy to the Department of the Treasury Under Secretary for Domestic Finance Saule Omarova,

Former Counselor to Secretary of the Department of the Treasury Antonio Weiss,

Former Deputy Governor of the Bank of England Paul Tucker on behalf of the Systemic Risk Council,

FDIC Vice Chair Thomas Hoenig,

Former Commodity Futures Trading Commission Chair Gary Gensler,

Former Chairman of the Financial Crisis Inquiry Commission Phil Angelides.

LIST OF LABOR, CONSUMER, AND CIVIL RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS OPPOSED TO S. 2155

AFL-CIO;
AFSCME;
Americans for Financial Reform;
Better Markets, Part I and Part II;
Center for American Progress;
Center for Popular Democracy;
Center for Responsible Lending;
Consumer Federation of America;
Consumers Union;
CWA;
Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights;
Mortgage Coalition (Center for Responsible Lending, National Community Reinvestment Coalition, National Consumer Law Center);
NAACP;
National Association of Consumer Advocates;
National Community Reinvestment Coalition;
Prosperity Now;
Public Citizen;
UAW;
Unidos;
Urban League;
US PIRG.

Mr. BROWN. People who cleaned up the last crisis are warning us not to pass this bill. Experts from both parties are warning us, the authors of Wall Street reform. Barney Frank said he would vote no if he were in the Senate. Chris Dodd, in an op-ed today, writes that the bill's changes amount to ''chipping away at the ability to conduct comprehensive and effective oversight.''

Now, people are saying this isn't a major scale-back of Dodd-Frank, but Senator Dodd and Congressman Frank both say they would vote no because they recognize it as damaging to the work we all did.

Experts like Paul Volcker, head of the Federal Reserve; Sheila Bair, head of FDIC, Republican appointment by President Bush, used to be chief of staff for Senator Bob Dole; Dan Tarullo, who was effectively the head of supervision of regulation for the Federal Reserve, wants us to vote no. Sarah Bloom Raskin, who was at the Federal Reserve and then Deputy Secretary of the Treasury; Gary Gensler, who is head of the Commodities Future Trading Commission; Tom Hoenig, a Republican who is at FDIC and earlier was the Fed president; Antonia Weiss at the Treasury Department; Paul Tucker, international banker from England—international regulator; Phil Angelides, a former California State Treasurer who ran the Commission that examined what happened in the bank crisis—they all wrote to the Senate. They all outlined a combined 28 pages' worth of concerns about this bill, and my colleagues just say: Oh, this is just helping the small community banks and some of the regional banks a little bit.

Well, not exactly. That is what happens here. We start off wanting to help the small banks; we start off helping some of the midsized regional banks that generally do a good job—banks like Huntington and Fifth Third and Key Bank—but then Wall Street gets involved, and Wall Street drives a bigger and bigger hole in this bill and gets more and more help and more and more breaks and look where we are.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD letters from two of these financial experts.

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

THE VOLCKER ALLIANCE,
WORKING FOR EFFECTIVE GOVERNMENT,
February 21, 2018.

DEAR SENATOR BROWN: I appreciate your letter seeking my views on the Economic Growth, Regulatory Relief and Consumer Protection Act, S. 2155. I am pleased that the Senate Banking Committee has forged ahead with meaningful, bipartisan financial reform to ease the unnecessary regulatory strain on small banks, helping them flourish as an engine of economic prosperity. I appreciate your leadership and dedication, and that of Senator Crapo, to this bill over the last two years and congratulate the bipartisan coalition of senators on the Committee who have worked diligently to advance this legislation.

Your letter sought my views on three sections of the bill. Specifically: (1) Section 401, which would exempt some important banks from stringent prudential standards, such as those for capital, leverage, stress testing, and resolution planning; (2) Section 402, which would relax leverage limitations on custodial banks; and (3) Section 203, which would exempt small banks from the Volcker Rule ban on proprietary trading. I offer the following observations and possible alternatives for your consideration.

First, section 401 would raise from $50 billion to $250 billion the asset threshold at which banks begin to face increasingly tougher prudential standards. Eight years following the passage of Dodd-Frank, it is appropriate to reexamine whether the $50 billion asset threshold is set too low. Indeed, there may be an opportunity to raise it without endangering financial stability. However, an increase to $250 billion would go too far. It would have the effect of substantially reducing the regulation of 25 of the 38 largest banks to which these standards now apply, notably including the operating subsidiaries of several large foreign banks.

Clearly the distress or failure of some of these banks could trigger reactions spreading broadly to the financial system. To take specific examples, Countrywide, National City, and GMAC, standing well below the $250 billion mark, in fact, required billions of dollars in official capital assistance and debt guarantees either for themselves or their acquiring institutions. Failure of the large U.S. operating subsidiaries of foreign banks could pose similar risk. I urge consideration

of raising the threshold to, say, $100 billion but building in additional flexibility for regulators to implement the standards below that.

Second, section 402 is a highly technical provision that relates to so-called custodial banks, institutions that specialize in safeguarding assets of their clients, including mutual funds, pension funds, asset managers, and other institutions. Given their size and importance to the financial system, some such banks, of which the sizable BNY Mellon and State Street stand out, are required to maintain a minimum supplementary leverage ratio (''SLR''), a measure of equity capital to total exposure.

Section 402 would mandate bank regulators to amend their regulations to allow ''custodial banks'' to exclude deposits they hold at the Federal Reserve and certain other central banks when calculating their SLR. While there may be reasons to adjust the SLR calculation for custodial banks, including during a crisis to facilitate the banks' ability to serve as a safe-haven for deposits, regulators already have broad authority to make those adjustments. They also are best positioned to decide how and when to exercise that discretion.

Section 402 does so preemptively, reducing leverage capital requirements for at least two of the most systemically important custodial banks by as much as 30 percent at a time when they should be building their capital cushion. It also would put Congress under pressure to expand the exclusion. Claims will be sure to arise that other banks in competition with the big custodial banks should have similar capital relief: that temptation should be resisted.

Finally, section 203 would exempt from the Volcker Rule banks with assets of less than $10 billion and whose trading assets and liabilities are no more than five percent of total assets. I'm in strong agreement with the aim of reducing unnecessary regulatory burdens on traditional community banks, not just from the Volcker Rule, but also more broadly. Community banks play a vital role in serving the needs of small businesses and do not require the full panoply of regulation or frequent full-scale examination.

An alternative to section 203 would be to simply relieve small banks from demonstrating compliance with the rule, while, at the same time tasking the bank regulators in their normal supervisory roles to detect persistent violations and demand remediation. This would have the advantage of preventing a small bank or a group of small banks protected by the Federal bank ''safety net'' from benefitting from risky proprietary trading activity. I know from my long experience in banking and savings and loan regulation that plausibly small loopholes can be ''gamed'' and exploited with unfortunate consequences.

I thank you for the opportunity to comment on this important piece of legislation and look forward to its swift passage.

Sincerely,

PAUL A. VOLCKER.

HARVARD LAW SCHOOL,
Cambridge, MA, March 5, 2018.

Hon. MICHAEL CRAPO,
Chairman, Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

Hon. SHERROD BROWN,
Ranking Member, Committee on Banking, Housing & Urban Affairs, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN CRAPO AND SENATOR BROWN: As we approach the tenth anniversary of the height of the financial crisis, it is critical that we not lose sight of the core concerns that rightly motivated members of both parties to seek regulatory mechanisms to guard against systemic risk and to promote financial stability. With the pending consideration of S. 2155 by the full Senate, I wanted to take this opportunity to reiterate some of the points about the regulatory structure we have discussed in the past, especially as they apply to this bill.

While S. 2155 begins from the sound premise that some refinements are desirable in the way various statutory requirements have been tailored, I have a number of disagreements with specifics of the bill. Rather than rehearse all of those, I want to focus on the three features that raise particular concerns about financial stability, in hopes that they could be omitted or at least clarified. As I will explain in more detail below, I would urge the following changes:

1. Clarification that banking organizations with assets between $100 and $250 billion will continue to be subject to the annual stress test and CCAR process of the Federal Reserve;

2. Clarification that the higher section 165 threshold established by the bill applies to the worldwide assets of foreign banking organizations; and

3. Deletion of Section 402 of the bill, which would make certain changes to leverage ratio requirements.

With respect to the first two of these changes, while there is widespread—though by no means universal—agreement that the $50 billion level is too low a threshold for many of the section 165 requirements, there is considerable disagreement over how much it should be raised. There is a case to be made for the $250 billion level chosen in S. 2155, though personally I think that is too high. In considering how to raise the threshold, the most important consideration is to align enhanced prudential standards with the risks to safety and soundness and financial stability actually associated with various groups of banks.

As you know, I have for several years advocated a limited number of changes to the statutory thresholds established in the Dodd-Frank Act for certain additional regulatory requirements. My reason for suggesting these changes was my conclusion, both from my own analysis and from discussions with supervisory staff when I was still a member of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve, that the benefits of some of the important prudential requirements added by Dodd-Frank were considerably less significant for the smaller banks within the range established by the different thresholds. In these instances, it seems better policy to allocate more of the risk management and compliance resources of banks, and of the supervisory resources of the banking agencies, to the important risks actually faced by banks of a certain size and activity mix. For instance, the expense incurred by small banks with minimal trading assets and liabilities just to ensure that they are complying with Volcker Rule regulatory exemptions seems quite disproportionate to any safety and soundness benefits.

When it comes to the threshold for the more stringent prudential standards mandated by Section 165 of Dodd-Frank, this same calculation should apply. That is, which of these requirements deliver significant safety and soundness benefits for particular sizes of banks? The answer, I concluded after several years of experience, is that the 165 requirements deliver relatively small benefits for the safety and soundness of banks that currently have between $50 and $100 billion in assets, and many deliver only moderate benefits for banks somewhat above that size. For example, special liquidity requirements (on top of normal supervisory assessments of liquidity management) seemed of limited prudential utility for medium-sized commercial banks engaged in the conventional business of taking deposits and making loans.

But S. 2155 calls into question the post-crisis prudential measure that is essential for the safety and soundness of these banks, and for the stability of the financial system in the face of major asset shocks. Section 401(e) of the bill as reported out of Committee instructs the Federal Reserve to conduct supervisory stress tests of banks with between $100 and $250 billion ''on a periodic basis.'' This provision is obviously meant to indicate that these banks are not exempted from the stress testing requirements created by Section 165. Yet the provision is quite vague, with little indication of what kind of test is contemplated for these banks. This language might be interpreted benignly, simply to indicate that this set of banks will remain in the stress testing program even though they will have been removed from other section 165 requirements. Of more concern is an interpretation that these banks not be in the stress test every year, though the results of the test—whenever it is conducted—could still be used as the analytic basis for the general authority of federal banking agencies to set capital requirements on a bank specific basis. And then there is a very troublesome interpretation that these banks not be in the current Federal Reserve stress testing process, including the Comprehensive Capital Annual Review (CCAR). Instead, they would be in some different, ill-defined kind of stress testing program.

Although liquidity and concentration limits beyond those applicable under pre-existing statutory requirements for insured depository institutions are only obliquely related to the risks faced by banks currently in this size range, capital shortfalls are a risk. Loans gone bad, with the resulting impairment of capital positions, are the principal risk associated with the traditional lending that dominates the activities of most of these banks.

A number of banks of this size received TARP funds in late 2008 in order to buttress their capital positions. While other, smaller banks also received TARP funds, the difference is precisely in the aggregate size of this group of banks. Together, just the domestically owned firms falling in this range hold $1.5 trillion in assets (compared to less than $300 billion in assets for those between $50 and $100 billion). There is good reason to believe that these regional lending institutions share the risks associated with shocks to commercial real estate prices, residential real estate prices, and the financial situation of consumers. Thus there could also be systemic implications of stress among this group of banks. The current CCAR program of the Federal Reserve helps build the resiliency of banks to these serious problems, thereby decreasing the chances of systemic stress or the unavailability of lending to even creditworthy businesses and households that results when the capital positions of banks are compromised.

To remove this protective measure would be to undermine a key achievement of the post-crisis period. Accordingly, as the first feature of the bill that should be changed, I urge the Senate, should it proceed with this legislation, to remove any ambiguity as to whether these banks will remain in the quantitative side of the CCAR program on an annual basis. The Federal Reserve has already exempted these banks from the qualitative part of the CCAR and has taken steps to simplify some of the procedural and reporting requirements associated with it. I suspect the Board of Governors would be amenable to doing more along these lines. But we should not risk the improvement in

the resiliency of the U.S. financial system that the stress testing program has brought about by ensuring that regulatory capital requirements take into account the changing economic and financial risks faced by sizeable banks that together provide credit to large proportions of American households and businesses.

The second feature of the bill that raises concerns of a systemic nature is also related to the $250 billion threshold, as it applies to foreign banking organizations operating in the United States. As you know, since the financial crisis the Board of Governors has required certain foreign banking organizations with more than $50 billion in assets other than branch assets to establish intermediate holding companies in the United States. (Some foreign banking organizations already had such holding companies.) In raising the $50 billion threshold to $250 billion, the bill may raise the question as to whether foreign banking organizations with less than $250 billion must now be excluded from the application of section 165 requirements.

I should say first that I do not think this is the best reading of the wording of S. 2155. That is, I think the best reading is that worldwide assets of large foreign banks are be the basis for determining if they are covered by section 165, with the Board of Governors having continuing authority to determine what level of U.S. assets of these large global banks is the appropriate threshold for section 165 regulatory measures promulgated in its regulations. I understand that Chairman Powell indicated something along these lines in his Senate testimony last week. However, it does appear that there are other interpretations being advanced, including by Secretary Mnuchin, whose testimony before the Senate Banking Committee in January seemed to suggest that foreign banking organizations with between $50 and $250 billion in assets in the United States would be exempted from Section 165 prudential measures by S. 2155.

This result would be a grave regulatory mistake, one that is almost incomprehensible in light of experience during the financial crisis and the profile of many large foreign banking organizations in the United States today. As I explained above, many of the special section 165 requirements are not especially relevant to nearly all the U.S. banks currently holding less than $250 billion in assets. But that is precisely because they are traditional commercial banks, taking deposits and making loans. The U.S. operations of many foreign banking organizations, on the other hand, contain substantial proportions of assets in broker dealers and other non-traditional-banking operations, where funding runs, cross-activity counterparty exposures, and resolution challenges are very significant risks. Indeed, the broker-dealer operations of many of these banks are more significant in the United States than in their home countries. They are also susceptible to having their parents seek dollars from them in order to meet obligations of parts of the foreign banking organizations outside the United States.

Moreover, in sheer dollar terms, the group of foreign banking organizations with between $100 and $250 billion is a very important part of the U.S. financial system, holding about $1.4 trillion in assets. Some of the foreign banking organizations falling in this category are among those that were most affected by the financial crisis; some have encountered significant problems since then. U.S. regulators do not have a window into the global liquidity positions, or authority over the global risk management practices, of these firms.

Again, like Chairman Powell I believe the best reading of S. 2155 is that it does not affect the authority of the Federal Reserve to apply section 165 standards, as appropriate, on foreign banking organizations with over $250 billion in worldwide assets—the change from current law being that it would not be required to do so for foreign banking organizations with between $50 and $250 billion in worldwide assets. But, given the enormous gap in the regulation of systemically important foreign banking operations in the United States that would result from a different interpretation by a regulator or court in the future, it is very important that this ambiguity be clarified. In an environment in which judicial deference to the interpretation of a possibly ambiguous statute by the administering agency is no longer so predictable, it is incumbent on Congress to eliminate such ambiguity wherever possible.

The third feature of the bill that raises potentially systemic concerns is section 402, which contains an oddly and, I think, inappropriately targeted change in the leverage ratio applied by the banking agencies. Removing funds deposited with central banks from the denominator of the leverage ratio only for banks ''predominantly engaged'' in the custody business is troublesome for at least two reasons.

First, removing any assets from the denominator risks sliding down the slippery slope of removing others. While central bankers may argue their interests in not having monetary policy affected at all, treasuries and finance ministries may then argue their interests in not having sovereign debt included. And, as we have already seen in the Treasury Department's report in June 2017, some will go even further, such as by arguing that margins posted in central clearing facilities should be excluded, presumably to encourage more central clearing. While these proposed exclusions may be justified on the ground that the assets in question are utterly risk-free (a clearly incorrect proposition for central clearing margin), that argument misconstrues the rationale of a leverage ratio, which is precisely to serve as a backup mode of capital regulation by measuring and controlling total leverage, not riskiness. Going down this path of excluding assets from the denominator would, in addition to being ill-advised legislative policy, threaten the post-crisis improvement in the leverage of major U.S. banks.

Second, it is hard to see the rationale for excluding a particular type of asset from the denominator of the leverage ratio only by reference to a bank's dominant form of activity in ''custody, safekeeping, and asset servicing.'' Banks other than custody banks engage in this activity. Taking this kind of approach is very much out of keeping with the traditional—and wise—practice of Congress in avoiding legislating the details of capital requirements. It will invite lobbying efforts for changing other details and, thereby, risk both the coherence and the integrity of regulatory capital requirements.

As I think you know, I am sympathetic to the situation of State Street and Bank of New York. But, as I have suggested previously, there is a much sounder way to address that situation. Their difficulties stem from the fact that the 2% enhanced supplemental leverage ratio add-on is applicable to all eight systemically important U.S. banks, whereas the risk-weighted capital surcharge varies based on the systemic importance of each bank. Thus State Street and Bank of New York have, in effect, higher leverage ratio ''surcharges'' than they do risk-weighted surcharges. This reverses what should be, and has been, the traditional role of the leverage ratio as a back-up to guard against excessive leverage build up in good economic times that can come to grief in bad ones (though the crisis revealed the pre-crisis leverage ratio requirement, like risk-weighted capital requirements, to be insufficiently robust). Modifying the enhanced supplemental leverage ratio requirement by stipulating that it would not exceed the risk-weighted surcharge, or by making it proportional to that surcharge would be a much more defensible policy approach.

My understanding, based on public statements from Federal Reserve officials, is that the banking agencies are planning to make changes to the leverage ratio. I anticipate that those changes will relieve the State Street and Bank of New York situations, though I hope without going so far as to erode the value of the leverage ratio more generally by encouraging the untrammeled growth of repo and other short-term, runnable funding back closer to pre-crisis levels. In any case, this anticipated action by the regulatory agencies should address the situation of the clearings banks without the damage to the framework for capital regulation which that Section 402 would entail.

To recapitulate: In the interests of protecting financial stability and guarding against systemic risk, I would urge the Senate to:

1. Make clear that banks with between $100 and $250 billion in assets will continue to subject to CCAR stress testing and resulting capital distribution constraints;

2. Make clear that foreign banking organizations with $250 billion or more in worldwide assets are subject to more stringent prudential restraints within the discretion of the Board of Governors; and

3. Remove Section 402.

Thank you for your consideration of these admittedly lengthy comments on S. 2155. As always, please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

DANIEL K. K. TARULLO.

Mr. BROWN. So the question is, Why do we ignore these pleas? Let's recap the problems with this legislation.

First, the bill puts American taxpayers at risk of another bank bailout. It weakens stress tests for all large banks. In spite of what my colleagues say, everybody that has commented on this bill—so many experts that have commented on this bill understand that this is not just about community banks; it is not just about the regional midsized that go up to $250 billion. We can stress test for all large banks; JPMorgan Chase, $2.5 trillion in assets; Bank of America, $2.3 trillion; Wells Fargo, $1.9 trillion. As if they haven't had enough—done enough, made enough mistakes, violated the public trust enough times. Citigroup, $1.9 trillion. These four banks—JPMorgan, Bank of America, Wells Fargo, and Citigroup—hold 51 percent, more than half of all industry assets, $8.6 trillion.

These banks have had a really good run since the crisis, since the bailout. Remember, people didn't go to jail even though people in my ZIP Code, in my community, in my State and in Pennsylvania and all over the country—people lost savings, their homes, and their jobs. These banks, which are more profitable than they have ever been in the last couple of years, got a huge tax break just last December, and now we are doing them a favor by weakening the stress test. All the country's biggest banks took about

$239 billion in taxpayer bailouts. Without rigorous annual stress tests, taxpayers can once again be on the hook if too-big-to-fail banks collapse and we don't have the right tools in place to see it coming.

Second, this bill opens the door to weaker oversight of foreign megabanks operating in the United States, the same banks that repeatedly violated U.S. law. These are banks like Deutsche Bank in Germany, the Trump business organization's personal bank; Santander in Spain, Barclays in Britain, Credit Suisse, and UBS in Switzerland. These are banks that violated Iran sanctions. They are banks that repossessed cars from American service men and women who were serving overseas. These are banks that were fined by the Federal Government, and we are doing these foreign banks a favor in this bill.

Third, with the change of just one word, this bill forces the Fed to weaken the rules even for the largest banks with more than $250 billion in assets. Former CFTC Chair Gary Gensler wrote to the Senate this month and said this change ''may subject the government to additional lobbying and possible litigation from individual banks seeking specially tailored rules.''

We know all of these regulators put in place by the Trump administration—most of them with ties to Wall Street, and we know the White House now looks like an executive retreat for Wall Street executives—we know these regulators are going to bend over backward for the big banks, and if they don't, they are going to be sued by the foreign banks and by other big banks to open up those loopholes even more.

Senator Dodd, one of the authors of the original bill, identified this $250 billion threshold as the No. 1 reason he can't support the bill. He said: ''It raises the danger of a cascading economic effect.''

Fourth, this bill makes another change to allow big banks to borrow more money than they can afford, which, once again, puts taxpayers and our economy at risk. The New York Times described this provision as weakening rules ''aimed at keeping banks from being able to take big risks without properly preparing for disaster.''

The Washington Post reported that JPMorgan Chase and Citigroup may get a combined $30 billion windfall—$30 billion windfall—if this provision passes. I am not making this up. This is what analysts are saying this bill will do.

Fifth, this bill chips away at key mortgage rules put in place after the last crisis. It includes provisions that weaken transparency, inclusiveness, and fairness in mortgage lending. The bill makes it easier for lenders to mislead families into mortgages they can't afford, and takes away those families' right to take the bank to court. It strips away key data used to monitor trends in mortgage lending and spot discrimination against communities of color.

There was an amendment to fix that from Senator CORTEZ MASTO that the Republicans will not allow us to offer.

We know that in too many places across the country, people of color are far more likely to be turned down for a loan for no good reason. Without this data, we will not know when that redlining is happening.

Sixth—and this may be the most awful of all. For reasons I can't even pretend to understand, this bill helps Equifax. It is the same Equifax that let hackers steal 148 million Americans' personal data. More than half the adults in this country had their personal data breached because of Equifax—their birth dates, Social Security numbers, and addresses—the same Equifax whose former executive was just today charged with insider trading for dumping his stocks just before the company announced its data breach failure.

In exchange for a small provision helping servicemembers watch their credit, this bill forces them to give up their right to take Equifax to court the next time the company's recklessness exposes sensitive financial data.

If that weren't bad enough, the bill also gives Equifax a big new business opportunity. This will give a company that put half the American population at risk of identify theft the power to decide who can get a mortgage.

What do the American people get in exchange for these goodies to big banks and to Equifax? They get to pick up the check. The Congressional Budget Office confirmed that this bill would increase the probability of a big bank failure and a financial crisis adding to the deficit. Even after the addition of language offsetting some of the costs of this bill, the legislation would increase the deficit by $455 million. Let me repeat that. The bipartisan Congressional Budget Office found that this bill will increase the probability of a big bank failure and a financial crisis. So don't tell me this bill doesn't roll back Dodd-Frank for the biggest banks.

In this town, no one seems to be able to find a single dollar when we need to solve our pension crisis or invest in infrastructure or remove toxic lead from kids' homes, but when the Big Bank lobbyists come calling, the Senate waives its budget rules to do Wall Street's bidding.

Let me also remind my colleagues how hard it was to enact the reforms we passed after the last crisis.

Do you remember that lobbyist said that it was only halftime after one of the few times in this body's recent history that Wall Street actually lost, when we did the right thing 10 years ago?

In the move up to that bill, the Senate considered 14 separate Republican amendments, where there were votes taken, to Dodd-Frank and another 12 from Democrats. Of those 26 amendments, 5 of them were adopted, 5 Republican amendments, 10 Democratic amendments. They were voted on in a Senate where the Democrats were in the majority and gave both parties the opportunity to amend the bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for an additional 5 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BROWN. During the conference committee, televised live on C–SPAN for 48 hours, 17 Senate Republican amendments were accepted and 22 amendments from Senate Democrats. Contrast that with today: No subsequent amendments were adopted. I credit Chairman CRAPO for at least allowing amendments, but that is as far as it went. On the Senate floor, it has been worse. Democrats and Republicans alike were completely shut down, not able to offer a single amendment.

We know how this place has worked the last year. All decisions are made down the hall in the majority leader's office. The tax bill was written there. The healthcare bill was written there. This bill was written in a way that there are no amendments allowed on the floor, no debate, no deliberation, no changes.

Lastly, fundamentally, the problem with this bill is that we are entrusting the profiteers from the last crisis, the deniers of the last crisis, with implementing big-bank giveaways. I am not willing to put blind trust in the people who failed us before. Regulators Quarles, Mulvaney, Otting, and Mnuchin are the people we are expecting to regulate and save us from another bailout, save us from another financial crisis, and save us from another implosion in our economy. These are the people who failed us so spectacularly in the past, with such grave consequences, and we are expecting them to protect us the next time. Nothing in their public record has earned them this trust.

This is the collective amnesia crowd—the crowd who forgets what I talked about at the beginning of the speech about what happened 10 years ago—but Ohio families haven't forgotten. People across this country still struggle. People who have lost savings haven't been able to entirely rebuild them. People who lost jobs are often in lower paying jobs as a result. People who lost their homes—in my part of Cleveland, I still see the devastation caused by this financial crisis, the tens of thousands of homes in Greater Cleveland that were foreclosed on. These are the people we are sent here to serve. What this bill does for them and the issues facing their lives is impossible to see.

I urge my colleagues to reject this bill. I urge my colleagues to fundamentally ask themselves whose side they

are on. Are you going to vote yes on this and side with special interests and Wall Street, or are you going to vote no and side with taxpayers and homeowners and students and workers?

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Idaho.

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, the time to vote has come, and we are a few minutes over. This is one of those times when the Senate is on a very tight timeline, so I will have the majority of my speech put into the RECORD. I just wanted to respond in one quick way to some of the comments my colleague from Ohio has just made.

A lot of attacks on this floor have been made saying that this bill rolls back the regulatory authority of the Federal Reserve and exposes all of our large banks to much greater risk or much less supervision than they would have had before and on and on. We knew these attacks were coming. They came in the Banking Committee when we had the markup on this bill.

Basically, I want to read a series of questions and answers I had with the current Chairman of the Federal Reserve about these types of allegations being made about the bill—a bill which is designed to deal with credit unions and community banks and the smaller sector of our economy, not the big banks—all these attacks about rolling back the protections against big banks.

I asked Federal Reserve Chairman Jay Powell whether it was accurate, if this bill were passed, that the Federal Reserve would still be required to conduct supervisory stress tests for any bank with total assets between $150 billion and $250 billion to ensure that it has enough capital to weather economic downturns.

He answered: Yes, it is.

I asked, if this bill were passed, whether it was accurate that the Federal Reserve would still have sufficient authority to apply any prudential standard—let me repeat that—any prudential standard to a bank with between $100 billion and $250 billion in total assets if the Fed determined that was appropriate.

He answered: Yes, that is true.

I asked whether it was accurate that this bill does not weaken oversight of the largest globally systemic banks.

He answered, correctly, that yes, that was correct.

Then I asked whether it was accurate that the Federal Reserve applies enhanced standards to international banks based on their global total consolidated assets—meaning that our bill would not exempt banks like Deutsche Bank and Santander from section 165 of Dodd-Frank.

He answered: That is correct.

I want to repeat this, because this keeps coming up. The Chairman of the Federal Reserve said that this bill does not exempt G-SIB foreign banks, such as Deutsche Bank and Santander, and that we do not eliminate the ability of our Federal Reserve to correctly and properly supervise our banks.

We are going to go back and forth over this, but this bill is designed to protect community banks and credit unions. That is why we have such bipartisan support for it.

Mr. President, we have been able to highlight the benefits of the Economic Growth, Regulatory Relief, and Consumer Protection Act on the Senate Floor over the last week, and I am glad we have the opportunity to continue that discussion this week.

I have been very encouraged by my colleagues' support for this critical piece of legislation. I thank each of those Senators, including many members of the Banking Committee, for their support, interest, and involvement in the many discussions, hearings, and personal conversations we have had to improve this bill. I also thank all those who voted on the motion to invoke cloture on substitute amendment No. 2151, as modified, to S. 2155.

Since the bill passed out of the Banking Committee, supporters have worked in good faith to include provisions that different Members have offered, including those who do not support the bill.

The substitute amendment we offered last week reflects the additional provisions that the bill's supporters were able to agree on, collectively.

To ensure that everyone understands what the substitute amendment does, let me take a few minutes to explain the changes from the bill that passed out of committee.

This amendment makes both technical and substantive changes to further improve economic growth, regulatory relief, and consumer protections.

This substitute makes changes to the appraisal provision in our bill to add definitions and provide detail on criteria for efforts to document and contact appraisers.

It also strengthens the HMDA provision by adding a ''bad actor'' prohibition, limiting the universe of lenders who can take advantage of the relief to those that do not have ratings of ''need to improve'' on their last two CRA exams or one rating of ''substantial non-compliance'' on their last CRA exam.

It adds further consumer protections on who can take advantage of transitional licenses and adds liability protections for government officials who carry out their official duties.

It modifies a provision by raising the threshold from $15 billion to $20 billion for those Federal savings associations that wish to take advantage of charter conversions.

It modifies the existing provision dealing with applying the Expedited Funds Availability Act, which governs bank deposit holds, to add Guam to the list of American Samoa and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands which would receive the benefit.

It clarifies the current international insurance provision so that the Treasury, Fed, and Federal Insurance Office report to Congress on studies regarding consumer and market impact of international insurance capital standards is only required with respect to final standards.

It also changes the date at which point Treasury and Fed reporting requirements on international insurance regulatory and supervisory forums terminate from December 31, 2022, to December 31, 2024—this aligns with the International Association of Insurance Supervisors' planned timeframe for implementing its insurance capital standard.

It promotes construction and development on Main Street by ensuring that the Federal Reserve appropriately treats certain commercial real estate loans in its rules.

It helps reduce identity fraud by directing the Social Security Administration to accept electronic signatures as consumer consent for financial institutions trying to verify customer ID and root out synthetic ID fraud.

It uses part of the Fed's discretionary surplus as a pay-for.

It expands the existing credit freeze provisions by increasing the circumstances where Americans can get a free credit freeze, and clarifies that an incapacitated person receives the same protections as a minor under the age of 16.

It also adds a provision that gives free and ongoing credit monitoring to Active Duty servicemembers who are serving and sacrificing for our country.

It adds a provision which helps protect veterans from predatory lending by requiring VA lenders to demonstrate a material benefit to consumers when refinancing their mortgages.

It adds a section requiring Fannie Mae and Freddy Mac to establish a process for validating and approving credit score models, and requires FHFA to establish standards and criteria for such processes.

The language requires that any credit score model must meet a series of criteria related to predictiveness, accuracy, safety and soundness, and other metrics in order to be approved, to ensure that this will not undermine the quality of underwriting at Fannie and Freddie.

The substitute adds important reports: a GAO report on Puerto Rico foreclosures; and a report on children's lead-based paint hazard prevention and abatement, which is a serious issue in many of our States.

It also makes permanent certain protections for members of uniformed services under the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act.

It also makes further clarifications to the section about enhanced supervision and prudential standards for certain banks, by lowering the asset threshold above which banks have to pay assessments and requiring the Fed

to adjust such charges to reflect the fact that the cost of supervision and regulation of certain institutions will be reduced as a result of this legislation.

It also clarifies that this bill does not affect the legal effect of the Federal Reserve's final rule on foreign banking organizations, and the bill does not limit the Federal Reserve's legal authority to require intermediate holding companies, apply enhanced prudential standards, or tailor regulations for certain foreign banking organizations.

The amendment also adds a new Encouraging Capital Formation title, which includes five capital formation and securities bills that passed the Senate by unanimous consent last year, as well as a bill to help companies take advantage of further ways to raise capital and ease burdens on certain publicly traded investment companies.

Lastly, the bill provides additional protections for borrowers and cosigners of private student loans, and requires the Treasury Department to study and promulgate best practices for higher education financial literacy.

All of these additions improve the bill and strengthen the core themes of the existing provisions; namely, improving economic growth, regulatory relief, and consumer protections.

I urge my colleagues to vote yes on this amendment.

AMENDMENT NO. 2152 WITHDRAWN

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. Chairman, before I yield, I withdraw my amendment No. 2152.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has that right.

The amendment is withdrawn.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 2151, AS MODIFIED

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question now occurs on agreeing to amendment No. 2151, as modified.

Mr. ALEXANDER. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) is necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 67, nays 31, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 51 Leg.]

YEAS—67

Alexander	Cochran	Donnelly
Barrasso	Collins	Enzi
Bennet	Coons	Ernst
Blunt	Corker	Fischer
Boozman	Cornyn	Flake
Burr	Cotton	Gardner
Capito	Crapo	Graham
Carper	Cruz	Grassley
Cassidy	Daines	Hassan
Hatch	McCaskill	Scott
Heitkamp	McConnell	Shaheen
Heller	Moran	Shelby
Hoeven	Murkowski	Stabenow
Inhofe	Nelson	Sullivan
Isakson	Paul	Tester
Johnson	Perdue	Thune
Jones	Peters	Tillis
Kaine	Portman	Toomey
Kennedy	Risch	Warner
King	Roberts	Wicker
Lankford	Rounds	Young
Lee	Rubio	
Manchin	Sasse	

NAYS—31

Baldwin	Gillibrand	Sanders
Blumenthal	Harris	Schatz
Booker	Hirono	Schumer
Brown	Klobuchar	Smith
Cantwell	Leahy	Udall
Cardin	Markey	Van Hollen
Casey	Menendez	Warren
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Whitehouse
Duckworth	Murphy	Wyden
Durbin	Murray	
Feinstein	Reed	

NOT VOTING—2

Heinrich	McCain

The amendment (No. 2151), as modified, was agreed to.

CLOTURE MOTION

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

The senior assistant 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 Calendar No. 287, S. 2155, a bill to promote economic growth, provide tailored regulatory relief, and enhance consumer protections, and for other purposes.

Mitch McConnell, Tom Cotton, Bob Corker, Ron Johnson, John Barrasso, Cory Gardner, Steve Daines, Mike Crapo, Deb Fischer, Shelley Moore Capito, Mike Rounds, Jeff Flake, John Kennedy, Johnny Isakson, James Lankford, Bill Cassidy, John Cornyn.

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 S. 2155, a bill to promote economic growth, provide tailored regulatory relief, and enhance consumer protections, and for other purposes, as amended, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN).

Mr. DURBIN I announce that the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) is necessarily absent.

The PRESDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senator in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 67, nays 31, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 52 Leg.]

YEAS—67

Alexander	Gardner	Paul
Barrasso	Graham	Perdue
Bennet	Grassley	Peters
Blunt	Hassan	Portman
Boozman	Hatch	Risch
Burr	Heitkamp	Roberts
Capito	Heller	Rounds
Carper	Hoeven	Rubio
Cassidy	Inhofe	Sasse
Cochran	Isakson	Scott
Collins	Johnson	Shaheen
Coons	Jones	Shelby
Corker	Kaine	Stabenow
Cornyn	Kennedy	Sullivan
Cotton	King	Tester
Crapo	Lankford	Thune
Cruz	Lee	Tillis
Daines	Manchin	Toomey
Donnelly	McCaskill	Warner
Enzi	McConnell	Wicker
Ernst	Moran	Young
Fischer	Murkowski	
Flake	Nelson	

NAYS—31

Baldwin	Gillibrand	Sanders
Blumenthal	Harris	Schatz
Booker	Hirono	Schumer
Brown	Klobuchar	Smith
Cantwell	Leahy	Udall
Cardin	Markey	Van Hollen
Casey	Menendez	Warren
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Whitehouse
Duckworth	Murphy	Wyden
Durbin	Murray	
Feinstein	Reed	

NOT VOTING—2

Heinrich	McCain

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 67, the nays are 31.

The motion is agreed to.

The Senator from Idaho.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand in recess until 5:45 p.m. today; that when the Senate reconvenes, all postcloture time be considered expired and the Senate vote on the motion to waive; and that following the vote on the motion to waive, the bill be read a third time and the Senate vote on passage of the bill, as amended.

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

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 5:45 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 4:48 p.m., recessed until 5:45 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. HELLER).

ECONOMIC GROWTH, REGULATORY RELIEF, AND CONSUMER PROTECTION ACT—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Idaho.

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 5 minutes before we begin voting.

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

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, we are about to witness a rare bipartisan moment in the Senate that has been years in the making. We have had the opportunity to highlight this bill over the

last 2 weeks, and I have been very encouraged by my colleagues' support for its critical results.

Again, I thank each of the Senators who support this bill—including many members of the Banking Committee—for their interest, involvement, and the many discussions, hearings, and personal conversations we have had to get to this point.

I want to stop at this point and give a special thanks to my staff, who has spent countless hours, weeks—actually months and years—getting us to this point on this legislation, and the staff of the other Members who have worked so closely with us as we worked to find a yes to difficult problems and solutions that we are facing.

Since the bill passed out of the Banking Committee, supporters have worked in good faith to include provisions that different Members have offered, including those who do not support the bill. The substitute amendment we introduced last week reflects the additional provisions that the bill supporters were able to agree to.

The final bill we are about to vote on today is the product of careful negotiations and good, old-fashioned statesmanship. The majority of us in this body recognize that our community financial institutions have been struggling to keep up with the regulatory demands coming out of Washington and that it was time to revisit current law and make changes where necessary.

While there are certain provisions that I would like to have included in this bill, I believe the package on which we were able to reach consensus is an important step in the right direction and will deliver much needed relief and economic growth to Main Street America.

When this bill is signed into law, it will right-size regulation for financial institutions, including community banks and credit unions, making it easier for consumers to get mortgages and to obtain credit. Those are the real victims of this regulatory overreach—individuals who find it difficult to get access to credit, to get a loan for college, to get a mortgage for a house, or small businesses seeking to start up or to expand that cannot get necessary access to capital not because they are not creditworthy but because the system we have created makes it so that our smaller financial institutions that do the relationship banking throughout so much of America don't have the ability to serve them anymore. It also increases important consumer protections for veterans, senior citizens, victims of fraud, and those who have fallen on tough financial times.

This bill has received widespread support for good reason. The cycle of lending and job creation has been stifled by onerous regulation. Absent excessive regulatory burdens, local banks and credit unions will be able to focus more on lending and in turn propel economic growth and create jobs.

Not to be overlooked, this is also an important moment for bipartisanship and working across the aisle to legislate. Many people are worried about the gridlocks in Congress. This bill shows that we can work together and can do big things that make a big difference in the lives of people across this country.

Those who support this bill have recognized that, with the right regulation, tailored regulation, we can promote local economic growth through our Nation's smaller financial institutions.

I will end with this: This bill was a bipartisan compromise. The changes are common sense, and it will allow financial institutions to better serve their customers and communities, while maintaining safety and soundness and important consumer protections. At a time of intense political polarization, we have proven that we can work together to get things done.

This is good for small financial institutions, good for small businesses, and good for families across America, and I encourage my colleagues to support its passage.

I yield back my time.

VOTE ON MOTION TO WAIVE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question now occurs on agreeing to the motion to waive.

The yeas and nays were previously ordered.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) is necessarily absent.

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 67, nays 31, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 53 Leg.]

YEAS—67

Alexander	Gardner	Paul
Barrasso	Graham	Perdue
Bennet	Grassley	Peters
Blunt	Hassan	Portman
Boozman	Hatch	Risch
Burr	Heitkamp	Roberts
Capito	Heller	Rounds
Carper	Hoeven	Rubio
Cassidy	Inhofe	Sasse
Cochran	Isakson	Scott
Collins	Johnson	Shaheen
Coons	Jones	Shelby
Corker	Kaine	Stabenow
Cornyn	Kennedy	Sullivan
Cotton	King	Tester
Crapo	Lankford	Thune
Cruz	Lee	Tillis
Daines	Manchin	Toomey
Donnelly	McCaskill	Warner
Enzi	McConnell	Wicker
Ernst	Moran	Young
Fischer	Murkowski	
Flake	Nelson	

NAYS—31

Baldwin	Duckworth	Markey
Blumenthal	Durbin	Menendez
Booker	Feinstein	Merkley
Brown	Gillibrand	Murphy
Cantwell	Harris	Murray
Cardin	Hirono	Reed
Casey	Klobuchar	Sanders
Cortez Masto	Leahy	Schatz
Schumer	Van Hollen	Wyden
Smith	Warren	
Udall	Whitehouse	

NOT VOTING—2

Heinrich	McCain

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 67, the nays are 31.

Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn having voted in the affirmative, the motion is agreed to and the point of order falls.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading and was read the third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the bill pass?

Mr. BARRASSO. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) is necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 67, nays 31, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 54 Leg.]

YEAS—67

Alexander	Gardner	Paul
Barrasso	Graham	Perdue
Bennet	Grassley	Peters
Blunt	Hassan	Portman
Boozman	Hatch	Risch
Burr	Heitkamp	Roberts
Capito	Heller	Rounds
Carper	Hoeven	Rubio
Cassidy	Inhofe	Sasse
Cochran	Isakson	Scott
Collins	Johnson	Shaheen
Coons	Jones	Shelby
Corker	Kaine	Stabenow
Cornyn	Kennedy	Sullivan
Cotton	King	Tester
Crapo	Lankford	Thune
Cruz	Lee	Tillis
Daines	Manchin	Toomey
Donnelly	McCaskill	Warner
Enzi	McConnell	Wicker
Ernst	Moran	Young
Fischer	Murkowski	
Flake	Nelson	

NAYS—31

Baldwin	Gillibrand	Sanders
Blumenthal	Harris	Schatz
Booker	Hirono	Schumer
Brown	Klobuchar	Smith
Cantwell	Leahy	Udall
Cardin	Markey	Van Hollen
Casey	Menendez	Warren
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Whitehouse
Duckworth	Murphy	Wyden
Durbin	Murray	
Feinstein	Reed	

NOT VOTING—2

Heinrich	McCain

The bill (S. 2155), as amended, was passed.

CLOTURE MOTION

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

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

The senior assistant 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 Kevin K. McAleenan, of Hawaii, to be Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security.

Mitch McConnell, Thom Tillis, John Cornyn, Roy Blunt, John Barrasso, Richard Burr, Richard C. Shelby, Mike Crapo, Shelley Moore Capito, Todd Young, Jeff Flake, Cory Gardner, Ron Johnson, Michael B. Enzi, John Kennedy, Susan M. Collins, James Lankford.

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 Kevin K. McAleenan, of Hawaii, to be Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) is necessarily absent.

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 79, nays 19, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 55 Ex.]

YEAS—79

Alexander	Flake	Paul
Baldwin	Gardner	Perdue
Barrasso	Graham	Peters
Bennet	Grassley	Portman
Blunt	Hassan	Reed
Boozman	Hatch	Risch
Brown	Heitkamp	Roberts
Burr	Heller	Rounds
Cantwell	Hirono	Rubio
Capito	Hoeven	Sasse
Carper	Inhofe	Scott
Casey	Isakson	Shaheen
Cassidy	Johnson	Shelby
Cochran	Jones	Smith
Collins	Kennedy	Stabenow
Coons	King	Sullivan
Corker	Klobuchar	Tester
Cornyn	Lankford	Thune
Cortez Masto	Leahy	Tillis
Cotton	Lee	Toomey
Crapo	Manchin	Warner
Cruz	McCaskill	Whitehouse
Daines	McConnell	Wicker
Donnelly	Moran	Wyden
Enzi	Murkowski	Young
Ernst	Murphy	
Fischer	Nelson	

NAYS—19

Blumenthal	Harris	Schatz
Booker	Kaine	Schumer
Cardin	Markey	Udall
Duckworth	Menendez	Van Hollen
Durbin	Merkley	Warren
Feinstein	Murray	
Gillibrand	Sanders	

NOT VOTING—2

Heinrich McCain

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 79, the nays are 19.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Kevin K. McAleenan, of Hawaii, to be Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding rule XXII, all postcloture time on the McAleenan nomination be considered expired and the Senate vote on the nomination at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, March 19; 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

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

ALLOW STATES AND VICTIMS TO FIGHT ONLINE SEX TRAFFICKING ACT OF 2017—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to H.R. 1865.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 339, H.R. 1865, a bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to clarify that section 230 of such Act does not prohibit the enforcement against providers and users of interactive computer services of Federal and State criminal and civil law relating to sexual exploitation of children or sex trafficking, and for other purposes.

CLOTURE MOTION

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 339, H.R. 1865, an act to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to clarify that section 230 of such Act does not prohibit the enforcement against providers and users of interactive computer services of Federal and State criminal and civil law relating to sexual exploitation of children or sex trafficking, and for other purposes.

Mitch McConnell, John Kennedy, John Cornyn, Dan Sullivan, Joni Ernst, James Lankford, Richard Burr, Johnny Isakson, Thom Tillis, Mike Crapo, Steve Daines, John Hoeven, Tom Cotton, Roger F. Wicker, Patrick J. Toomey, Mike Rounds, Rob Portman.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: PN1357.

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

The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Jeffrey DeWit, of Arizona, to be Chief Financial Officer, National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the nomination.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate vote on the nomination with no intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action; that no further motions be in order; and that any statements relating to the nomination be printed in the RECORD.

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

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the DeWit nomination?

The nomination was confirmed.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate resume 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.

FAMILY FIRST PREVENTION SERVICES ACT

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I rise today with my good friend Senator WYDEN, to acknowledge a major accomplishment of this body and to thank those who were instrumental in helping us achieve it. Last month, after years of work and decades of effort by many groups across the country, Congress passed and the President signed into law the Family First Prevention Services Act.

This effort is an example of bipartisanship at its best, and we are proud to have stood with members on the other side of the Capitol in seeing this through to the finish. In particular, we acknowledge Ways and Means Chairman KEVIN BRADY, Ranking Member RICHARD NEAL, former Ranking Member SANDER LEVIN, Speaker PAUL RYAN, Minority Leader NANCY PELOSI, and Congressmen VERNON BUCHANAN, ADRIAN SMITH, and DANNY DAVIS for their work to make sure more families stay safely together—not to mention the many other Members of the House who also supported this effort. In this Chamber, we particularly extend our gratitude for the leadership of Senators CHARLES GRASSLEY and MICHAEL BENNET and to the many others who supported this work since Senate legislative efforts first began on this issue in 2013.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, this new law has the power to better the lives of hundreds of thousands of children and their families. It will for the first time allow States to invest Federal foster care dollars in evidence-based services, like substance use treatment and mental health and parenting programs, to prevent the need for foster care by keeping families safely together. It will provide critical new opportunities for families adopting children and relatives caring for kin by making these same services available when a child is at risk of reentering foster care. It will also support investments in Kinship Navigator programs to help grandparents and other relative caregivers who often take on the parenting role at a moment's notice.

The opioid crisis is showing why these investments are absolutely critical. After years of decline in the number of children in foster care, we have begun to see a steady increase, which many attribute to the opioid crisis. According to Federal data, at least 34 percent of foster care entries are attributed to parental substance use. Family First will be a game changer when it comes to fighting addiction, as States will now have many more tools to address these issues without breaking families apart. These tools will not only help with the current opioid epidemic, but they will position our Nation's child welfare system to respond to this crisis and any others that families may face in the future.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, this new law will also give children and youth already in foster care new protections by making sure children get the services they need in the setting best suited for them. It creates robust standards for foster care providers operating group homes, congregate care, and residential treatment facilities. It will require these types of facilities to be equipped to meet children's needs and provide services that help address the trauma they have faced so they can return to live with family or be placed with a caring foster family as soon as possible. It will also promote a model where children are placed in these types of facilities only when they need specific services that cannot be provided in another setting. Too often, children who can and should be living in families end up in group care simply because it is what is available, not because it is the best place for the child. This law helps tip the scales toward placing more children in family settings where children do best.

This new law amounts to the most significant changes to our child welfare system in decades, and it simply would not have been possible without the hard work, dedication, perseverance, education, and technical assistance of so many advocates and experts across the Nation. Today, we would like to acknowledge several such individuals, including: Akin Abioye, MaryLee Allen, Schylar Baber, Lauren Behsudi, William Bell, Mary Bissell, Celeste Bodner, Laura Boyd, Christine Calpin, JooYeun Chang, Hope Cooper, Kristi Craig, Nicole Dobbins, Kay Farley, Ruth Friedman, Ami Gadhia, Rob Geen, Elizabeth Rigby Gibson, Christen Glickman, Lexie Gruber, Jesse Hahnel, Ron Haskins, Megan Hauck, Anne Heiligenstein, Jeremy Kohomban, Joe Kroll, Sherry Lachman, Zachary Laris, Brooke Lehmann, Jaia Lent, Rricha Mathur, Melanie Nathanson, Barbara Pryor, Lindsay Punzenberger, Rebecca Robuck, Jennifer Rodriguez, David Sanders, John Sciamanna, Stefanie Sprow, Becky Weichhand, Nancy Young, and Megan Zuckerman.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I would also like to acknowledge the dedication of key congressional staffers, including those at the Congressional Research Service, the Congressional Budget Office, and with House and Senate legislative counsel's office. These staffers pour immense time, effort, and expertise into turning concepts into legislation and are the epitome of dedicated public servants. In particular, we would like to acknowledge and thank Emilie Stoltzfus, Ruth Ernst, Jim Grossman, Susanne Mehlman, Sheila Dacey, and Jennifer Gray. We would like to thank key congressional and administration staffers, including Ryan Martin, Laura Berntsen, Anne DeCesaro, Morna Miller, Becky Shipp, Scott Raab, Veronica Duron, Ted McCann, Stephanie Parks, Wendell Primus, Samantha Offerdahl, Rafael Lopez, Jeff Hild, Jenny Delwood, Rose Hacking, and Sonja Nesbit.

We recognize there is not the space to acknowledge all of the countless individuals who made this law a reality, but we honor the contributions of those individuals and their organizations across the country as well. Opportunities for reform like this do not materialize out of nowhere; they are the result of hard work and perseverance by many committed to a cause. These individuals' vision for a better world for vulnerable children and families guided our work and we will be forever grateful for their commitment and dedication.

RECOGNIZING VERMONT ATHLETES IN THE 2018 WINTER OLYMPIC GAMES

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, late last month, as I watched Olympic Gold Medal winner Jessie Diggins carry our flag in the Pyeongchang closing ceremonies, I was overcome with pride—pride in Vermont and pride in our great country. Throughout the games, athletes raised in Vermont and those who choose to train at Vermont's world-class winter academies and programs showcased the very best of our winter wonderland. Vermont, ranked 49th in population among the States, sent the most athletes per capita to the games. While there, they showcased Vermont values, including respect, personal achievement and excellence, civility and good sportsmanship.

Vermont athletes were also incredibly successful during these games, bringing home three gold medals. Montpelier native Amanda Pelkey and the U.S. Women's Hockey Team capped a year battling for equal pay and treatment with a gold medal performance, stunning Canada in a thrilling final match. Burke Mountain Academy graduate Mikaela Schiffrin continued her stunning success, bringing home gold in the giant slalom and silver in the alpine combined. Jessie Diggins, from Stratton Mountain School's T2 elite team, lunged across the finish line in an exciting end to the women's cross-country skiing team sprint to grab the gold, the first cross-country gold medal ever for the United States.

Between the golden moments of triumph, we also saw the grit and determination of Vermont athletes to simply compete at the highest levels of their sport. In the slalom, Ryan Cochran-Siegle demonstrated his ability to overcome injuries and the odds as he enjoyed—and then gracefully ceded—the lead to his fellow athletes. His teammate, UVM alpine racer Tommy Bisemeyer, had the courage to speak honestly about the profound disappointment of suffering a training injury that cut short his second Olympic attempt. Other Vermont Olympians include Sophie Caldwell, cross-country skiing, from Peru; Caroline Claire, freestyle skiing, from Wilmington; Kelly Clark, snowboarding, from West Dover; Emily Dreissigacker, biathlon, from Morrisville; Susan Dunklee, biathalon, from Barton; Lindsey Jacobellis, snowboarding, from Stratton; Nolan Kasper, alpine skiing, from Warren; Devin Logan, freestyle skiing, from West Dover; Kaitlynn Miller, cross-country skiing, from Elmore; Andy Newell, cross-country skiing, from Shaftsbury; Ida Sargent, cross-country skiing, from Craftsbury Common; Emerson Smith, freestyle skiing, from Dover; and Liz Stephen, cross-country skiing, from Montpelier.

We as Vermonters are so proud of each and every Vermonter who went to Pyeongchang to represent the Green Mountain State and our country. Each of them competed fiercely and truly

represented the Olympic values of friendship, respect, and excellence—which also happen to be some of our cherished Vermont values. I congratulate each and every one of them.

MICHIGAN PTA CENTENNIAL

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, today I wish to pay special tribute to the Michigan Parent Teacher Association, which this year is celebrating 100 years of advocacy on behalf of Michigan's children and families.

A lot has changed since the Michigan PTA was first established in Battle Creek on May 19, 1918. Parents today are as likely to learn school news via Facebook or text messages as they are from notes sent home, and students are as likely to learn their lessons on laptops and tablets as they are on the chalkboard.

However, one thing hasn't changed at all: Michigan PTA members are still working together every day to provide a quality education and nurturing environment for every Michigan child.

They do that in the best way possible, by bringing together families, educators, school boards, nonprofit organizations, businesses, community leaders, and elected officials around a common cause: promoting the welfare of Michigan children in school, at home, and in the community.

It has been said that it takes a village to raise a child, and the PTA is building that village.

They are building that village by offering parents resources on important topics like teen driving, bullying prevention, online safety, and career planning.

They are building that village by presenting the Fran Anderson Michigan PTA Scholarship to high school seniors who have demonstrated leadership and advocacy skills through their involvement in PTA.

They are building that village through Advocacy Day and advocacy training that gives members the tools they need to speak up for policies that benefit students, families, and schools.

They are building that village by ensuring that parents remain strong partners in the education of their children.

For a century, the Michigan PTA has made sure that the voices of our parents are heard and that the needs of our children are not forgotten. I have been honored to join them in this effort and look forward to continuing our work together.

Michigan's future is found in our children. Thanks to the Michigan PTA for 100 years of making that future a bright one.

Thank you.

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:20 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, without amendment:

S. 324. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the provision of adult day health care services for veterans.

The message also announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 1350. An act to modify the boundary of Voyageurs National Park in the State of Minnesota, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1800. An act to direct the Secretary of Agriculture to transfer certain Federal land to facilitate scientific research supporting Federal space and defense programs.

H.R. 3469. An act to designate the bridge located in Blount County, Tennessee, on the Foothills Parkway (commonly known as ''Bridge 2'') as the ''Dean Stone Bridge''.

H.R. 4266. An act to clarify the boundary of Acadia National Park, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4465. An act to maintain annual base funding for the Upper Colorado and San Juan fish recovery programs through fiscal year 2023, to require a report on the implementation of those programs, and for other purposes.

The message further announced that the Clerk of the House be directed to return to the Senate the bill (H.R. 1207) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 306 River Street in Tilden, Texas, as the ''Tilden Veterans Post Office'', in compliance with a request of the Senate for the return thereof.

MEASURES REFERRED

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

H.R. 1800. An act to direct the Secretary of Agriculture to transfer certain Federal land to facilitate scientific research supporting Federal space and defense programs; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

H.R. 4266. An act to clarify the boundary of Acadia National Park, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 4465. An act to maintain annual base funding for the Upper Colorado and San Juan fish recovery programs through fiscal year 2023, to require a report on the implementation of those programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bill was read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and placed on the calendar:

H.R. 1350. An act to modify the boundary of Voyageurs National Park in the State of Minnesota, and for other purposes.

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–4562. A communication from the Acting Administrator of the National Organic Program, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''National Organic Program (NOP); Organic Livestock and Poultry Practices'' ((RIN0581–AD75) (Docket No. AMS–NOP–15–0012)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 13, 2018; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–4563. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Legislative Affairs), transmitting proposed legislation entitled ''National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019''; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–4564. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting the report of four (4) officers authorized to wear the insignia of the grade of major general or brigadier general in accordance with title 10, United States Code, section 777; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–4565. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report of the continuation of the national emergency with respect to Iran that was declared in Executive Order 12957 on March 15, 1995; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–4566. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Somalia that was declared in Executive Order 13536 on April 12, 2010; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–4567. A communication from the Director of Legislative Affairs, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Alternatives to References to Credit Ratings With Respect to Permissible Activities for Foreign Branches of Insured State Nonmember Banks and Pledge of Assets by Insured Domestic Branches of Foreign Banks'' (RIN3064–AE36) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12, 2018; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–4568. A communication from the General Counsel, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Electric Storage Participation in Markets Operated by Regional Transmission Organizations and Independent System Operators'' ((RIN1902–AF18) (Docket Nos. RM16–23–000 and AD16–20–000)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 13, 2018; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–4569. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Consolidated Guidance About Materials Licenses: Program-Specific Guidance About 10 CFR Part 36 Irradiator Licenses'' (NUREG–1556, Volume 6, Revision 1) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12, 2018; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4570. A communication from the Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Arms Export Control Act (OSS–2018–0217); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–4571. A communication from the Management Analyst, Bureau of Consular Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Schedule of Fees for Consular Services, Department of State and Overseas Embassies and Consulates - Passport Services Fee Changes'' (RIN1400–AD81) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 7, 2018; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–4572. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to Executive Order 13313 of July 31, 2003, a semiannual report detailing telecommunications-related payments made to Cuba pursuant to Department of the Treasury licenses; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–4573. A communication from the Director of Regulations and Policy Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Food Additives Permitted in Feed and Drinking Water of Animals; Silicon Dioxide as a Carrier for Flavors'' ((21 CFR Part 573) (Docket No. FDA–2017–F–5528)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12, 2018; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–4574. A communication from the Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Department's activities under the Civil Rights of Institutionalized Persons Act during fiscal year 2017; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–4575. A communication from the Acting Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Department's activities under the Civil Rights of Institutionalized Persons Act during fiscal year 2017; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–4576. A communication from the Director, Administrative Office of the United States Courts, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Uniform Resource Locators (URLs) for two reports entitled ''2017 Annual Report of the Director of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts'' and ''Judicial Business of the United States Courts''; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–4577. A communication from the Impact Analyst, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Federal Civil Penalties Inflation Adjustment Act Amendments'' (RIN2900–AQ22) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 9, 2018; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

EC–4578. A communication from the Impact Analyst, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Reimbursement of qualifying adoption expenses for certain veterans'' (RIN2900–AQ01) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 9, 2018; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS

The following petitions and memorials were laid before the Senate and were referred or ordered to lie on the table as indicated:

POM–181. A concurrent resolution adopted by the Legislative Assembly of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico requesting the United States Congress to extend the unemployment and the Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) benefits for an additional twenty-six (26) weeks, due to the catastrophic impact of Hurricanes Maria and Irma on Puerto Rico; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 50

STATEMENT OF MOTIVES

Only two weeks after Hurricane Irma hit the Island, on September 20th, 2017, Hurricane Maria struck Puerto Rico. The eye of this Category 4 hurricane made landfall in the municipality of Yabucoa.

Puerto Rico suffered damages estimated in at least ninety billion dollars ($90,000,000,000), and a never-before-seen devastation. The power grid as well as the telecommunications and drinking water systems were down. One month after landfall, a mere eighteen percent (18%) of the population had power service, fifty-nine percent (59%) had telecommunications service, and seventy-three percent (73%) had drinking water service.

Many businesses have been unable to operate due to the lack of these services. Consequently, a significant number of employees have lost their jobs or their work hours have been reduced considerably.

Through a contribution based on a percentage of payroll expenses, employers participate in a program where job-seeking unemployed persons are able to receive financial assistance and labor advisory from the Government.

Workers who have been wrongfully discharged may receive the following benefits:

Unemployment compensation equivalent to a percentage of the salary earned up to one hundred thirty-three dollars ($133.00) a week. Such compensation may be extended for an additional twenty-six (26) weeks, if eligible.

Job search assistance through their job center locations.

Furthermore, the Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) is available for employed and self-employed persons who have been determined not otherwise eligible for regular unemployment insurance benefits. This program provides unemployment benefits to individuals who have become unemployed as a direct result of a major disaster. Just as the unemployment benefit, this assistance is available for twenty-six (26) weeks.

Hurricanes Irma and Maria have had a major impact on the economy. Countless Puerto Ricans have lost their jobs, either temporarily or permanently. The lines at the regional offices of the Department of Labor are endless.

Moreover, it has been estimated that more than sixty thousand (60,000) Puerto Ricans have left the Island over the thirty (30) days following Hurricane Maria, forty thousand (40,000) of which have relocated to Florida.

If the U.S. Congress approves the unemployment benefit extension it will greatly contribute to the recovery of the People of Puerto Rico and prevent many others from making the difficult decision of moving from Puerto Rico.

This is not the first time that such a request is made. The U.S. Congress approved a similar extension in 2006 after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita struck Louisiana and Texas, respectively.

For all of the foregoing, this Legislative Assembly of Puerto Rico deems it meritorious to request the Congress of the United States of America to extend the unemployment and the Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) benefits for an additional twenty-six (26) weeks, due to the catastrophic impact of Hurricanes Maria and Irma on Puerto Rico.

Be it resolved by the Legislative Assembly of Puerto Rico:

Section 1.—To request the Congress of the United States of America to extend the unemployment and the Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) benefits for an additional twenty-six (26) weeks, due to the catastrophic impact of Hurricanes Maria and Irma on Puerto Rico.

Section 2.—It is hereby directed that a copy of this Concurrent Resolution, translated into English, be delivered to the leadership of the Congress of the United States of America, including the Resident Commissioner of Puerto Rico in Washington, D.C., the President of the United States of America, and the U.S. Secretary of Labor.

Section 3.—This Concurrent Resolution shall take effect upon its approval.

POM–182. A joint resolution adopted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado relative to the fiftieth anniversary of the capture of the U.S.S. Pueblo by North Korea; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 18–1004

Whereas, The U.S.S. Pueblo was originally launched as a United States Army cargo ship in 1944 but was transferred to the United States Navy and renamed the U.S.S. Pueblo in 1966; and

Whereas, The U.S.S. Pueblo was named for the city of Pueblo, Colorado, and the county of Pueblo, Colorado, and was the third ship in the naval fleet to bear the name Pueblo; and

Whereas, After leaving Japan in early January 1968 on an intelligence mission, the U.S.S. Pueblo was attacked by the North Korean military on January 23, 1968; and

Whereas, According to United States Naval authorities and the crew of the U.S.S. Pueblo, the ship was in international waters at the time of the attack; and

Whereas, One crew member of the U.S.S. Pueblo was killed during the attack, and eighty crew members and two civilian oceanographers were captured and held for eleven months by the North Korean government; and

Whereas, This year marks the fiftieth anniversary of North Korea's attack on the U.S.S. Pueblo and her crew; and

Whereas, The U.S.S. Pueblo is still in commission in the United States Navy but continues to be held by the North Korean government and is currently a museum in Pyongyang, North Korea; Now, therefore; and be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives of the Seventy-first General Assembly of the State of Colorado, the Senate concurring herein:

(1) That we, the members of the General Assembly, recognize the bravery and sacrifice of the crew of the U.S.S. Pueblo;

(2) That we take pride in the fact that the U.S.S. Pueblo bears the name of a city and a county in Colorado, and, therefore, the citizens of Colorado should be aware of the incident that occurred with the U.S.S. Pueblo fifty years ago;

(3) That we continue the call for Kim Jong Un and the North Korean government to return the U.S.S. Pueblo to the people of the United States; and

(4) That we hereby designate January 23 each year as ''U.S.S. Pueblo Day'' as a day to remember and honor the brave crew of the U.S.S. Pueblo; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this Joint Resolution be sent to President Donald J. Trump, Governor John W. Hickenlooper, President Pro Tempore of the United States Senate Orrin Hatch, Speaker of the United States House of Representatives Paul D. Ryan, and the members of Colorado's Congressional delegation.

POM–183. A resolution adopted by the Common Council of the City of Syracuse, New York urging the federal government to pass legislation in support of a national revenue-neutral carbon fee and dividend in order to help slow climate change; to the Committee on Finance.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. ALEXANDER for the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

*Mark Schneider, of the District of Columbia, to be Director of the Institute of Education Science, Department of Education for a term of six years.

*Frank T. Brogan, of Pennsylvania, to be Assistant Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education, Department of Education.

*Marco M. Rajkovich, Jr., of Kentucky, to be a Member of the Federal Mine Safety and Health Review Commission for a term of six years expiring August 30, 2022.

*John F. Ring, of the District of Columbia, to be a Member of the National Labor Relations Board for the term of five years expiring December 16, 2022.

By Mr. RISCH for the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

Hannibal Ware, of the Virgin Islands, to be Inspector General, Small Business Administration.

*David Christian Tryon, of Ohio, to be Chief Counsel for Advocacy, Small Business Administration.

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

(Nominations without an asterisk were reported with the recommendation that they be confirmed.)

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

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

By Ms. WARREN:

S. 2544. A bill to stop financial institution crime, require certain officers of companies to certify that they have conducted due diligence relating to criminal conduct or civil fraud, create accountability in deferred prosecution agreements, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Ms. SMITH (for herself, Mr. UDALL, Mr. TESTER, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Ms. WARREN, and Ms. HEITKAMP):

S. 2545. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to authorize a special behavioral health program for Indians; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

By Mr. MARKEY (for himself and Ms. WARREN):

S. 2546. A bill to provide grants to States to encourage the implementation and maintenance of firearms licensing requirements, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. KENNEDY (for himself and Mr. CASSIDY):

S. 2547. A bill to provide assistance for educational facilities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. HELLER (for himself, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. RUBIO):

S. 2548. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to furnish mental health care to certain former members of the Armed Forces who are not otherwise eligible to receive such care, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself and Mr. SCHUMER):

S. 2549. A bill to designate the United States Postal Service located at 1234 Saint Johns Place in Brooklyn, New York, as the ''Major Robert Odell Owens Post Office''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself and Mr. SCHUMER):

S. 2550. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 99 Macombs Place in New York, New York, as the ''Tuskegee Airman Post Office Building''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. CORKER (for himself and Mr. COONS):

S. 2551. A bill to modernize United States international food assistance programs made available through the Food for Peace Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. PETERS (for himself and Mr. PERDUE):

S. 2552. A bill to amend the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act to authorize the Secretary of Agriculture to increase the maximum amounts of Farm Service Agency loans for years in which those maximum amounts are insufficient to satisfy demand, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Ms. STABENOW (for herself, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. CASSIDY, Mrs. MCCASKILL, and Mr. BARRASSO):

S. 2553. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to prohibit health plans and pharmacy benefit managers from restricting pharmacies from informing individuals regarding the prices for certain drugs and biologicals; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Mr. BARRASSO, Ms. STABENOW, and Mr. CASSIDY):

S. 2554. A bill to ensure that health insurance issuers and group health plans do not prohibit pharmacy providers from providing certain information to enrollees; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mrs. GILLIBRAND:

S. 2555. A bill to amend the Agricultural Act of 2014 to establish the Dairy Farm Sustainability Price Loss Coverage Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. COONS (for himself, Mr. COCHRAN, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. WICKER, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. CARPER, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. REED, Mr. HATCH, Ms. WARREN, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. BROWN, Mr. BENNET, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. CARDIN, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. TESTER, Ms. SMITH, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. BOOKER, Ms. HIRONO, Mrs. MURRAY, Ms. HARRIS, and Mr. KING):

S. Res. 434. A resolution recognizing the contributions of AmeriCorps members and alumni to the lives of the people of the United States; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. PORTMAN (for himself, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. CASEY, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BROWN, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. WICKER, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. MURPHY, and Mrs. SHAHEEN):

S. Res. 435. A resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that the 85th anniversary of the Ukrainian Famine of 1932–1933, known as the Holodomor, should serve as a reminder of repressive Soviet policies against the people of Ukraine; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Mrs. CAPITO, Ms. DUCKWORTH, and Ms. COLLINS):

S. Res. 436. A resolution recognizing the Girl Scouts of the United States of America on its 106th birthday and affirming the importance of leadership development for girls; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 384

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. SMITH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 384, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend the new markets tax credit, and for other purposes.

S. 455

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 455, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to count resident time spent in a critical access hospital as resident time spent in a nonprovider setting for purposes of making Medicare direct and indirect graduate medical education payments.

S. 720

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 720, a bill to amend the Export Administration Act of 1979 to include in the prohibitions on boycotts against allies of the United States boycotts fostered by international governmental organizations against Israel and to direct the Export-Import Bank of the United States to oppose boycotts against Israel, and for other purposes.

S. 833

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 833, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to expand health care and benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs for military sexual trauma, and for other purposes.

S. 1084

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1084, a bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to require that the Director of the Bureau of Prisons ensure that each chief executive officer of a Federal penal or correctional institution provides a secure storage area located outside of the secure perimeter of the Federal penal or correctional institution for firearms carried by certain employees of the Bureau of Prisons, and for other purposes.

S. 1301

At the request of Mr. NELSON, the names of the Senator from Minnesota

(Ms. KLOBUCHAR) and the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) were added as cosponsors of S. 1301, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for the distribution of additional residency positions, and for other purposes.

S. 2135

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the names of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER) and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) were added as cosponsors of S. 2135, a bill to enforce current law regarding the National Instant Criminal Background Check System.

S. 2147

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2147, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to create a Pension Rehabilitation Trust Fund to establish a Pension Rehabilitation Administration within the Department of the Treasury to make loans to multiemployer defined benefit plans, and for other purposes.

S. 2314

At the request of Mrs. MCCASKILL, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2314, a bill to increase the number of U.S. Customs and Border Protection Office of Field Operations officers and support staff and to require reports that identify staffing, infrastructure, and equipment needed to enhance security at ports of entry.

S. 2353

At the request of Mr. COTTON, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mrs. FISCHER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2353, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to report on the estimated total assets under direct or indirect control by certain senior Iranian leaders and other figures, and for other purposes.

S. 2468

At the request of Ms. HIRONO, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2468, a bill to provide access to counsel for unaccompanied alien children.

S. 2497

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the names of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. KENNEDY), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) and the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) were added as cosponsors of S. 2497, a bill to amend the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 and the Arms Export Control Act to make improvements to certain defense and security assistance provisions and to authorize the appropriations of funds to Israel, and for other purposes.

S. 2507

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the names of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY) and the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) were added as cosponsors of S. 2507, a bill to require short-term limited duration insurance issuers to renew or continue in force such coverage at the option of the enrollees.

S.J. RES. 54

At the request of Mr. SANDERS, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 54, a joint resolution to direct the removal of United States Armed Forces from hostilities in the Republic of Yemen that have not been authorized by Congress.

S. RES. 424

At the request of Ms. BALDWIN, the names of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) and the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 424, a resolution honoring the 25th anniversary of the National Guard Youth Challenge Program.

S. RES. 426

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 426, a resolution supporting the goals of International Women's Day.

S. RES. 432

At the request of Mr. JOHNSON, the names of the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY), the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) and the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 432, a resolution congratulating the Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania on the 100th anniversary of their declarations of independence.

AMENDMENT NO. 2180

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2180 intended to be proposed to S. 2155, a bill to promote economic growth, provide tailored regulatory relief, and enhance consumer protections, and for other purposes.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 434—RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF AMERICORPS MEMBERS AND ALUMNI TO THE LIVES OF THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. COONS (for himself, Mr. COCHRAN, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. WICKER, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. CARPER, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. REED, Mr. HATCH, Ms. WARREN, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. BROWN, Mr. BENNET, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. CARDIN, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. TESTER, Ms. SMITH, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. BOOKER, Ms. HIRONO, Mrs. MURRAY, Ms. HARRIS, and Mr. KING) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions:

S. RES. 434

Whereas, since its inception in 1994, the AmeriCorps national service program has proven to be a highly effective way to engage the people of the United States in meeting a wide range of local and national needs and promote the ethics of service and volunteerism;

Whereas, since 1994, more than 1,000,000 individuals have taken the AmeriCorps pledge to ''get things done for America'' by becoming AmeriCorps members;

Whereas, each year, AmeriCorps, in coordination with State service commissions, provides opportunities for approximately 75,000 individuals across the United States to give back in an intensive way to communities, States, Tribal nations, and the United States;

Whereas AmeriCorps members have served more than 1,480,000,000 hours nationwide, helping—

(1) to improve the lives of the most vulnerable people of the United States;

(2) to protect the environment;

(3) to contribute to public safety;

(4) to respond to disasters;

(5) to strengthen the educational system of the United States; and

(6) to expand economic opportunity;

Whereas, since 1994, more than $9,200,000,000 in AmeriCorps funds have been invested in nonprofit, community, educational, and faith-based groups, and those funds leverage hundreds of millions of dollars in outside funding and in-kind donations each year;

Whereas AmeriCorps members recruit and supervise millions of community volunteers, demonstrating the value of AmeriCorps as a powerful force for encouraging people to become involved in volunteering and community service;

Whereas AmeriCorps members serve at more than 20,000 locations across the United States, including at nonprofit organizations, schools, and faith-based and community organizations;

Whereas AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps campuses in the States of Mississippi, Maryland, Iowa, California, and Colorado strengthen communities and develop future leaders through team-based service;

Whereas AmeriCorps members nationwide, in return for the service of those members, have earned more than $3,500,000,000 to use to further their own educational advancement at colleges and universities across the United States;

Whereas AmeriCorps members, after their terms of service with AmeriCorps end, have been more likely to remain engaged in their communities as volunteers, teachers, and nonprofit professionals than the average individual;

Whereas AmeriCorps is a proven pathway to employment, providing members with valuable career skills, experience, and contacts to prepare them for the 21st century workforce and to help close the skills gap in the United States;

Whereas, in 2009, Congress passed the bipartisan Serve America Act (Public Law 111–13; 123 Stat. 1460), which authorized the expansion of national service, expanded opportunities to serve, increased efficiency and accountability, and strengthened the capacity of organizations and communities to solve problems;

Whereas national service programs have engaged millions of people in the United States in results-driven service in the most vulnerable communities of the United States, providing hope and help to individuals with economic and social needs;

Whereas national service and volunteerism demonstrate the best of the spirit of the United States, with people turning toward problems and working together to find community solutions; and

Whereas AmeriCorps Week, observed in 2018 from March 11 through March 17, is an appropriate time for the people of the United States to salute current and former AmeriCorps members for their positive impact on the lives of people in the United States, to thank the community partners of AmeriCorps for making the program possible, and to encourage more people in the United States to become involved in service and volunteering: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) encourages the people of the United States to join in a national effort—

(A) to salute AmeriCorps members and alumni; and

(B) to raise awareness about the importance of national and community service;

(2) acknowledges the significant accomplishments of the members, alumni, and community partners of AmeriCorps;

(3) recognizes the important contributions made by AmeriCorps members and alumni to the lives of the people of the United States; and

(4) encourages individuals of all ages to consider opportunities to serve in AmeriCorps.

SENATE RESOLUTION 435—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE THAT THE 85TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UKRAINIAN FAMINE OF 1932–1933, KNOWN AS THE HOLODOMOR, SHOULD SERVE AS A REMINDER OF REPRESSIVE SOVIET POLICIES AGAINST THE PEOPLE OF UKRAINE

Mr. PORTMAN (for himself, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. CASEY, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BROWN, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. WICKER, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. MURPHY, and Mrs. SHAHEEN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 435

Whereas 2017–2018 marks the 85th anniversary of the Ukrainian Famine of 1932–1933, known as the Holodomor;

Whereas, in 1932 and 1933, millions of Ukrainian people perished at the will of the totalitarian Stalinist government of the former Soviet Union, which perpetrated a premeditated famine in Ukraine in an effort to break the nation's resistance to collectivization and communist occupation;

Whereas the Soviet government deliberately confiscated grain harvests and starved millions of Ukrainian men, women, and children by a policy of forced collectivization that sought to destroy the nationally conscious movement for independence;

Whereas Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin ordered the borders of Ukraine sealed to prevent anyone from escaping the manmade starvation and to prevent the delivery of any international food aid that would provide relief to the starving;

Whereas numerous scholars worldwide have worked to uncover the scale of the famine, including Canadian wheat expert Andrew Cairns, who visited Ukraine in 1932 and was told that there was no grain ''because the government had collected so much grain and exported it to England and Italy,'' while Joseph Stalin simultaneously denied food aid to the people of Ukraine;

Whereas nearly a quarter of Ukraine's rural population perished or were forced into exile due to the induced starvation, and the entire nation suffered from the consequences of the prolonged famine;

Whereas noted correspondents of the time were refuted for their courage in depicting and reporting on the forced famine in Ukraine, including Gareth Jones, William Henry Chamberlin, and Malcolm Muggeridge, who wrote, ''They (the peasants) will tell you that many have already died of famine and that many are dying every day; that thousands have been shot by the government and hundreds of thousands exiled. . .'';

Whereas title V of the Departments of Commerce, Justice, and State, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 1986 (Public Law 99–180; 99 Stat. 1157), signed into law on December 13, 1985, established the Commission on the Ukraine Famine to ''conduct a study of the Ukrainian Famine of 1932–1933 in order to expand the world's knowledge of the famine and provide the American public with a better understanding of the Soviet system by revealing the Soviet role'' in it;

Whereas, with the dissolution of the Soviet Union, archival documents became available that confirmed the deliberate and premeditated deadly nature of the famine, and that exposed the atrocities committed by the Soviet government against the Ukrainian people;

Whereas Raphael Lemkin, who devoted his life to the development of legal concepts and norms for containing mass atrocities and whose tireless advocacy swayed the United Nations in 1948 to adopt the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, authored an essay in 1953 entitled, ''Soviet Genocide in [the] Ukraine,'' which highlighted the ''classic example of Soviet genocide,'' characterizing it ''not simply a case of mass murder [, but as] a case of genocide, of destruction, not of individuals only, but of a culture and a nation'';

Whereas Ukraine's law N 376-V ''About the 1932–1933 Holodomor in Ukraine'' of November 28, 2006, gave official recognition to the Holodomor as an act of genocide against the Ukrainian people;

Whereas President George W. Bush signed into law Public Law 109–340 on October 13, 2006, authorizing the Government of Ukraine ''to establish a memorial on Federal land in the District of Columbia to honor the victims of the Ukrainian famine-genocide of 1932–1933,'' which was officially dedicated in November 2015;

Whereas the Government of Ukraine and the Ukrainian communities in the United States and worldwide continue their efforts to secure greater international awareness and understanding of the 1932–1933 tragedy; and

Whereas victims of the Holodomor of 1932–1933 will be commemorated by Ukrainian communities around the globe, and in Ukraine, through November 2018: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) solemnly remembers the 85th anniversary of the Holodomor of 1932–1933 and extends its deepest sympathies to the victims, survivors, and families of this tragedy;

(2) condemns the systematic violations of human rights, including the freedom of self-determination and freedom of speech, of the Ukrainian people by the Soviet government;

(3) recognizes the findings of the Commission on the Ukraine Famine as submitted to Congress on April 22, 1988, including that ''Joseph Stalin and those around him committed genocide against the Ukrainians in 1932–1933'';

(4) encourages dissemination of information regarding the Holodomor of 1932–1933 in order to expand the world's knowledge of this manmade tragedy; and

(5) supports the continuing efforts of the people of Ukraine to work toward ensuring democratic principles, a free-market economy, and full respect for human rights, in order to enable Ukraine to achieve its potential as an important strategic partner of the United States in that region of the world, and to reflect the will of its people.

SENATE RESOLUTION 436—RECOGNIZING THE GIRL SCOUTS OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA ON ITS 106TH BIRTHDAY AND AFFIRMING THE IMPORTANCE OF LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT FOR GIRLS

Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Mrs. CAPITO, Ms. DUCKWORTH, and Ms. COLLINS) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 436

Whereas the Girl Scout movement began on March 12, 1912, in Savannah, Georgia, by Juliette ''Daisy'' Gordon Low—

(1) whose life mission was to build girls of courage, confidence, and character who make the world a better place; and

(2) through whose legacy the Girl Scouts of the United States of America (referred to in this preamble as the ''Girl Scouts organization'') continues to have an extraordinary influence on the lives of millions of girls across the country;

Whereas the Girl Scouts organization is—

(1) recognized as a national leader in providing the best leadership development experience in the world for girls, bringing time-tested methods and research-backed programs that speak to the strengths of girl leadership development; and

(2) backed by more than 100 years of experience and expertise in the field;

Whereas the Girl Scouts organization—

(1) offers hands-on, girl-led, girl-centered learning in—

(A) science, technology, engineering, and math;

(B) the outdoors;

(C) entrepreneurship; and

(D) other subjects; and

(2) helps girls develop invaluable life skills and take the lead early and often;

Whereas the Girl Scouts organization continues a legacy of creating gender-balanced leadership in the United States and the world in its second century of service to girls by providing girls with the tools to become leaders dedicated to making the United States and the world a better place;

Whereas the Girl Scouts organization has been instrumental in developing female leaders in government, business, and public service;

Whereas 55 percent of female Members of Congress, 73 percent of women in the Senate, and 80 percent of female governors are alumnae of the Girl Scouts organization;

Whereas today more than 50,000,000 American women are alumnae of the Girl Scouts organization and 2,600,000 girls and adult volunteers are active members;

Whereas, while the Girl Scouts organization has evolved over the years, the fundamental experience of being part of the Girl Scouts organization connects generations of women;

Whereas only the Girl Scouts organization offers girls a one-of-a-kind opportunity to earn the Gold Award of the Girl Scouts by engaging in leadership at the highest levels while addressing issues they care passionately about;

Whereas the Gold Award of the Girl Scouts, the highest honor a Girl Scout can earn, acknowledges the power and dedication

of each recipient to not only bettering herself but to making the world a better place for others;

Whereas from the boardroom to the courtroom to the caucus room, the need for female leadership has never been clearer or more urgent than it is today; and

Whereas the Girl Scouts organization has the expertise to give girls and young women the tools they need to empower themselves and assume their rightful role as leaders: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the remarkable impact that 106 years of the Girl Scouts of the United States of America have had on life in the United States, our communities, and our world; and

(2) joins the Girl Scouts of the United States of America in ensuring that all girls get the support and tools they need to succeed and become the future leaders of the United States.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, I have 12 requests for committees to meet during today's session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority leaders.

Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today's session of the Senate:

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

The Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 14, 2018, at 9:30 a.m. to conduct a hearing.

THE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

The Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 14, 2018, at 10 a.m. to conduct a hearing entitled, ''Rebuilding Infrastructure in America: Investing in Next Generation Broadband.''

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

The Committee on Environment and Public Works is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 14, 2018, at 10 a.m. to conduct a hearing entitled, ''The Agriculture Creates Real Employment (ACRE) Act.''

THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

The Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 14, 2018, at 4:05 p.m. to conduct a hearing on the following nominations: John F. Ring, of the District of Columbia, to be a Member of the National Labor Relations Board, Frank T. Brogan, of Pennsylvania, to be Assistant Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education, and Mark Schneider, of the District of Columbia, to be Director of the Institute of Education Science, both of the Department of Education, Marco M. Rajkovich, Jr., of Kentucky, to be a Member of the Federal Mine Safety and Health Review Commission, and other pending nominations.

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

The Committee on Indian Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 14, 2018, at 2:30 p.m to conduct a hearing entitled, ''Opioids in Indian Country: Beyond the Crisis to Healing the Community.''

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

The Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 14, 2018, at 9:30 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled ''See Something, Say Something, Oversight of the Parkland Shooting and Legislative Proposals to Improve School Safety.''

COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 14, 2018, after the first vote to conduct a hearing on S. 526, to amend the Small Business Act to provide for expanded participation in the microloan program, S. 791, to amend the Small Business Act to expand intellectual property education and training for small businesses, S. 1538, to amend the Small Business Act to establish awareness of, and technical assistance for, the creation of employee stock ownership plans, S. 1961, to amend the Small Business Act to temporarily reauthorize certain pilot programs under the Small Business Innovation Research Program and the Small Business Technology Transfer Program, S. 1995, to amend the Small Business Investment Act of 1958 to improve the number of small business investment companies in underlicensed States, S. 2283, to amend the Small Business Act to strengthen the Office of Credit Risk Management within the Small Business Administration, S. 2419, to amend the Small Business Act to improve the technical and business assistance services under the SBIR and STTR programs, S. 2527, to amend the Small Business Investment Act of 1958 to increase the amount of leverage made available to small business investment companies, and the nominations of David Christian Tryon, of Ohio, to be Chief Counsel for Advocacy, and Hannibal Ware, of the Virgin Islands, to be Inspector General, both of the Small Business Administration.

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

The Committee on Veterans' Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 14, 2018, at 10 a.m. to conduct a joint hearing.

JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE ON SOLVENCY OF MULTIEMPLOYER PENSION PLANS

The Joint Select Committee on Solvency of Multiemployer Pension Plans is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 14, 2018, at 10 a.m. to conduct a hearing.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON STRATEGIC FORCE

The Subcommittee on Strategic Force of the Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 14, 2018, at 2:30 p.m. to conduct a hearing.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICA AND GLOBAL HEALTH POLICY

The Subcommittee on Africa and Global Health Policy of the Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 14, 2018, at 10 a.m. to conduct a hearing entitled, ''Somalia's Current Security and Stability Status.''

SUBCOMMITTEE ON MULTILATERAL INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, MULTILATERAL INSTITUTIONS, AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC, ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

The Subcommittee on Multilateral International Development, Multilateral Institutions, and International Economic, Energy and Environmental Policy of the Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 14, 2018, at 2:30 p.m. to conduct a hearing entitled, ''Why Food Security Matters.''

RECOGNIZING THE GIRL SCOUTS OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA ON ITS 106TH BIRTHDAY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 436, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 436) recognizing the Girl Scouts of the United States of America on its 106th birthday and affirming the importance of leadership development for girls.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I further ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 436) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

ELIMINATING GOVERNMENT-FUNDED OIL-PAINTING ACT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask that the Chair lay before the Senate the message to accompany S. 188.

The Presiding Officer laid before the Senate the following message from the House of Representatives:

Resolved, That the bill from the Senate (S. 188) entitled ''An Act to prohibit the use of Federal funds for the costs of painting portraits of officers and employees of the Federal Government.'', do pass with amendments.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to concur in the House amendments, and I ask unanimous consent that the motion be agreed to and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

EDWARD T. SCHAFER AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH CENTER

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 2154 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

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

The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 2154) to rename the Red River Valley Agricultural Research Center in Fargo, North Dakota, as the Edward T. Schafer Agricultural Research Center.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The bill (H.R. 2154) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, MARCH 15, 2018

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m., Thursday, March 15; further, that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed. Finally, I ask that following leader remarks, the Senate resume consideration of the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 339, H.R. 1865.

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

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 7:10 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, March 15, 2018, at 10 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nomination received by the Senate on March 8, 2018:

IN THE COAST GUARD

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT AS VICE COMMANDANT, UNITED STATES COAST GUARD, AND TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 14, U.S.C., SECTION 47:

To be admiral

VICE ADM. CHARLES W. RAY

CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by the Senate March 14, 2018:

NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION

JEFFREY DEWIT, OF ARIZONA, TO BE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER, NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING MR. AND MRS. CHAZZ AND SUE HUMPHREY FOR THEIR 60TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 14, 2018

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. and Mrs. Chazz and Sue Humphrey, who will be celebrating their 60th wedding anniversary on April 11, 2018. Chazz and Sue are a great example of the lifelong bond of marriage and illustrate the strength of love.

Chazz and Sue both grew up in Mission, Kansas and were married on April 11, 1958, just one year after they met. Sue, a lover of flying, earned her FAA student's license in 1985. From that day forward, Sue and Chazz have enjoyed flying ultralight planes. And if that was not enough, they have volunteered for nearly 15 years at the Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) Airshow in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. Throughout their time with the EAA, Chazz has served on the Experimental Aircraft Association's Ultralight Council and as the Ultralight Chairman. In recent years, Chazz volunteered at the National Museum of Transportation steam train display.

Chazz and Sue have 3 children, Chuck, Dave, and Rachel, 5 grandchildren, and 18 great-grandchildren. When they are not volunteering or flying, both Chazz and Sue enjoy traveling and spending time with family and friends.

Please join me in congratulating Chazz and Sue Humphrey on their 60th Wedding Anniversary and wishing them happiness and health in the years to come.

TRIBUTE IN MEMORY OF DR. PEARSE LYONS

HON. HAROLD ROGERS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 14, 2018

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the memory of my Irish friend and one of Kentucky's best imports, Dr. Pearse Lyons.

Dr. Lyons was born and raised across the pond in Ireland and the United Kingdom and immigrated to Kentucky over 40 years ago to launch his first major business, Alltech. He quickly became a Kentuckian at heart and developed an inspiring passion for rural Eastern Kentucky. In many ways, he would tell me, that Kentucky's Appalachian region reminded him of his homeplace in Ireland, where folks take great pride in their communities and their trades. In fact, he believed in Eastern Kentucky so much that he extended a branch from Alltech into Pikeville, Kentucky with a new distillery to create jobs and invest in our region. Today, Alltech is now a $3 million company that employs more than 5,000 people across 128 countries, and soon those numbers will include Eastern Kentucky.

Dr. Lyons was the type of visionary that believed we could accomplish monumental things by telling the story of Eastern Kentucky with our own people leading the charge, with our own talents. His charisma and enthusiasm for life were contagious. He helped remind us of the unique treasures that we have in Eastern Kentucky and inspired us to share them on a broader spectrum.

In addition to his business ingenuity, Dr. Lyons and his lovely wife, Deidre, shared their philanthropic spirit with the entire Commonwealth. In fact, Alltech was birthed as a way to help feed the world with locally farmed products. Thanks to his global leadership in agribusiness, Dr. Lyons played an essential role in attracting the World Equestrian Games to Kentucky in 2010 by building the state-of-the-art Alltech Arena at the Kentucky Horse Park. Aside from the farm, Dr. Pearse and Deidre Lyons have shared immense generosity around the globe through disaster relief, improving access to education, and countless other worthy programs.

I counted Dr. Lyons a dear friend who displayed genuine kindness and love for our state. I'm grateful that he planted seeds of hope in Kentucky, where we will see his dreams continue to flourish for years to come. My wife, Cynthia, and I extend our heartfelt sympathy to Deidre and the entire Lyons family.

RECOGNIZING THE DEER PARK ART PARK PLAYERS AND THE TEXAS NON-PROFIT THEATRE ANNUAL CONFERENCE

HON. BRIAN BABIN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 14, 2018

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Speaker, I seek to recognize the Deer Park Art Park Players on the occasion of the Texas Non-Profit Theatre Annual Conference. The City of Deer Park Parks and Recreation Department, The Art Park Players, and The Friends of the Art Park Players are hosting the conference on Thursday, March 15th. Theatre companies from across the State of Texas will be in attendance.

In early 1979, a small group of Deer Park residents, led by Jeff Smith and Jean Riggs, met at the Deer Park Community Center to form a script-reading club. Later that year, they staged their very first production, Once Upon a Mattress, at Deer Park High School's Gaines Mason Auditorium. The City of Deer Park recognized the community's love of theatrical arts and hired Sue Fenley Meyers as the full-time Artistic Managing Director of the ''Not-Yet-Named-Theatre Company.'' The theatre officially became The Art Park Players in 1980. In December 1986, the current theater facility was opened by the city. Longtime theatre performer, Junior Art Park Player director, and volunteer, Susan Mele, was named director in April 2004 following Meyer's retirement.

After nearly four decades, The Art Park Players have grown in number and spirit. Their success relies heavily on their staff, families, and more than one hundred volunteers. With four mainstage productions, concerts, and youth productions, The Art Park Players engage over 12,000 patrons each season, enriching the Deer Park community artistically and financially. The Art Park Players hold the distinction of being the only year-round dinner theatre in the Greater Houston area and is truly one-of-a-kind in the State of Texas.

Mr. Speaker, it is my distinct honor to recognize the Deer Park Art Park Players.

HONORING CONGRESSWOMAN MARCY KAPTUR ON BECOMING THE LONGEST SERVING WOMAN IN THE HISTORY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

HON. DANIEL LIPINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 14, 2018

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Congresswoman MARCY KAPTUR of Ohio's Ninth District, for becoming the longest serving woman in the history of the U.S. House of Representatives. She breaks a record that has stood since 1960, when it was set by another great American trailblazer, Congresswoman Edith Nourse Rogers.

It is only fitting that Congresswoman KAPTUR becomes the longest serving woman in the history of the House during Women's History Month. This dedicated public servant has demonstrated time and time again her commitment to constituent service and her passion for tackling the tough issues. In representing the Great Lakes Region, she has shown her dedication to preserving the waters, lands, and environment our states share. Her leadership in the Polish Caucus is greatly appreciated and I have learned much through exploring our mutual heritage. And as she has stood up for the middle class, I have had the privilege of watching her fight for the Midwest and our manufacturing roots.

I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Congresswoman KAPTUR on this achievement. During my time in Congress, I have been honored to serve with Congresswoman KAPTUR. Her conviction, work ethic, and strength stand as a model to all Americans. As we celebrate Women's History Month, I hope that many more women will be inspired by her example and pursue a career in public service. I extend the most heartfelt congratulations to Congresswoman KAPTUR, both on her phenomenal accomplishment and her proud tenure in Congress.

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

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

IN RECOGNITION OF HONORARY TAYLOR AUXILIARY POLICE OFFICER DAVE GORGON'S SERVICE TO OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY

HON. DEBBIE DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 14, 2018

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the distinguished public service of Dave Gorgon. He has enriched our community through his positive leadership.

Established in 1962 as a volunteer civil defense organization to assist the Taylor Police Department, the Taylor Auxiliary Police play a key role in safeguarding the public. In addition to helping the full-time police department staff community events like high school sports events and assisting with regular police patrols, the auxiliary police also serve as a reserve force to assist the City of Taylor in the event of a disaster or emergency situation. Additionally, the auxiliary has partnered with the city to further crime prevention initiatives, including Taylor on Watch, an education and outreach program that shares best practices for neighborhood and community safety. These initiatives and the service of officers are well documented by Dave Gorgon, a photographer with the City of Taylor.

Mr. Gorgon is a well-loved member of our local community who is known for his passion and leadership. Known around Downriver as ''Mr. Taylor,'' he has served the city in various capacities, including as an interim member of the Taylor City Council and as a reporter and photographer for the Southgate News-Herald. Those who know Mr. Gorgon laud him as a special person who is always willing to go out of the way to make someone feel special. and positively impact their day. He is a strong supporter of both the Taylor Police Department and the Taylor Auxiliary Police Department and often attends events to take photos of the departments in action and share the good work being done by local officers. Taylor Auxiliary officers credit Mr. Gorgon as a positive force for the community and an irreplaceable member of the department. He is truly deserving of being named an Honorary Taylor Auxiliary Police Officer; we are grateful for his lifetime of service and positivity and look forward to his continued contributions to the Downrivers in the years to come.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mr. Dave Gorgon for his years of commitment to the community that he loves. His passion and dedicated service have bettered Taylor for years to come.

HONORING MARTINEZTOWN FOOD PANTRY

HON. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 14, 2018

Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the founders of an outstanding organization in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Celebrating the 10-year anniversary since its inception, the Martineztown Food Pantry has provided meals for thousands of families in New Mexico since 2008.

The idea for a neighborhood food pantry was sparked when a young neighbor of Brad Brown and Michael Griego knocked on the door of their home asking if they were interested in buying a pair of his shoes so that he would have money to purchase food for his young wife and child. Brown and Griego felt compelled to address the larger issue at hand and do something to help end hunger in Albuquerque.

The pair started by giving up their gym memberships and donating that money to the Roadrunner Food Bank. Eventually they would establish their own mobile food program known as the Martineztown Food Pantry. Since its creation, this program has brought together a dedicated group of volunteers in the community to pursue a noble cause. They've helped feed 32,000 families for over a decade, totaling 1,612,000 pounds of food.

Dedicated to ending hunger and preserving the dignity of citizens of New Mexico, Brown and Griego truly embody the values of humanitarianism. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Brad Brown and Michael Griego and everyone who volunteers at the Martineztown Food Pantry for their selfless dedication to improving the community, and congratulate them on all they have achieved over the last 10 years.

JONATHAN GARCIA, OLYMPIAN AND HOUSTONIAN

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 14, 2018

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the whir of skate gliding across the ice transfixes spectators at the 2018 Pyeongchang Winter Olympic Games. Competing on the ice is Olympic speed skater, Texan, and Houston native, Jonathan Garcia.

Jonathan has been speed skating since he was 7 years old. His love for skating began when he witnessed Dan Jansen win the speed skating gold medal at the 1994 Winter Olympic Games in Lillehammer, Norway. Ever since that time, Jonathan has passionately competed in speed skating and has enjoyed years of success.

Jonathan did not immediately begin speed skating at the ripe old age of 7, as one would assume. He first competed in roller speed skating for 14 years, before switching to speed skating in 2007. His goal was to compete in the Winter Olympic Games, and that wouldn't be possible as a roller speed skater. Jonathan, being the determined and motivated person he is, quickly took up speed skating and began competing in major competitions throughout the country.

Jonathan's first major achievement came during the 2011 to 2012 Short Track U.S. Time Trials where he earned the gold medal in the 1000 meters. After that, Jonathan's career absolutely skyrocketed. He has competed in the World Championships consistently for the past 7 years, even placing in every event he skated in.

Perhaps most impressively, Jonathan has qualified for and competed in the past two Winter Olympics. He placed 28th overall in the 1000 meters at the 2014 So chi Olympic Winter Games.

In this year's 2018 Pyeongchang Winter Olympics, Jonathan finished 23rd in the 500 meters. He was also second among the three U.S. entries to compete in the speed skating competition.

We are beyond thrilled to have a hometown hero representing Team USA and his town of Katy, Texas. Jonathan's determination to succeed and his passion for speed skating will no doubt inspire a younger generation to compete and achieve their wildest dreams.

And that is just the way it is.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ANDRÉ CARSON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 14, 2018

Mr. CARSON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, during Roll Call Vote number 102 on H.R. 5247, I mistakenly recorded my vote as nay when I should have voted yea.

PUBLIC SCHOOLS WEEK

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 14, 2018

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the students, teachers, and communities who work together to support our public schools during Public Education Week.

Our public schools are where our students come to be educated in the fullest sense of the word as citizens of this great country. Our educators strive daily to make every public school a place where we prepare the nation's young people to contribute to our society, economy and citizenry:

Ninety percent of American children attend public schools. Lawmakers of every level can agree that we should all support our nation's public schools and empower local education leaders to manage and lead school districts in partnership with educators, parents, and other local education stakeholders and learning communities. This support includes recognizing how educators and our schools provide important services outside the classroom such as counseling, extra/co-curricular activities, and mental health supports that are critical to help meet students' needs.

As an advocate for public education, I believe we must promote advancing excellence in public education, by implementing continuous improvement and evidence-based practices. Every child has the right to an education and to attend schools that offer a high quality experience and help them reach their full potential.

I support predictable and adequate funding for our public schools so that students have classrooms and up-to-date resources as well as well-prepared educators. Our school buildings should have manageable class sizes to allow teachers to provide students the attention they need to succeed. Furthermore, I believe that public tax dollars should support public schools that are accountable to parents, educators and the communities they serve.

As a product of the public school system in Northwest Missouri, I reiterate my support for

public education and pride in our public schools. I will continue to promote the promise and purpose of public education, to elevate the great things happening every day in our public schools, and to engage communities about strategies that help students succeed. I affirm my commitment to fight for resources and support for public schools, and will be steadfast in my efforts to support policies that would protect these values.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JAMES R. LANGEVIN

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 14, 2018

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 102, and YEA on Roll Call No. 103.

HONORING THOMAS H. McCARTHY AS CHAIRMAN OF THE 47TH ANNUAL BUFFALO IRISH CENTER CIVIC LUNCHEON

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 14, 2018

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Thomas H. McCarthy, who has been selected to serve as Honorary Chairman of the 47th Annual Civic Luncheon to benefit the Buffalo Irish Center. A proud Buffalonian, born and raised, Tom is a graduate of St. Thomas Aquinas School, Bishop Timon-St. Jude High School, Canisius College, and Simmons School of Mortuary Science.

One year after graduating from Simmons, he founded the Thomas H. McCarthy Funeral Home. Through his funeral home business, he has provided care and compassion to neighborhood families during difficult times.

Tom is a dedicated community servant. He served in the Buffalo Fire Department for 37 years, retiring as a Lieutenant. Additionally, he is a member of the Knights of Columbus, an organization of nearly two million Catholic men. Tom embodies their principles of charity, unity, fraternity, and patriotism.

Organizations that benefit from Tom's stewardship include his alma mater, Bishop Timon, where he raises funds for student scholarships with the Hillery Foundation. For almost 60 years, he has been a member of the Blackthorn Club, a group which encourages the camaraderie and connection of its members with Irish ancestry through social events. At one point, he served as President of the Club.

Married for 63 years, Tom and his wife Mary Ellen have raised six children together. They now have twelve grandchildren and two great grandchildren. Alongside his wonderful family, Tom has been an active participator in this Luncheon since the beginning.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to honor Mr. Thomas H. McCarthy here today, to recognize his countless contributions to the Irish community in Buffalo, and the Western New York community as a whole. His time and talents have made a difference in the lives of so many, and he is deserving of our most sincere gratitude.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LUIS V. GUTIÉRREZ

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 14, 2018

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably absent in the House chamber for roll call votes 102 and 103 on Tuesday, March 13, 2018. Had I been present, I would have voted Nay on Roll Call 102 and Yea on Roll Call 103.

REMEMBERING THE LIFE OF CHARLES EDWARD WERN, JR.

HON. TIM RYAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 14, 2018

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to remember the life of Charles Edward Wern, Jr., 85, who passed away peacefully on Tuesday, Feb. 13, 2018, at home with his family by his side.

Charles was born on November 11, 1932 to Charles E. Wern, Sr. and Mary Lyke Wern. After graduating from Vienna High School in 1950, he completed his undergraduate degree at Duke University where he played both basketball and baseball. Upon graduation, Chuck served in the U.S. Army for two years and played professional basketball and baseball in Europe after his time in the Army. Chuck later returned to the United States and graduated from Ohio Northern law school in 1959. Chuck practiced law in the Warren, Ohio area for over 57 years.

Chuck married the love of his life, Maureen Ann McGlone on November 14, 1990. They shared a long and happy marriage filled with love, respect, and laughter. Together, they had three children. Nothing brought him more pride and joy than being a part of their lives. All three children followed in his footsteps and began practicing law.

Chuck's passion for sports and competition never faded. He coached JFK baseball and golf, he was an avid golfer winning several area events including the Trumbull Country Club Championship. He was the co-chair for two of the LPGA tournaments when the tour was coming to the Valley. He crossed off a big ''Bucket List Item'' when he became a minority owner of the Mahoning Valley Scrappers. For the past 18 seasons, Chuck and Maureen enjoyed hosting over 50 Scrapper players.

Chuck always believed you have an obligation to support your community whenever the opportunity presents itself. He lived that philosophy, serving on numerous committees throughout his life in the Mahoning Valley. Specifically, he served over a span of 20 years on the Mahoning Valley Economic Development Corporation, serving as its Chairman for three different terms. He served as both past and present Chairman of the Warren Commerce Industrial Park. He was a Trustee of Warren General Hospital for several years, Chair of the Blessed Sacrament Building Fund Drive, Chairman and Trustee of the Warren Philharmonic Orchestra Association, Trustee of the Community Foundation of the Mahoning Valley and most recently served on the Board of Directors of the American Red Cross. He was also a recipient of the American Heart Association's ''Heart of The Community'' award honoring heart patients who give of their time and talent to the community.

He will be deeply missed by his wife, Maureen; three children and eight grandchildren, Atty. Happy (Atty. Giovanni) DiCenso and Luca, Rocco and Valentina of Pepper Pike, Atty. Charles E. (Melissa) Wern, III and Chase, Cole and Clay of Denver and Atty. Theodore ''Ted'' (Georgia) Wern and Evan and Owen of Chicago; his sister, Marjorie Turner of Gillette, Wyo.; brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law, James McGlone of Struthers, Kitty (William) Brown of Canfield, John (Sally) McGlone of Jamestown, Pa., Michael (Lori) McGlone of Boardman, Matthew (Judi) McGlone of Canfield and Lorraine McGlone of Hudson; and several nieces, nephews, cousins and dear friends. He was preceded in death by his parents; his mother-in-law and father-in-law, Peg and Joe McGlone; his brother-in-law, Joseph McGlone; his niece, Jaqueline Turner; his nephew, Chet Turner; and several aunts, uncles, cousins and friends.

Chuck was a valued member of the community, and I know he is dearly missed. I extend my sincerest condolences to his family and friends.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 14, 2018

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, March 13, 2018, I regret not being present for two vote sessions. Had I been present, I would have voted in support of the Endangered Fish Recovery Programs Extension Act of 2017, H.R. 4465, Roll Call No. 103, and against the Trickett Wendler, Frank Mongiello, Jordan McLinn, and Matthew Bellina Right to Try Act of 2018, H.R. 5247, Roll Call No. 102.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE DISTINGUISHED SERVICE OF JEFF WITMER, TAYLOR AUXILIARY POLICE OFFICER OF THE YEAR

HON. DEBBIE DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 14, 2018

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the distinguished public service of Commander Jeff Witmer, the 2017 Taylor Auxiliary Police Officer of the Year. He has protected the City of Taylor and its residents for over 14 years.

Established in 1962 as a volunteer civil defense organization to assist the Taylor Police Department, the Taylor Auxiliary Police play a key role in safeguarding the public. In addition to helping the full-time police department staff community events like high school sports

events and assisting with regular police patrols, the auxiliary police also serve as a reserve force to assist the City of Taylor in the event of a disaster or emergency situation. Additionally, the auxiliary has partnered with the city to further crime prevention initiatives, including Taylor on Watch, an education and outreach program that shares best practices for neighborhood and community safety. These initiatives and the service of officers, including 2017 award recipient Commander Jeff Witmer, have helped to make Taylor a safe city to live and work.

Commander Jeff Witmer has served the Taylor Auxiliary Police Department in various capacities for the past 14 years, including range instructor, Platoon Lieutenant, and the department's Operations Commander. As Operations Commander, Mr. Witmer is entrusted with the command of department operations making sure platoons run smoothly, and that all patrol rides go out on schedule. He is a well-respected member of both the department and the City of Taylor for his positivity, dedication, and community-oriented leadership. Due to his years of service and the trust placed in him, Commander Witmer oversees the training department for new recruits and serves as a mentor for junior department members. Our city is better because of Commander Witmer's leadership, and he is truly deserving of being named the 2017 Taylor Auxiliary Police Officer of the Year. We are grateful for Commander Witmer's service and look forward to his continued contributions to protecting our city and growing the auxiliary department in the years to come.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Commander Jeff Witmer for his years of service to our local community. He has impacted countless lives through his work with Taylor's Auxiliary Police Department.

CELEBRATING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF NORTH COUNTRY PUBLIC RADIO

HON. ELISE M. STEFANIK

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 14, 2018

Ms. STEFANIK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and recognize North Country Public Radio on its 50th anniversary.

North Country Public Radio (NCPR) is a public radio network with a mission to inform, enrich, and connect the community. Based out of Canton, New York, the network is the NPR affiliate for the North Country, providing NPR programming as well as music and award-winning regional news coverage. In addition, NCPR serves as the emergency broadcast system for many communities within the North Country. After starting with a single transmitter covering St. Lawrence County, NCPR debuted on the air in 1968 and has since expanded to operate 34 transmitters today, serving not only the entire Adirondack North Country region, but also western Vermont and southeastern Ontario.

NCPR provides a particularly important service to my district, delivering invaluable content to the people of the North Country. The hard work of NCPR employees has greatly expanded the options available to North Country residents, whether they are looking for entertainment programming or for news and information.

On behalf of New York's 21st district, I would like to thank NCPR for prioritizing the enrichment of our community during its 50 years of broadcasting.

SPECIAL OLYMPIAN, CHRISTI ROBERTS

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 14, 2018

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, special Olympian and native of Houston, Christi Roberts, knows a thing or two about competition. In her own words she says, ''Don't mess with me, because I'm bringing the Texas heat.'' And Texas heat is what she brings.

Christi was born with a rare heart condition that required surgery when she was just two years old. She had to get her index fingers corrected and constantly has to check her blood pressure. None of that brought Christi down, but only pushed her to become a better athlete and pursue her passions in life.

Christi loves to run. As a Special Olympics athlete, she has competed in multiple events, but track is by far her favorite. And who would doubt it? Christi smokes the competition. During races she surprised all of her coaches, teammates and onlookers as she blazed down the track at lightning speed. Christi is not to be messed with, because she has one goal: winning. Her motto is, ''I win, but I don't like losing.''

When you can't find her beating the competition on the track, you can find her at the Houston Police Barn, sponsoring a horse by the name of Smash. She spends her extra time feeding, brushing and loving on her horse. Spending time with Smash is one of her favorite past times, and the Houston Police Barn is grateful for her time and dedication to sponsoring one of their beloved horses.

Christi's positive attitude and passion for life is infectious and she radiates happiness every single day. Her dedication to competing in the Special Olympics and continuing to crush the competition is one to be admired.

Christi is the definition of what it means to be a Special Olympian and Houstonian, and I'm proud to honor her and spread her inspirational story.

And that's just the way it is.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 14, 2018

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I missed votes on March 13, 2018 due to illness. Had I been present, I would have voted Yea on Roll Call No. 102 and Yea on Roll Call No. 103.

RECOGNITION OF THE LEADERSHIP COBB CLASS OF 2018

HON. BARRY LOUDERMILK

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 14, 2018

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the outstanding leaders and members of the Leadership Cobb Class of 2018.

Leadership Cobb was founded in 1983 by a nucleus of leaders, including Harris Hines, Johnny Isakson, Phil Sanders and Jay Whorton, in order to train a new group of leaders to guide Cobb County's future.

From hundreds of qualified applicants, Leadership Cobb selected 50 exceptionally qualified individuals for the Class of 2018, to provide a learning environment that enhances personal and professional growth to benefit the individual, his or her local community, and the entire Atlanta region.

The Leadership Cobb Class of 2018 is led by Leadership Cobb alumni Lee Freeman-Smith, Brett McClung, Chris Martin, Tripp Boyer, and Michelle Howard from the Cobb County Chamber of Commerce, and dozens of alumni who volunteer for committees to plan each program day, including class members Wendy Alpine, Elaine Armster, Lisa Ashby, Neera Bahl, Dale Bercher, Alyssa Blanchard, Obie Brannon, Littie Brown, Jarrette Burckhalter, Amy Carrier, Karen Cates, Cedric Clark, Christi Cronin, Lisa Cupid, Frank Durrance, Jesse Evans, Britt Fleck, Jason Gaines, Derek Goshay, Tyler Gwynn, Bonnie Harris, Stacy Haubenschild, Bob Heuel, David Hoeller, Erick Hofstetter, Peter Hortman, Schuyler Hoynes, David Jones, Derek Krebs, Kelly Luscre, Tim Matthews, Anthony Mullins, Nicole Nurse, Jonathan Page, Amber Patterson, Serena Ploessl, Ron Price, Esther Prieto, Valerie Prince, Matt Reid, Christina Saliba, Jessi Samford, Kelvin Scott, Amanda Seals, Jason Shepherd, Thomas Sherrer, Jr., Angie Smith, Trey Spivey, Meaghan Timko, and Erin Zwigart.

On behalf of Georgia's 11th Congressional District and the United States House of Representatives, I commend Leadership Cobb and the members of the Leadership Cobb Class of 2018 for their dedication to community service and their commitment to improving opportunities for local citizens.

RECOGNIZING MARCY KAPTUR AS LONGEST SERVING WOMAN IN CONGRESS

HON. JOYCE BEATTY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 14, 2018

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, as people across America celebrate Women's History Month and honor our nation's many sheroes, I rise today to recognize a modern-day shero, my colleague, fellow Ohioan, and good friend Congresswoman MARCY KAPTUR.

This Sunday, March 18, 2018, Congresswoman KAPTUR will become the longest-serving woman in the U.S. House of Representatives, serving incredibly for 35 years, 2 months, 15 days and counting.

I have had the privilege of knowing MARCY for more than two decades, as well as the honor of serving in the House alongside her for the last six years, and I cannot think of a more determined, driven, and dedicated public servant than she.

Throughout her entire decades-long service to the people of Ohio's Ninth Congressional District, Congresswoman KAPTUR has been a steadfast champion for our great automotive and manufacturing industries, the American worker and their families, and the brave men and women in the Armed Forces. In addition, she has been a tireless advocate for the middle class, and in ensuring that everyone has a fair shake to succeed and realize the American Dream.

Of course, I would be remiss to also not mention her unyielding commitment to our nation's veterans—highlighted by her tireless work and driving force to establish the National World War II Memorial.

Yes, Congresswoman KAPTUR has left an indelible mark on Ohio and this nation, and I join all those in Congress and across the country in saluting her on this momentous and most historic accomplishment.

Congratulations, MARCY.

SALUTING REPRESENTATIVE MARCY KAPTUR

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 14, 2018

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Representative MARCY KAPTUR as she becomes the longest-serving woman in the history of the United States House of Representatives.

For more than 35 years, Representative KAPTUR has served the people of Toledo and northern Ohio with passion and tenacity. Ms. KAPTUR has been a tireless advocate for energy independence, strong international engagement, robust national defense, workers' rights, and America's veterans.

There is no greater physical symbol of Representative KAPTUR's leadership than the National World War II Memorial on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. Ms. KAPTUR shepherded legislation creating the memorial through Congress and then worked vigorously to appropriate the funds needed to complete it.

It has been my privilege to serve with MARCY on the Appropriations Committee, where she is Ranking Member of the Energy and Water Subcommittee and sits with me on both the Defense and Interior-Environment Subcommittees.

On every issue we consider, Representative KAPTUR is a thoughtful voice who consistently prioritizes the needs and interests of her constituents. Her support for our Great Lakes has been invaluable to me as we work to sustain important restoration efforts in the area.

Mr. Speaker, the entire House is lucky to have such a distinguished colleague as Ms. KAPTUR. As we celebrate this historic milestone, I salute Representative MARCY KAPTUR on her service.

HONORING THE MEMORY AND SERVICE OF OFFICER GREGGORY JONATHAN CASILLAS

HON. NORMA J. TORRES

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 14, 2018

Mrs. TORRES. Mr. Speaker, on Friday March 9th, the brave men and women. of the Pomona Police Department responded to a short pursuit that resulted in a 15-hour long standoff in my hometown. Among those brave first responders was Officer Greggory Jonathan Casillas.

It is with more than a heavy heart that I stand here on the House floor to say that during that altercation, Officer Casillas was killed in the line of duty. I can't say much about the motives of the individual who committed this abhorrent crime, nor do I want to.

What I do want to do is focus on Officer Casillas and the incredible contributions he made to leave Pomona safer than it was before.

He made the ultimate sacrifice doing what he loved, and he will be missed dearly. He is survived not only by his parents, brothers, wife, five-month old and four-year old sons, but also by every single law enforcement officer of the Pomona Police Department and every member of our community.

Casillas knew his calling early on: to one day become a Pomona Police Officer. In March of 2015, he set out on this pursuit and joined the Pomona PD as a records specialist. Casillas would go on to work his way up through the department, prudently learning every detail at every step. On November 2015, he became a jailer before eventually becoming a Pomona police recruit, putting him one step closer to attending the police academy.

Officer Casillas intentionally took on these varying roles within the department because he was eager to learn and wanted to become the best version of himself to prepare him for the role of officer.

Colleagues recall Casillas diligently studying officer reports so he could learn how to write them—he was known for always carrying flashcards of penal codes and books to prepare for the police officer exam.

He was honest, dedicated, and determined. He never lost hope nor sight of his dreams.

And last September, that relentless determination led him to graduate from the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department Academy Class No. 207. He accomplished his goal of becoming a Pomona Police Officer.

Officer Casillas was in the final stages of finishing his field training, which would have allowed him to ride on his own without a training officer—a self-imposed final hurdle for achieving his ultimate goal of riding solo.

But in my opinion, he achieved his goal nearly four years ago when he decided to join the Pomona Police Department. It takes a special kind of unyielding dedication for someone to be willing to put their lives at risk every single day that they put on a uniform.

Casillas was this type of individual.

Officer Casillas accomplished his goal long ago and surpassed it.

The hundreds of people that gathered for multiple vigils in his memory is evidence.

The young generation of police recruits that he has inspired by leading by example is proof.

He selflessly left his family at home to protect our community. His memory and spirit will live on, and we are eternally grateful for his sacrifice. May he rest in peace.

SWIMMING PRO AND SPECIAL OLYMPIAN, MEG NORMAN

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 14, 2018

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, every individual finds their refuge and sanctuary in different places. Meg Norman finds hers in the swimming pool. Rightfully so, as Meg is a fierce swimming competitor and an even fiercer lover of life.

At the age of two, Meg appeared on the autism spectrum. Her mom, Joan, said being doted on by her older siblings helped boost her confidence. And boost her confidence it did. Meg has no hesitation jumping into a pool to compete in races. Her competitors don't even stand a chance when she pushes off that pool wall. Her recipe for success? Practicing hard, having a lot of fun and always smiling. Meg is determined to succeed every time she jumps into the pool and that's aided by focusing on winning and keeping a positive attitude.

Meg is a competitor in the Special Olympics and as you can imagine, has been very successful. The Special Olympics has given her an outlet to compete in a sport she loves and she has thrived during every moment. Meg's competitive spirit has driven her motivation to succeed and also helped her to win several titles and medals throughout her life.

When you can't find Meg at the pool swimming laps, you can find her working in the Special Olympics office. At the office, she devotes her time to helping staff with various projects, which comes as a huge help.

Meg's ''can-do'' attitude and joyful spirit is one to be admired. Her success in and out of the pool can be attributed to hard work and her own sense of determination. Nothing can get Meg down. That is why the pool is her sanctuary.

I am honored to say Meg is a Special Olympian from Houston, Texas. As Texans and Houstonians, we pride ourselves in our hard work and determination to do something great with our lives. Meg has certainly lived up to both of those qualities, and I'm proud to be able to spread her story today. Just keep swimming, Meg.

And that's just the way it is.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOSEPH CROWLEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 14, 2018

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, on March 13, I was absent for recorded votes No. 102 and No. 103. Had I been present, I would have voted as follows: on Roll Call No. 102 I would have voted NO; and on Roll Call No. 103 I would have voted YES.

HONORING CERRO COSO COMMUNITY COLLEGE FOR 45 YEARS OF SERVICE

HON. KEVIN McCARTHY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 14, 2018

Mr. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 45th anniversary of Cerro Coso Community College.

Established in the fall of 1973 as a separate college within the Kern Community College District, Cerro Coso grew quickly from its humble roots in the Indian Wells Valley community of Ridgecrest to representing the largest service area of any community college in the State of California. Today, the college serves an incredible 18,000 square miles of desert, mountain, and valley communities in eastern California at eight sites across Kern, Inyo, and Mono counties.

Cerro Coso has defined itself as the premiere community college in the eastern region of the Congressional District I represent, offering over 180 classes each semester and nineteen two-year degree programs, all of which have been accessible online since 1997. A source of great pride for the Indian Wells Valley, Cerro Coso has dedicated its mission to serving students who deserve an education regardless of financial or personal status. In what has become known as the ''Cerro Coso Promise,'' the college offers financial support to its student body, assisting with tuition and books so that students can achieve their educational goals regardless of financial barriers. The work accomplished at Cerro Coso is invaluable and truly vital to the community it serves.

I am incredibly proud of the faculty, administrators, and educators who have made Cerro Coso Community College into the educational powerhouse it is today in our community. The work these dedicated individuals have done has touched the lives of thousands of students, providing them the skills and knowledge to succeed in any endeavor they pursue. As a former trustee of the Kern Community College District and currently a proud Representative of the college and the Ridgecrest community, I look forward to continuing to watch Cerro Coso's growth and achievements in the years to come. Go Coyotes.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Thursday, March 15, 2018 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

MARCH 20

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine United States Strategic Command in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2019 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SH–216

10 a.m.

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

To hold an oversight hearing to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2019 for the Department of Energy.

SD–366

Committee on Environment and Public Works

Subcommittee on Clean Air and Nuclear Safety

To hold hearings to examine the nomination of John L. Ryder, of Tennessee, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Tennessee Valley Authority.

SD–406

Committee on Finance

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of John J. Bartrum, of Indiana, to be an Assistant Secretary, and Lynn A. Johnson, of Colorado, to be Assistant Secretary for Family Support, both of the Department of Health and Human Services.

SD–215

Committee on the Judiciary

To hold hearings to examine the need to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act.

SD–226

10:30 a.m.

Committee on Foreign Relations

Business meeting to consider S. Res. 85, calling on the Government of Iran to fulfill repeated promises of assistance in the case of Robert Levinson, the longest held United States civilian in our Nation's history, S. Res. 224, recognizing the 5th anniversary of the death of Oswaldo Paya Sardinas, and commemorating his legacy and commitment to democratic values and principles, S. Res. 376, urging the Governments of Burma and Bangladesh to ensure the safe, dignified, voluntary, and sustainable return of the Rohingya refugees who have been displaced by the campaign of ethnic cleansing conducted by the Burmese military, S. Res. 426, supporting the goals of International Women's Day, S. Res. 429, commemorating the 59th anniversary of Tibet's 1959 uprising as ''Tibetan Rights Day'', and expressing support for the human rights and religious freedom of the Tibetan people and the Tibetan Buddhist faith community, S. Res. 432, congratulating the Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania on the 100th anniversary of their declarations of independence, H.R. 1660, to direct the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development to submit to Congress a report on the development and use of global health innovations in the programs, projects, and activities of the Agency, extradition Treaty between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Kosovo (the ''Treaty''), signed at Pristina on March 29, 2016 (Treaty Doc. 115–02), the Treaty between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Kiribati on the Delimitation of Maritime Boundaries, signed at Majuro on September 6, 2013, and the Treaty between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Federated States of Micronesia on the Delimitation of a Maritime Boundary, signed at Koror on August 1, 2014 (Treaty Doc. 114–13), extradition Treaty between the United States of America and the Republic of Serbia (the ''Treaty''), signed at Belgrade on August 15, 2016 (Treaty Doc. 115–01), the United Nations Convention on the Assignment of Receivables in International Trade, done at New York on December 12, 2001, and signed by the United States on December 30, 2003 (Treaty Doc. 114–07), and the nominations of Erik Bethel, of Florida, to be United States Alternate Executive Director of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, Judy Lynn Shelton, of Virginia, to be United States Director of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, Kevin Edward Moley, of Arizona, to be an Assistant Secretary (International Organization Affairs), Robert Frank Pence, of Virginia, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Finland, and Trevor D. Traina, of California, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Austria, all of the Department of State, and Josephine Olsen, of Maryland, to be Director of the Peace Corps.

S–116

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Armed Services

Subcommittee on SeaPower

To hold hearings to examine Marine Corps ground modernization in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2019 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SR–232A

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

Subcommittee on Consumer Protection, Product Safety, Insurance, and Data Security

To hold hearings to examine an update on National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and automaker efforts to repair defective Takata air bag inflators.

SR–253

MARCH 21

10 a.m.

Committee on Environment and Public Works

To hold an oversight hearing to examine the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

SD–406

Committee on the Judiciary

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Michael Y. Scudder, of Illinois, and Amy J. St. Eve, of Illinois, both to be a United States Circuit Judge for the Seventh Circuit, and Charles J. Williams, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Iowa.

SD–226

10:30 a.m.

Committee on the Budget

To hold hearings to examine the Economic Report of the President.

SD–608

2 p.m.
Committee on Veterans' Affairs
To hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2019 for veterans' programs and fiscal year 2020 advance appropriations requests.
SR–418

2:30 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on SeaPower
To hold hearings to examine Navy shipbuilding programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2019 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SR–232A

Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Strategic Forces
To hold hearings to examine ballistic missile defense policies and programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2019 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SR–222

Committee on Indian Affairs
To hold an oversight hearing to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2019 for Indian Programs.
SD–628

MARCH 22

10 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
To hold hearings to examine the challenges in the Department of Energy's atomic energy defense programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2019 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SH–216

Daily Digest

HIGHLIGHTS

Senate passed S. 2155, Economic Growth, Regulatory Relief, and Consumer Protection Act, as amended.

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S1695–S1739

Measures Introduced: Twelve bills and three resolutions were introduced, as follows: S. 2544–2555, and S. Res. 434–436. **Page S1735**

Measures Passed:

Economic Growth, Regulatory Relief, and Consumer Protection Act: By 67 yeas to 31 nays (Vote No. 54), Senate passed S. 2155, to promote economic growth, provide tailored regulatory relief, and enhance consumer protections, after taking action on the following amendments and motions proposed thereto: **Pages S1696–S1729, S1729–30**

Adopted:

By 67 yeas to 31 nays (Vote No. 51), McConnell (for Crapo) Modified Amendment No. 2151, in the nature of a substitute. **Page S1729**

Withdrawn:

Crapo Amendment No. 2152 (to Amendment No. 2151), of a perfecting nature. **Page S1729**

During consideration of this measure today, Senate also took the following action:

By 67 yeas to 31 nays (Vote No. 52), three-fifths of those Senators duly chosen and sworn, having voted in the affirmative, Senate agreed to the motion to close further debate on the bill. **Page S1729**

By 67 yeas to 31 nays (Vote No. 53), three-fifths of those Senators duly chosen and sworn, having voted in the affirmative, Senate agreed to the motion to waive all applicable sections of Congressional Budget Act of 1974 and applicable budget resolutions, with respect to the bill. Subsequently, the point of order that the bill was in violation of section 4106 of H. Con. Res. 71, establishing the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2018 and setting forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2019 through 2027, was not sustained, and thus the point of order fell. **Page S1730**

Girl Scouts of the United States of America 106th Birthday: Senate agreed to S. Res. 436, recognizing the Girl Scouts of the United States of America on its 106th birthday and affirming the importance of leadership development for girls. **Page S1738**

Edward T. Schafer Agricultural Research Center: Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry was discharged from further consideration of H.R. 2154, to rename the Red River Valley Agricultural Research Center in Fargo, North Dakota, as the Edward T. Schafer Agricultural Research Center, and the bill was then passed. **Page S1739**

Measures Considered:

Allow States And Victims To Fight Online Sex Trafficking Act—Cloture: Senate began consideration of the motion to proceed to consideration of H.R. 1865, to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to clarify that section 230 of such Act does not prohibit the enforcement against providers and users of interactive computer services of Federal and State criminal and civil law relating to sexual exploitation of children or sex trafficking. **Page S1731**

A motion was entered to close further debate on the motion to proceed to consideration of the bill, and, in accordance with the provisions of Rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, a vote on cloture will occur on Monday, March 19, 2018. **Page S1731**

Prior to the consideration of this measure, Senate took the following action:

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to Legislative Session. **Page S1731**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing for further consideration of the motion to proceed to consideration of the bill at approximately 10 a.m., on Thursday, March 15, 2018. **Page S1739**

House Messages:

Eliminating Government-funded Oil-painting Act: Senate agreed to the motion to concur in the amendments of the House to S. 188, to amend title 31, United States Code, to prohibit the use of Federal funds for the costs of painting portraits of officers and employees of the Federal Government.

Pages S1738–39

McAleenan Nomination—Agreement: Senate resumed consideration of the nomination of Kevin K. McAleenan, of Hawaii, to be Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security. **Pages S1730–31**

During consideration of this nomination today, Senate also took the following action:

By 79 yeas to 19 nays (Vote No. 55), Senate agreed to the motion to close further debate on the nomination. **Pages S1730–31**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that notwithstanding Rule XXII, all post-cloture time on the nomination be considered expired, and Senate vote on confirmation of the nomination at 5:30 p.m., on Monday, March 19, 2018.

Page S1731

Nomination Received: On Thursday, March 8, 2018, Senate received the following nomination:

1 Coast Guard nomination in the rank of admiral.

Page S1739

Nomination Confirmed: Senate confirmed the following nomination:

Jeffrey DeWit, of Arizona, to be Chief Financial Officer, National Aeronautics and Space Administration. **Page S1739**

Messages from the House: **Page S1733**

Measures Referred: **Page S1733**

Measures Placed on the Calendar: **Page S1733**

Executive Communications: **Pages S1733–34**

Petitions and Memorials: **Page S1734**

Executive Reports of Committees: **Pages S1734–35**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages S1735–36**

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: **Pages S1736–38**

Authorities for Committees to Meet: **Page S1738**

Record Votes: Five record votes were taken today. (Total—55) **Pages S1729, S1730, S1731**

Adjournment: Senate convened at 9:30 a.m. and adjourned at 7:10 p.m., until 10 a.m. on Thursday, March 15, 2018. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Majority Leader in today's Record on page S1739.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION REQUEST AND FUTURE YEARS DEFENSE PROGRAM

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Strategic Forces concluded a hearing to examine Department of Energy atomic energy defense activities and programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2019 and the Future Years Defense Program, including continued actions needed to address management challenges, after receiving testimony from Lisa E. Gordon-Hagerty, Under Secretary for Nuclear Security, James M. Owendoff, Acting Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management, and Admiral James F. Caldwell Jr., USN, Deputy Administrator for Naval Reactors, National Nuclear Security Administration, all of the Department of Energy; and David C. Trimble, Director, Natural Resources and Environment, Government Accountability Office.

REBUILDING INFRASTRUCTURE IN AMERICA

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: Committee concluded a hearing to examine rebuilding infrastructure in America, focusing on Administration perspectives, after receiving testimony from Elaine L. Chao, Secretary of Transportation; Wilbur L. Ross, Secretary of Commerce; R. Alexander Acosta, Secretary of Labor; Sonny Perdue, Secretary of Agriculture; and Rick Perry, Secretary of Energy.

AGRICULTURE CREATES REAL EMPLOYMENT ACT

Committee on Environment and Public Works: Committee concluded a hearing to examine an original bill entitled, ''the Agriculture Creates Real Employment (ACRE) Act'', after receiving testimony from Doug Miyamoto, Wyoming Department of Agriculture Director, Cheyenne; Ryan Yates, American Farm Bureau Federation, Washington, D.C.; and Jim Lyons, Center for American Progress, Edgewater, Maryland.

SOMALIA

Committee on Foreign Relations: Subcommittee on Africa and Global Health Policy concluded a hearing to examine Somalia's current security and stability status, after receiving testimony from Abdirashid Hashi, Heritage Institute for Policy Studies, Mogadishu, Somalia; Tricia Bacon, American University School of Public Affairs, Alexandria, Virginia; and Mark A. Yarnell, Refugees International, and E.J. Hogendoorn, International Crisis Group, both of Washington, D.C.

FOOD SECURITY

Committee on Foreign Relations: Subcommittee on Multilateral International Development, Multilateral Institutions, and International Economic, Energy, and Environmental Policy concluded a hearing to examine food security, after receiving testimony from Mathew Nims, Director, Office of Food for Peace, United States Agency for International Development; David Beasley, United Nations World Food Program, Society Hill, South Carolina; Chase Sova, World Food Program USA, Washington, D.C.; Lieutenant General John Castellaw, USMC (Ret.), Farmspace Systems LLC, Crockett Mills, Tennessee; and Michelle Nunn, CARE USA, Atlanta, Georgia.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions: Committee ordered favorably reported the nominations of John F. Ring, of the District of Columbia, to be a Member of the National Labor Relations Board, Frank T. Brogan, of Pennsylvania, to be Assistant Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education, and Mark Schneider, of the District of Columbia, to be Director of the Institute of Education Science, both of the Department of Education, and Marco M. Rajkovich, Jr., of Kentucky, to be a Member of the Federal Mine Safety and Health Review Commission.

OPIOIDS IN INDIAN COUNTRY

Committee on Indian Affairs: Committee concluded an oversight hearing to examine opioids in Indian country, after receiving testimony from John C. Anderson, United States Attorney for the District of New Mexico, Department of Justice; Christopher M. Jones, Director, National Mental Health and Substance Use Policy Laboratory, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, and Rear Admiral Michael E. Toedt, Chief Medical Officer, Indian Health Service, both of the Department of Health and Human Services; Jolene George, Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe, Kingston, Washington; and Sam Moose, Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, Bemidji, Minnesota, on behalf of the National Indian Health Board.

PARKLAND SHOOTING AND SCHOOL SAFETY OVERSIGHT

Committee on the Judiciary: Committee concluded an oversight hearing to examine the Parkland shooting and legislative proposals to improve school safety, including S. 2135, to enforce current law regarding the National Instant Criminal Background Check System, S. 2502, to address gun violence, improve the availability of records to the National Instant Criminal Background Check System, address mental illness in the criminal justice system, and end straw purchases and trafficking of illegal firearms, S. 1916, to prohibit the possession or transfer of certain firearm accessories, S. 1923, to prohibit firearms dealers from selling a firearm prior to the completion of a background check, S. 446, to allow reciprocity for the carrying of certain concealed firearms, S. 1212, to provide family members of an individual who they fear is a danger to himself, herself, or others, and law enforcement, with new tools to prevent gun violence, S. 2095, to regulate assault weapons, to ensure that the right to keep and bear arms is not unlimited, and S. 2495, to reauthorize the grant program for school security in the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, after receiving testimony from Senators Rubio and Nelson; Thomas E. Brandon, Acting Director, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, and David Bowdich, Deputy Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation, both of the Department of Justice; Lina Alathari, Chief, National Threat Assessment Center, Secret Service, Department of Homeland Security; Michael Beckerman, Internet Association, Washington, D.C.; and Ryan B. Petty, and Katherine Posada, both of Parkland, Florida.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship: Committee ordered favorably reported the following business items:

S. 526, to amend the Small Business Act to provide for expanded participation in the microloan program, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 791, to amend the Small Business Act to expand intellectual property education and training for small businesses;

S. 1538, to amend the Small Business Act to establish awareness of, and technical assistance for, the creation of employee stock ownership plans, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 1961, to amend the Small Business Act to temporarily reauthorize certain pilot programs under the Small Business Innovation Research Program and the Small Business Technology Transfer Program, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 1995, to amend the Small Business Investment Act of 1958 to improve the number of small business investment companies in underlicensed States;

S. 2283, to amend the Small Business Act to strengthen the Office of Credit Risk Management within the Small Business Administration, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 2419, to amend the Small Business Act to improve the technical and business assistance services

under the SBIR and STTR programs, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 2527, to amend the Small Business Investment Act of 1958 to increase the amount of leverage made available to small business investment companies; and

The nominations of David Christian Tryon, of Ohio, to be Chief Counsel for Advocacy, and Hannibal Ware, of the Virgin Islands, to be Inspector General, both of the Small Business Administration.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 24 public bills, H.R. 5268–5291; and 5 resolutions, H. Res. 799 and 781–784 were introduced.

Pages H1607–08

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages H1609–10**

Reports Filed: Reports were filed today as follows:

H.R. 3249, to authorize the Project Safe Neighborhoods Grant Program, and for other purposes, with an amendment (H. Rept. 115–597);

H.R. 3996, to amend title 28, United States Code, to permit other courts to transfer certain cases to United States Tax Court (H. Rept. 115–598);

H.R. 506, to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide an additional tool to prevent certain frauds against veterans, and for other purposes, with an amendment (H. Rept. 115–599); and

H. Res. 780, providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4061) to amend the Financial Stability Act of 2010 to improve the transparency of the Financial Stability Oversight Council, to improve the SIFI designation process, and for other purposes, and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4293) to reform the Comprehensive Capital Analysis and Review process, the Dodd-Frank Act Stress Test process, and for other purposes (H. Rept. 115–600).

Page H1607

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he appointed Representative Collins (GA) to act as Speaker pro tempore for today. **Page H1545**

Recess: The House recessed at 11:06 a.m. and reconvened at 12 noon. **Page H1552**

Guest Chaplain: The prayer was offered by the Guest Chaplain, Pastor Rodney David Cannon, Frostproof Church of God, Frostproof, FL. **Page H1552**

Recess: The House recessed at 1:48 p.m. and reconvened at 2:16 p.m. **Page H1566**

Suspensions: The House agreed to suspend the rules and pass the following measures:

Student, Teachers, and Officers Preventing School Violence Act of 2018: H.R. 4909, amended, to reauthorize the grant program for school security in the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, by a ⅔ yea-and-nay vote of 407 yeas to 10 nays, Roll No. 106; **Pages H1559–66, H1569**

Protecting Access to the Courts for Taxpayers Act: H.R. 3996, to amend title 28, United States Code, to permit other courts to transfer certain cases to United States Tax Court; **Page H1570**

Preventing Crimes Against Veterans Act: H.R. 506, amended, to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide an additional tool to prevent certain frauds against veterans; and **Pages H1570–73**

Project Safe Neighborhoods Grant Program Authorization Act: H.R. 3249, amended, to authorize the Project Safe Neighborhoods Grant Program.

Pages H1573–76

Taking Account of Institutions with Low Operation Risk Act: The House passed H.R. 1116, to require the Federal financial institutions regulatory agencies to take risk profiles and business models of institutions into account when taking regulatory actions, by a yea-and-nay vote of 247 yeas to 169 nays, Roll No. 108. **Pages H1554–59, H1576–85**

Rejected the Connolly motion to recommit the bill to the Committee on Financial Services with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith with an amendment, by a yea-and-nay vote of 182 yeas to 232 nays, Roll No. 107.

Pages H1584–85

Pursuant to the Rule, the amendment printed in part C of H. Rept. 115–595 shall be considered as adopted. **Page H1576**

H. Res. 773, the rule providing for consideration of the bills (H.R. 4545), (H.R. 1116), and (H.R. 4263) was agreed to by a recorded vote of 235 ayes to 182 noes, Roll No. 105, after the previous question was ordered by a yea-and-nay vote of 234 yeas to 183 nays, Roll No. 104. **Pages H1567–68**

Clerk Designation: Read a letter from the Clerk wherein she designated Mr. Robert Reeves, Deputy

Clerk, and Mr. Christopher Donesa, Legal Counsel, to sign any and all papers and do all other acts in case of her temporary absence or disability.

Pages H1585–86

Senate Referral: S. 2286 was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on Education and the Workforce. Page H1606

Senate Message: Message received from the Senate today appears on page H1573.

Quorum Calls Votes: Four yea-and-nay votes and one recorded vote developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H1567, H1567–68, H1569, H1584–85, and H1585. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 9:07 p.m.

Committee Meetings

APPROPRIATIONS—U.S. AIR FORCE

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Defense held a budget hearing on the U.S. Air Force. Testimony was heard from Heather Wilson, Secretary of the Air Force; and General David L. Goldfein, Chief of Staff of the Air Force.

APPROPRIATIONS—U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS AND BUREAU OF RECLAMATION

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development, and Related Agencies held a budget hearing on the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Bureau of Reclamation. Testimony was heard from R.D. James, Secretary of the Army for Civil Works, U.S. Army Corp of Engineers; Timothy Petty, Assistant Secretary for Water and Science, Department of the Interior; Lieutenant General Todd Semonite, Commanding General and Chief of Engineers, U.S. Army Corp of Engineers; and Brenda Burman, Commissioner, Bureau of Reclamation.

SPACE WARFIGHTING READINESS: POLICIES, AUTHORITIES, AND CAPABILITIES

Committee on Armed Services: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Space Warfighting Readiness: Policies, Authorities, and Capabilities''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE FY 2018 BUDGET REQUEST FOR SEA POWER AND PROJECTION FORCES

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Seapower and Projection Forces held a hearing entitled ''Department of the Air Force FY 2018 Budget Request for Sea Power and Projection Forces''. Testimony was heard from Lieutenant General Jerry D. Harris, Jr., Deputy Chief of Staff for Strategic Plans and Programs, Headquarters U.S. Air Force; Lieutenant General Mark C. Nowland, Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations, Plans and Requirements, Headquarters U.S. Air Force; and William Roper, Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Acquisition, Headquarters U.S. Air Force.

A REVIEW AND ASSESSMENT OF THE FISCAL YEAR 2019 BUDGET REQUEST FOR DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY PROGRAMS

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities held a hearing entitled ''A Review and Assessment of the Fiscal Year 2019 Budget Request for Department of Defense Science and Technology Programs''. Testimony was heard from Rear Admiral Upper Half David Hahn, Chief of Naval Research; Mary Miller, Performing the Duties of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering; Tom Russell, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army for Research and Technology; Jeff Stanley, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Science, Technology, and Engineering; and Steve Walker, Director, Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency.

CBO OVERSIGHT: PERSPECTIVES FROM OUTSIDE EXPERTS

Committee on the Budget: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''CBO Oversight: Perspectives from Outside Experts''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

DOE MODERNIZATION: LEGISLATION ADDRESSING CYBERSECURITY AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Energy held a hearing entitled ''DOE Modernization: Legislation Addressing Cybersecurity and Emergency Response''. Testimony was heard from Mark Menezes, Under Secretary, Department of Energy; Zachary Tudor, Associate Laboratory Director for National and Homeland Security, Idaho National Laboratory; Tristan Vance, Director, Chief Energy Officer, Office of Energy Development, Indiana; and public witnesses.

REAUTHORIZATION OF ANIMAL DRUG USER FEES: ADUFA AND AGDUFA

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Health held a hearing entitled ''Reauthorization of Animal Drug User Fees: ADUFA and AGDUFA''. Testimony was heard from Steven Solomon, Director,

Center for Veterinary Medicine, Food and Drug Administration; and public witnesses.

EXAMINING THE CRYPTOCURRENCIES AND ICO MARKETS

Committee on Financial Services: Subcommittee on Capital Markets, Securities, and Investment held a hearing entitled "Examining the Cryptocurrencies and ICO Markets". Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

MODERNIZING EXPORT CONTROLS: PROTECTING CUTTING-EDGE TECHNOLOGY AND U.S. NATIONAL SECURITY

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Full Committee held a hearing entitled "Modernizing Export Controls: Protecting Cutting-Edge Technology and U.S. National Security". Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Natural Resources: Full Committee held a markup on H.R. 401, to designate the mountain at the Devils Tower National Monument, Wyoming, as Devils Tower, and for other purposes; H.R. 3008, the "George W. Bush Childhood Home Study Act"; H.R. 4609, the "West Fork Fire Station Act of 2017"; H.R. 4851, the "Kennedy-King Establishment Act of 2018"; S. 35, the "Black Hills National Cemetery Boundary Expansion Act"; and S. 466, a bill to clarify the description of certain Federal land under the Northern Arizona Land Exchange and Verde River Basin Partnership Act of 2005 to include additional land in the Kaibab National Forest. H.R. 401, H.R. 3008, H.R. 4609, and S. 35 were ordered reported, without amendment. H.R. 4851 and S. 466 were ordered reported, as amended.

SHINING LIGHT ON THE FEDERAL REGULATORY PROCESS

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Full Committee held a hearing entitled "Shining Light on the Federal Regulatory Process". Testimony was heard from Kris Nguyen, Acting Director, Strategic Issues Division, Government Accountability Office; and public witnesses.

STATE OF PLAY: FEDERAL IT IN 2018

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Subcommittee on Information Technology; and Subcommittee on Government Operations held a joint hearing entitled "State of Play: Federal IT in 2018". Testimony was heard from David Powner, Director of IT Management Issues, Government Accountability Office; Margaret Weichert, Deputy Director for Management, Office of Management and Budget; Bill Zielinski, Deputy Assistant Commissioner of the IT Category, General Services Administration; and Jeanette Manfra, Assistant Secretary for the Office of Cybersecurity and Communications, Department of Homeland Security.

FINANCIAL STABILITY OVERSIGHT COUNCIL IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2017; STRESS TEST IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2017

Committee on Rules: Full Committee held a hearing on H.R. 4061, the "Financial Stability Oversight Council Improvement Act of 2017"; and H.R. 4293, the "Stress Test Improvement Act of 2017". The Committee granted, by voice vote, a closed rule for H.R. 4061. The rule provides one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Financial Services. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the bill. The rule provides that an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 115–64, modified by the amendment printed in part A of the Rules Committee report, shall be considered as adopted and the bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. The rule waives all points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended. The rule provides one motion to recommit with or without instructions. In section 2, the rule provides for the consideration of H.R. 4293 under a closed rule. The rule provides one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Financial Services. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the bill. The rule provides that an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 115–63, modified by the amendment printed in part B of the Rules Committee report, shall be considered as adopted and the bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. The rule waives all points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended. The rule provides one motion to recommit with or without instructions. Testimony was heard from Chairman Hensarling and Representative Lynch.

NATIONAL LABORATORIES: WORLD-LEADING INNOVATION IN SCIENCE

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology: Full Committee held a hearing entitled "National Laboratories: World-Leading Innovation in Science". Testimony was heard from Paul Kearns, Director, Argonne National Laboratory; Chi-Chang Kao, Director, Stanford Linear Accelerator Center, National Accelerator Laboratory; Mark Peters, Director, Idaho National Laboratory; Susan Seestrom, Advanced Science and Technology Associate Labs Director and Chief Research Officer, Sandia National Laboratory,

and Mary E. Mixon, Associate Laboratory Director for Biosciences, Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Small Business: Full Committee held a markup on H.R. 4743, the ''Small Business 7(a) Lending Oversight Reform Act of 2018''; H.R. 5178, the ''Puerto Rico Small Business Contracting Assistance Act of 2018''; H.R. 3170, the ''Small Business Development Center Cyber Training Act of 2017''; H.R. 4668, the ''Small Business Advanced Cybersecurity Enhancements Act of 2017''; H.R. 2655, the ''Small Business Innovation Protection Act of 2017''; and H.R. 5236, the ''Main Street Employee Ownership Act of 2018''. H.R. 4743, H.R. 4668, and H.R. 5236 were ordered reported, as amended. H.R. 5178, H.R. 3170, and H.R. 2655 were ordered reported, without amendment.

REVIEW OF FISCAL YEAR 2019 BUDGET REQUEST FOR THE COAST GUARD AND MARITIME TRANSPORTATION PROGRAMS

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure: Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation held a hearing entitled ''Review of Fiscal Year 2019 Budget Request for the Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Programs''. Testimony was heard from Admiral Paul F. Zukunft, Commandant, U.S. Coast Guard; Master Chief Steven W. Cantrell, Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard; Rear Admiral Mark H. Buzby, U.S. Navy (Ret.), Administrator, Maritime Administration, Department of Transportation; and Michael A. Khouri, Acting Chairman, Federal Maritime Commission.

POST TAX REFORM EVALUATION OF RECENTLY EXPIRED TAX PROVISIONS

Committee on Ways and Means: Subcommittee on Tax Policy held a hearing entitled ''Post Tax Reform Evaluation of Recently Expired Tax Provisions''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

Joint Meetings

VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS LEGISLATIVE PRESENTATION

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs concluded a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation of multiple veterans service organizations, after receiving testimony from Verdie Bowen, Alaska Office of Veterans Affairs, Anchorage, on behalf of the National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs; William E. Starkey, Fleet Reserve Association, Glassboro, New Jersey; Paul D. Warner, Jewish War Veterans, Eastchester, New York; Chief Master Sergeant Jeffrey Ledoux, USAF (Ret.), Air Force Sergeants Association, Benton, Louisiana; Paul L. Mimms, Blinded Veterans Association, Kansas City, Missouri; Neil Van Ess, Military Order of the Purple Heart, Totowa, New Jersey; Commander Rene A. Campos, USN (Ret.), Military Officers Association of America, Alexandria, Virginia; Master Sergeant John Adams, USAF (Ret.), The Retired Enlisted Association, Colorado Springs, Colorado; and Cyndie Gibson, Gold Star Wives of America, Inc., Cibolo, Texas.

BUSINESS MEETING

Joint Select Committee on Solvency of Multiemployer Pension Plans: Committee adopted its rules of procedure for the 115th Congress.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR THURSDAY, MARCH 15, 2018

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

Committee on Armed Services: to hold hearings to examine United States Pacific Command in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2019 and the Future Years Defense Program, 9:30 a.m., SD–G50.

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources: business meeting to consider the nomination of James Reilly, of Colorado, to be Director of the United States Geological Survey, Department of the Interior; to be immediately followed by a hearing to examine the nominations of Theodore J. Garrish, of Maryland, to be an Assistant Secretary (International Affairs), and James Edward Campos, of Nevada, to be Director of the Office of Minority Economic Impact, both of the Department of Energy, 10 a.m., SD–366.

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions: to hold hearings to examine perspectives on the 340B Drug Discount Program, 10 a.m., SD–430.

Committee on the Judiciary: business meeting to consider the nominations of Joel M. Carson III, of New Mexico, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Tenth Circuit, Colm F. Connolly, and Maryellen Noreika, both to be a United States District Judge for the District of Delaware, William F. Jung, to be United States District Judge for the Middle District of Florida, Ryan T. Holte, of Ohio, to be a Judge of the United States Court of Federal Claims, Jonathan F. Mitchell, of Washington, to be Chairman of the Administrative Conference of the United States, and William M. McSwain, to be United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, Matthew D. Harris, to be United States Marshal for the District of Utah, Johnny Lee Kuhlman, to be United States Marshal for the Western District of Oklahoma, Joseph D. McClain, to be United States Marshal for the Southern District of Indiana, and David A. Weaver, to be United

States Marshal for the District of Colorado, all of the Department of Justice, 10 a.m., SD–226.

Select Committee on Intelligence: to hold hearings to examine the nomination of Lieutenant General Paul M. Nakasone, to be Director of the National Security Agency, Department of Defense, 10 a.m., SH–216.

House

Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Defense, budget hearing on the U.S. Army, 10 a.m., H–140 Capitol.

Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies, budget hearing on the Department of Veterans Affairs, 10 a.m., 2362–A Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development, and Related Agencies, budget hearing on the Department of Energy, 10 a.m., 2362–B Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies, budget hearing on the Department of Health and Human Services, 10 a.m., 2358–C Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies, budget hearing on the Office of the Inspector General, Department of Agriculture, 1:30 p.m., 2362–A Rayburn.

Committee on Armed Services, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Security Challenges in Europe and Posture for Inter-state Competition with Russia'', 10 a.m., 2118 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Tactical Air and Land Forces, hearing entitled ''Fiscal Year 2019 Budget Request on Air Force Airborne Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) Programs'', 2 p.m., 2212 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Strategic Forces, hearing entitled ''Fiscal Year 2019 Budget Request for National Security Space Programs'', 3:30 p.m., 2118 Rayburn.

Committee on Education and the Workforce, Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Development, hearing entitled ''Strengthening Access and Accountability to Work in Welfare Programs'', 10 a.m., 2175 Rayburn.

Committee on Financial Services, Subcommittee on Monetary Policy and Trade, hearing entitled ''Evaluating CFIUS: Administration Perspectives'', 10 a.m., 2128 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Terrorism and Illicit Finance, hearing entitled ''After the Breach: the Monetization and Illicit Use of Stolen Data'', 2 p.m., 2128 Rayburn.

Committee on Foreign Affairs, Full Committee, markup on H. Res. 644, strongly condemning the slave auctions of migrants and refugees in Libya, and for other purposes; H.R. 4681, the ''No Assistance for Assad Act''; H.R. 4744, the ''Iran Human Rights and Hostage-Taking Accountability Act''; and H. Con. Res. 111, recognizing and supporting the efforts of the United Bid Committee to bring the 2026 Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) World Cup competition to Canada, Mexico, and the United States, 9:30 a.m., 2172 Rayburn.

Committee on Homeland Security, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Preparedness, Response, and Rebuilding: Lessons from the 2017 Disasters'', 10:30 a.m., HVC–210.

Subcommittee on Border and Maritime Security, hearing entitled ''Bang for the Border Security Buck: What do we get for $33 billion?'', 2 p.m., HVC–210.

Committee on Natural Resources, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Policy Priorities at the Department of the Interior and the Administration's Fiscal Year 2019 Budget Proposal'', 10 a.m., 1324 Longworth.

Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources, hearing entitled ''Abandoned Hardrock Mines and the Role of Non-Governmental Entities'', 2 p.m., 1324 Longworth.

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Full Committee, markup on H.R. 50, the ''Unfunded Mandates Information and Transparency Act of 2017''; H.R. 1339, the ''Freedom from Government Competition Act of 2017''; H.R. 2846, the ''Federal Agency Customer Experience Act of 2017''; H.R. 4809, the ''GOOD Act''; legislation on the Office of Government Information Services Empowerment Act of 2018; H.R. 1376, the ''Electronic Message Preservation Act of 2017''; H.R. 3303, the ''First Responder Fair RETIRE Act''; H.R. 4446, to amend the Virgin Islands of the United States Centennial Commission Act to extend the expiration date of the Commission, and for other purposes; H.R. 2979, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 390 West 5th Street in San Bernardino, California, as the ''Jack H. Brown Post Office Building''; H.R. 4574, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 108 West Schick Road in Bloomingdale, Illinois, as the ''Bloomingdale Veterans Memorial Post Office Building''; H.R. 4722, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 111 Market Street in Saugerties, New York, as the ''Maurice D. Hinchey Post Office Building''; H.R. 4840, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 567 East Franklin Street in Oviedo, Florida, as the ''Sergeant First Class Alwyn Crendall Cashe Post Office Building''; H.R. 4890, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 9801 Apollo Drive in Upper Marlboro, Maryland, as the ''Wayne K. Curry Post Office Building''; H.R. 4960, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 511 East Walnut Street in Columbia, Missouri, as the ''Spc. Sterling William Wyatt Post Office Building''; S. 931, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 4910 Brighton Boulevard in Denver, Colorado, as the ''George Sakato Post Office''; H.R. 1496, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 4040 West Washington Boulevard in Los Angeles, California, as the ''Marvin Gaye Post Office''; and H.R. 3184, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 180 McCormick Road in Charlottesville, Virginia, as the ''Captain Humayun Khan Post Office'', 10 a.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on the Interior, Energy, and Environment, hearing entitled ''An Examination of Federal Permitting Processes'', 2 p.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''An Overview of the National Science Foundation Budget Proposal for Fiscal Year 2019'', 10 a.m., 2318 Rayburn.

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment, hearing entitled ''Building a 21st Century Infrastructure for America: Water Resources Projects and Policy'', 10 a.m., 2167 Rayburn.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Subcommittee on Health, hearing entitled ''FY 2019 Department of Veterans Affairs Budget Request for the Veterans Health Administration'', 10 a.m., 334 Cannon.

Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs; and Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity, joint hearing entitled ''U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Fiscal Year 2019 Budget: Veterans Benefits Administration and the Board of Veterans' Appeals'', 2 p.m., 334 Cannon.

Next Meeting of the **SENATE**

10 a.m., Thursday, March 15

Senate Chamber

Program for Thursday: Senate will continue consideration of the motion to proceed to consideration of H.R. 1865, Allow States and Victims to Fight Online Sex Trafficking Act.

Next Meeting of the **HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

10 a.m., Thursday, March 15

House Chamber

Program for Thursday: Complete consideration of H.R. 4545—Financial Institutions Examination Fairness and Reform Act and H.R. 4263—Regulation A+ Improvement Act.

Extensions of Remarks, as inserted in this issue

HOUSE

Babin, Brian, Tex., E309
Beatty, Joyce, Ohio, E312
Carson, André, Ind., E310
Crowley, Joseph, N.Y., E313
Dingell, Debbie, Mich., E310, E311
Graves, Sam, Mo., E310
Gutiérrez, Luis V., Ill., E311
Higgins, Brian, N.Y., E311
Langevin, James R., R.I., E311
Lipinski, Daniel, Ill., E309
Loudermilk, Barry, Ga., E312
Luetkemeyer, Blaine, Mo., E309, E312
Lujan Grisham, Michelle, N.M., E310
McCarthy, Kevin, Calif., E314
McCollum, Betty, Minn., E313
Poe, Ted, Tex., E310, E312, E313
Rogers, Harold, Ky., E309
Ryan, Tim, Ohio, E311
Stefanik, Elise M., N.Y., E312
Torres, Norma J., Calif., E313
Velázquez, Nydia M., N.Y., E311

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