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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER. 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.

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION SHOULD INVESTIGATE ILLEGAL INSIDER TRADING BY CARL ICAHN

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

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. Mr. Speaker, last week I wrote a letter to Jay Clayton, the chairman of the Securities and Exchange Commission, asking him about this guy.

This is Carl Icahn, the billionaire, financier, and buddy of our President Donald Trump.

It seems that he had a massive amount of stock in a company that sells cranes and equipment, which, in case you didn't know, are made of a lot of steel. Then all of a sudden, Mr. Icahn sold his position in the crane and equipment maker; and 1 week later, his friend, buddy, pal, and fellow billionaire, Donald Trump, announced he was proposing import tariffs on steel and aluminum.

Now, we all know what happens to the stock of companies heavily dependent on steel and aluminum when the President announces he will impose

new tariffs. Their stock prices go down a lot.

So I guess you could say that Carl Icahn was lucky to unload his shares, valued at, at least, \$31 million, just before the President made his announcement, but I suspect that luck had nothing to do with it.

Here is a Trump insider making a gigantic decision on tens of millions of dollars, and we are just supposed to believe it is a coincidence.

Sorry, but I am not buying it.

So I wrote the chairman of the SEC to request that he investigate. I have not heard back from him, but I hope after he hears this speech, he might have a change of mind.

In the letter, I said: "The announcement of tariffs on the heels of Mr. Icahn's stock sale is highly suspicious. The close relationship between the President and Mr. Icahn adds to the appearance of wrongdoing."

So I think the SEC has an obligation to investigate, because it looks bad. We are talking about the President of the United States, and the people have a right to know that things are on the up and up.

Let's remember that Mr. Icahn left as an adviser to Trump at the White House because, we are told, it would raise difficult conflicts of interest, and presumably, just like the President, Mr. Icahn was not interested in selling off part of his empire just so he could appear impartial and demonstrate core integrity to the American people.

The President, who many of us think is profiting illegally from the office—and we have filed Articles of Impeachment because of it—seems to attract a lot of people with deep pockets and shallow reserves of judgment to his side.

Mr. Icahn, who was a notorious corporate raider and vulture capitalist during the Clinton boom years of the 1990s, appears to me and a lot of others to fit this mold.

If there is nothing to hide in this deal, then the investigation will be quick and that will be that, but simply saying this multimillion-dollar stroke of luck was just a coincidence is not flying; not with me, anyway.

Do you know the rigorous reporting of assets that we as House Members have to do to fully disclose our debts and investments?

And all those disclosures are available to the public, and the press goes over them with a fine-tooth comb. Every time a Member of Congress buys or sells a security over \$1,000, we have to file a form, and then that gets shared with the public. And if we are late with the filing of the paperwork, we have to pay a fine.

This may seem burdensome, but the important goal here is transparency and to ensure that Members are not using insider information they have access to to personally enrich themselves.

If I was as lucky as Carl Icahn to make a stock trade that my friend had the power to tell me the inside information on and it resulted in me making millions of dollars or avoiding losing millions of dollars, well, let's see, there would be investigative reporters, hearings, an Ethics Committee report, maybe even criminal charges. But for Mr. Icahn and his buddy, the President, nothing; at least not yet.

Let's demand that the friends who circle the White House and the Trump businesses provide the American people with answers and transparency. That is all we ask so that we can have greater confidence in our President and his family that they are not running a kleptocracy like we see in Russia, where those who govern are simply governing to make money.

Mr. Speaker, no tax returns; very little in the way of disclosure; recusals that don't seem to actually be recusals; hotel and business conflicts of interest; and the strong odor of something fishy;

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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those close to the President who are making millions, apparently because of the proximity to the President; those people demand scrutiny from watchdog agencies; and, in this case, it requires an investigation of Carl Icahn by the SEC.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD my letter to the Honorable Jay Clayton, the chairman of the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission, of last week.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, March 8, 2018.

Hon. JAY CLAYTON,
Chairman, U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN CLAYTON: I write to request that you and your agency immediately investigate possible illegal insider trading by Mr. Carl Icahn, a longtime friend of President Donald Trump, who according to his SEC filings sold \$31.3 million worth of stock in a company heavily dependent on steel just days before the President announced plans to impose import tariffs on steel and aluminum.

According to Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) filings submitted in February, Mr. Icahn disclosed that he sold nearly 1 million shares of Manitowoc Company, Inc., which is heavily dependent on steel to manufacture cranes and lifts. Approximately seven days later, his good friend President Trump announced plans to impose steep tariffs on steel imports. On that news, Manitowoc stock plunged and lost 6% of its value, but Mr. Icahn had already cashed out.

The announcement of tariffs on the heels of Mr. Icahn's stock sale is highly suspicious. The close relationship between the President and Mr. Icahn adds to the appearance of wrongdoing. This is also not the first time Mr. Icahn has been suspected of using his relationship with the President for his personal benefit. It was widely reported that Mr. Icahn stepped down from his role as "special adviser" to the President because of potential conflicts of interest.

As a member of the House of Representatives I am required to report my assets and liabilities yearly and to report within 30 days of a transaction any securities I buy or sell. The purpose of these rules is to ensure transparency and to help prevent personal profiteering from insider information that Members of Congress may have access to while serving. In other words, if I were to dump a stock a week before Congress took action that would impact that stock's price, I would most certainly be investigated resulting in possible sanctions, removal from office or jail time.

It is hard to believe Mr. Icahn's actions with regard to unloading voluminous shares of Manitowoc stock right before the President's is just a coincidence. It undoubtedly warrants a federal investigation. Thank you for your attention in this matter and I look forward to your agency taking swift action and your response to this request. To contact me about this request, please call me at my Washington DC office.

Sincerely,

LUIS V. GUTIÉRREZ,
Member of Congress.

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

WE SHOULD DEBATE A NEW AUMF REGARDING AMERICAN TROOPS IN AFGHANISTAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, 1 week ago, BARBARA LEE and TOM COLE sent a letter to the Speaker of the House that was signed by 100 Members of Congress, including myself, asking the Speaker to authorize the committees of jurisdiction to bring an AUMF—that is an Authorization for Use of Military Force—so that we can have a debate.

The last time we had a policy debate on Afghanistan was 2001, 17 years ago.

I have been on the floor for the last 5 years because I am frustrated that we can't get a debate. It is our constitutional duty. And our young men and women are around the world in different locations, half we don't even know about, yet we can't debate an issue of war when young men and women go and die for this country.

That 5 years included calling on John Boehner to authorize an AUMF. Now we are calling on PAUL RYAN. I think my name has been on 15 letters going back to the days of John Boehner.

In the 17 years, we have spent over \$1 trillion, over 2,300 Americans have died, and over 20,000 wounded; yet we in Congress are not meeting our constitutional responsibility.

I have Camp Lejeune in my district. I have talked to many Active Duty marines who have been there five, six, seven times. It is so chaotic now, that the Russians are working with Karzai and trying to get back in with the Taliban.

It is a no-win situation. It is time to have a debate and let Members vote whether they want to stay or come home.

Mr. Speaker, to make things worse than ever, on February 15, Pamela Constable wrote an article in The Washington Post titled, "Taliban appeals to American people to 'rationally' rethink war effort."

They are our enemy, but it is not bad advice, to be honest with you.

Pamela Constable mentions many portions of a longer letter written by the Taliban to the United States. I have a copy of this article and I read it yesterday.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD the article written by Pamela Constable.

[From the Washington Post, Feb. 14, 2018]
TALIBAN APPEALS TO AMERICAN PEOPLE TO
'RATIONALLY' RETHINK WAR EFFORT
(By Pamela Constable)

KABUL.—Taliban insurgents on Wednesday issued an extraordinary, 17,000-word appeal to the "American people," asking them to pressure U.S. officials to end the 16-year-old conflict in Afghanistan and asserting that the protracted American "occupation" had brought only death, corruption and drugs to the impoverished country.

The letter, whose authenticity was confirmed by a brief telephone conversation

with insurgent spokesman Zabiullah Mujahid, was primarily aimed at a U.S. audience. Unlike previous statements issued by the Taliban, it used statistics and logical arguments—not just ideological harangues—to convince Americans that their government's investment in the war has been a dire mistake.

"Prolonging the war in Afghanistan and maintaining American troop presence is neither beneficial for America nor for anyone else," the document said, calling on U.S. citizens, legislators and others to "read this letter prudently" and evaluate the costs and benefits of continuing to fight. "Stubbornly seeking the protraction of this war;" it added, "will have 'dreadful consequences' for the region and the 'stability of America herself.'"

The letter, sent under the banner of "The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan," was issued just weeks after a blitz of deadly insurgent attacks in the Afghan capital have left the government struggling to cope with increased public anxiety and anger. It also came as the Trump administration is ramping up a new military strategy, involving thousands of additional troops, to expand the Afghan security forces and train them to defend their country independently.

While insisting that "our preference is to solve the Afghan issue through peaceful dialogues," the letter also warned that Taliban forces "cannot be subdued by sheer force" and that seeking a peaceful solution does not mean "that we are exhausted or our will has been sapped."

This combination of outreach and threat has been a hallmark of Taliban statements, including a shorter one issued shortly after the spate of attacks last month that killed more than 150 people in urban population centers. The insurgent group has said it would not revive peace talks unless foreign troops leave the country, and it has rejected feelers from the administration of President Ashraf Ghani.

A spokesman for Ghani, Shah Hussain Murtazawi, responded sharply to the letter, saying, "We never negotiate with groups who resort to crime and the brutal killing of people and then claim responsibility for it. The door of peace is shut to them, but the door of peace is open to those groups who have expressed their hatred for such crimes."

The letter's talking points included a list of goals that the U.S. government had set out to achieve in entering the war, including eliminating terrorism, establishing the rule of law and eradicating drugs. It then systematically presented arguments, backed up with international statistics but also exaggerated for effect, to show that these efforts had failed or had extremely negative consequences.

"As confirmed by your own military authorities, 3546 American and foreign soldiers have been killed, more than 20,000 American forces injured and tens of thousands more are suffering mentally," the letter said, asserting that the actual casualty figures were much higher but were being "concealed" by U.S. leaders. The casualty figures track with those provided by the U.S. military.

A second argument said reports by the U.S. Office of the Special Inspector General for Afghan Reconstruction estimated that "sixty percent of Afghan territory is now under the control of Taliban." The figure is actually much lower, but the inspector general and other agencies have said that insurgents control or influence more territory than at any previous time in the war and that the area continues to widen.

The letter also said that there had been 751 U.S. airstrikes in September, which appears to be an accurate figure. "You should ask your generals that despite using such force,

have you retaken even a single inch of land from the Taliban," the letter suggested.

A third assertion was that previous U.S. administrations had cited the "prevention and eradication of narcotics" as a justification to "invade" Afghanistan, an inaccurate claim. But the letter correctly cited figures from the U.N. Office on Drugs and Crime showing that opium poppy cultivation has "skyrocketed" in the 16 years since the military intervention and that the number of Afghan drug addicts has reached more than 3 million.

The overall message of these arguments was that the American people should make a "rational" assessment of the war effort, realize that it is backfiring and prevail upon their leaders to withdraw.

"You proclaim to be a developed and civilized nation," the letter said. "We leave it to your judgment to decide" whether the prevailing conditions of "insecurity, chaos" and soaring drug problems in Afghanistan constitute "reforms or crimes against humanity."

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, it is ironic because many of us in the House of Representatives do think and would agree with the Taliban: It is time to rethink the policy in Afghanistan.

Mr. Speaker, I must have at least 35 or 40 posters that I have been using on the floor of the House for the last number of years. This one is of a woman who lost her husband, in tears, and the little baby girl sitting in her lap. She doesn't know why there is a man in a uniform kneeling before her mother with a folded flag.

There is just so much that we are missing as Members of Congress because we won't debate the war in Afghanistan.

Afghanistan is a graveyard of empires. I think one day that Afghan graveyard is going to have a headstone that says, "USA," because we are going broke trying to fix a country that couldn't care less about our values and our system. But that is the way it works around here. You can't even get a debate on sending young men and women to die for this country.

Mr. Speaker, I ask Mr. RYAN to please let us have this debate. Members of Congress in both parties want to debate. You can vote for staying in Afghanistan, or you can vote for getting out of Afghanistan, but let us meet our constitutional responsibility.

I ask God to bless our men and women in uniform, and God to bless America.

YABUCOA AND VIEQUES, PUERTO RICO

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Puerto Rico (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ) for 5 minutes.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, as we speak today, the people of Puerto Rico continue to suffer. Currently, 200,000 families and businesses, 16 percent of the island, remain without power. That is not 6 days after the hurricane or 6 weeks. We are talking about 6 months.

For those still without power in Puerto Rico, they are now living

through the longest blackout in modern history.

While parts of the island are recovering, it is the rural, far-flung portions of the island that continue to suffer the most and where aid has been slowest to reach. For example, if you go to my hometown of Yabucoa, where Hurricane Maria made landfall, it looks like the hurricane struck yesterday. Two-thirds of the residents living there are without electricity.

For decades, Yabucoa's baseball stadium stood as an important symbol of that town's community. The people there love baseball, and the stadium was a community anchor, a symbol of the town and its people. Those who live in Yabucoa are proud of their baseball diamond, as this town fielded Puerto Rico's team in the 2017 Junior League World Series.

Today, the baseball stadium sits empty, now a symbol of how the people of Yabucoa struggle daily to survive. Meanwhile, basic services are hard to come by, with hospitals relying on generators to provide lifesaving treatment. Older, rural parts of Puerto Rico continue to suffer immensely.

Thirty miles east of Yabucoa's coast sits the island of Vieques. As an island off an island, Vieques also has been neglected, waiting for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to restore power.

Just a few weeks ago, I was there and I saw this on the road: power poles dangling from electric wires, just waiting to snap.

Can you imagine seeing that in the mainland United States?

Again, this is not 1 week or 2 weeks after the hurricane. It is close to 6 months later. Meanwhile, the island's connection to the main power grid has been cut off, and some workers think it will take years to fully restore the undersea cables.

Those are just two towns in a commonwealth of 3.3 million American citizens, but all across Puerto Rico there are rural areas that have been hit hard and are still suffering today.

We cannot afford to forget what has happened there. These are fellow American citizens. For 120 years they have fought, shed blood, and died in our wars, defending our freedoms. Now they need our help to recover from a humanitarian crisis.

I implore my colleagues, we must not forget Puerto Rico. We must allocate additional aid and help. We must rebuild Puerto Rico stronger and better than ever before. Until we do, we will be failing the people of Puerto Rico, we will be failing our fellow Americans.

SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KUSTOFF of Tennessee). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MARSHALL) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MARSHALL. Mr. Speaker, last night, 406 of my colleagues and I voted to pass the STOP School Violence Act and the Securing Our Schools Act.

As a father of four, when I dropped each of my kids off at Jefferson Elementary School in Great Bend, Kansas, I felt confident that they were going to have a safe place where they could learn and grow; but, today, we have seen time and time again that we need to revisit how we are protecting our children.

The STOP School Violence Act will train students, teachers, faculty, and local law enforcement on ways to identify threats and report them. It goes back to the message we have been relaying for ages: see something, say something.

□ 1015

This bill recognizes that sometimes our children and educators often do not have the training to spot some of the warning signs, and that is why it is critical that we provide training so students and personnel can recognize and report threats before they occur.

We also looked at ways to better our reporting process so that, when a threat is made, we have an effective way to log and intervene. To do so, this bill provides funding for States to upgrade their technology and develop an anonymous reporting system through a mobile app, hotline, and website. Not only does it allocate funds for violence, prevention training, and modernize our reporting protocols, it also allocates funds to improve school security equipment.

The STOP School Violence Act, coupled last night with the Securing Our Schools Act, grants funds for schools to install panic buttons and further hardening and protection of our schools. These are steps forward that approach the issue of school safety from several angles, and I am proud to have cosponsored both pieces of legislation.

I want to make sure that my message to everyone back home today is clear. The House of Representatives is listening, and our school grounds should no longer be soft targets. After last night's vote, the STOP School Violence Act and the Securing Our Schools Act joins the Fix NICS Act that has been waiting on a vote from the Senate since last December. Fix NICS would strengthen background checks and close critical loopholes.

Today I urge my friends in the Senate to pass these bills so that our Nation's schools and children can be safer.

RECOGNIZING RESILIENCY OF KANSANS

Mr. MARSHALL. Mr. Speaker, as droughts continue to worsen across Kansas, now impacting all 105 counties, we are again at the point of seeing wildfires whip across the State of Kansas. While so far none of them have come close to the size of last year's Starbuck fire, there is reason to be concerned.

Today I want to recognize the resiliency of Kansans who have been coming together to help neighbors and strangers alike, as well as soldiers from

the Kansas National Guard. These guardsmen work in cooperation with local firefighters and emergency personnel to combat fires and save people, property, and animals.

I stand today to commend their hard work and thank them for their service. These fires are a stark reminder of the devastation created by wildfires last year and provide a reminder of the importance in standing together in the face of difficulties.

RECOGNIZING PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN WASHINGTON'S SEVENTH DISTRICT

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

Ms. JAYAPAL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of our wonderful public schools across the country.

Every child, Mr. Speaker, has the right to pursue opportunity, and through our public schools our country makes that opportunity a reality every day. Education imparts practical and invaluable skills that kids carry with them for the rest of their lives, teaches our children to become engaged members of our society and our democracy, and public education is a great equalizer, having remained a means of mobility for generations of families. I know this firsthand, Mr. Speaker. I came to the United States when I was 16 years old by myself to go to college and take advantage of all the opportunities that an American education had to offer.

For much of our Nation's history, our public schools have served this essential purpose of helping students and their families to thrive. And public schools, which serve all students, regardless of who they are, are the only institutions where the vast majority of our kids can access these benefits.

It is those schools and the teachers, professionals, and staff who serve in them—and I use “serve” very deliberately, because it is a service to be in our public schools, where teachers could earn so much more elsewhere but choose to be in the public schools because that is the place where they can help the most kids. It is those schools and those amazing successes in my own district that I want to celebrate today.

Monserrat is a teacher at Concord International Elementary School where almost 80 percent of the students are from low-income families and more than half are English language learners. Last year, Monserrat created a writing lesson using both Spanish and English. Before this lesson, most of the kids wrote at a kindergarten or a first grade level, but by the end of that lesson, every single one of her students was able to write a complex complete sentence. And over the next year Monserrat's second graders became ambassadors for Concord International, giving tours of their school in both Spanish and English. It is clear that

her investment in her students opened doors to achievement for these Seattle public school students.

Another story comes from Shorewood High School in Shoreline, Washington. Emily, a leader on her school's robotics team, wasn't interested in STEM until she got to high school because no one encouraged her to pursue it when she was younger. It wasn't until she learned about the lack of representation of women and girls in STEM that she realized that something needed to change. And last summer, Emily launched the Full STEAM Ahead Club, an all girls' mentoring group that encourages middle school girls to pursue science, technology, engineering, arts, and math. The youth mentors showed girls how important it is to engage in STEM fields early, and they work every day to expand girls' perceptions of what they can achieve, which is to say, anything.

And at Evergreen High School, a youth-led group called FEEST is working to combat food injustice in public schools. One of their campaigns recently made waves when youth leaders created the first student advisory committee with the district's nutrition services director. They provided the director with feedback on how to increase fresh and culturally relevant food items on school menus. And last month, they successfully got one of the recipes they created onto the district menu.

Through their work, these young people have developed relationships with their classmates, with decision-makers at the school district level, and they are building power and using their own innate intelligence about the issues that matter to create change in their schools and communities.

Mr. Speaker, I share these stories today to highlight how critical public schools are to my constituents and all Members. And as Members of Congress, we have a responsibility to ensure that we continue supporting our public schools. For example, public money should go to public schools. It should not be used to bankroll private entities and corporations that don't deliver excellent, inclusive, equitable instruction.

Our public schools are under attack right now from the Secretary of Education and the Trump administration. Our public schools and public money should not be used to generate a profit. And teachers, Mr. Speaker, should be teaching and not carrying guns to try to protect their students.

As tens of thousands of students across our country and here in the capital have rallied and called for attention to safety in our public schools by passing sensible gun reform legislation, Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, this body has yet to address the issue of guns and safety in our schools and in our classrooms.

And if we want to support education for our kids, we should make sure that they have the right to live. That is

what we are talking about: kids who go to sleep at night wondering if they are going to cower in the corners of their classrooms the next day because somebody has a gun because Congress has not done our job.

The Trump administration and Secretary DeVos have demonstrated that they want to make sure that the money is what prevails. And, Mr. Speaker, today as we honor our public schools, we also need to honor the responsibility of Congress to protect our students and protect our public education.

HONORING THE LIFE OF ANDREW KISTLER

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, today in Franklin, Pennsylvania, an American hero will be laid to rest. Mr. Andrew A. Kistler, past commander of the Disabled American Veterans, died on March 9 in Erie, Pennsylvania. He was 88 years old.

Andy Kistler was a tireless advocate for disabled veterans not only in Pennsylvania, but nationally. A Korean war veteran who was almost mortally wounded Christmas week in 1952, he lost both of his legs, a finger, and a concussion put him into a deep coma.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to share with you the words of the late Korean war medic and journalist Chris Farlekas. He helped save Andy Kistler, a 21-year-old baseball player from Franklin who arrived at the 11th Evacuation Hospital for care. I quote from this letter:

“The ward was crammed with casualties, and every helicopter that landed outside the tent brought even more. The doctor said Andy was too far gone, that he would die.

“But something inside me said no.

“I still don't completely understand my ferocity in needing Andy to live. Maybe it was because I'd seen so much death already in the 4 months that I'd been in the war, holding frightened, dying young men as they talked about home. Andy was my test case with God. If he lived, I'd believe. If not, tough.

“So for 3 days I sat with Andy, willing him to live.

“On Christmas Eve, several of the nurses, doctors, and corpsmen went through the 11th Evac, singing Christmas carols. At exactly midnight, they came to the shock ward and sang ‘Silent Night.’ It may have sounded a little ragged, off-pitch, but to me it was absolutely beautiful, angelic.

“As I listened, Andy came out of the coma, opened his eyes, grabbed my hand, and softly sang, ‘All is calm, all is bright.’ The doctors said it was a miracle.”

Andy and Chris spoke about that glorious moment in the PBS documentary, “Korean War Stories,” produced in 2002.

Andy, a double amputee, went on to be a major force for the American veterans as head of the Disabled American Veterans, a nonprofit that provides a lifetime of support for veterans and their families. With almost 1,300 chapters and more than a million members across the country, DAV empowers our Nation's heroes and their families by helping to provide the resources they need and ensuring our Nation keeps the promises that were made to them.

Mr. Speaker, Andy said he sometimes found himself humming or singing "Silent Night" in odd moments, "like when I'm shaving," he told Chris. I know that as friends and family say good-bye to a true American hero today in Franklin, all is calm, all is bright.

May God bless Andy Kistler, whose service to this Nation will be long remembered, and may he rest in peace.

HONORING THE NATION'S TEACHERS DURING PUBLIC SCHOOL WEEK

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LANCE). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MCKINLEY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCKINLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor our Nation's dedicated teachers during this year's Public School Week.

When I think back to my teachers in public school, one in particular stands out: Ms. Eleanor Ball, my eighth grade English teacher. In addition to instilling in me a love and respect for the English language, she was a teacher who went above and beyond the call of duty and gave each of us youngsters a sense of confidence to face the challenges that would lie ahead in our society.

But who are the Ms. Balls of today? Perhaps they are like Cristina Stout, a 4th grade teacher at Leading Creek Elementary School in Gilmer County, West Virginia. Ms. Stout is known for her compassion for her students. She often buys school supplies and winter coats for kids whose families can't afford them. One year she gave up every lunch break, every day, so that just one of her students who suffers with a sensory issue could eat in her classroom with her and avoid the overstimulating cafeteria. Most days, she stays late to tutor students who need the extra care, help, and assistance to ensure that they don't fall behind.

These are just two of countless examples of our Nation's teachers going above and beyond the call of duty every day across America.

To Ms. Ball, Ms. Stout, and teachers everywhere, we thank you, from the bottom of our hearts.

HONORING JOE ORGILL

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

Mr. KUSTOFF of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and re-

member Joel Orgill, a friend of mine and a great west Tennessean who passed away this week at the age of 80.

Joe was a lifelong Memphian who inspired so many with his business prowess, his strong faith, and, most importantly, his kindness and commitment to giving back to his community. Through the years, Joe was always very nice to me and offered great advice and counsel.

Like most Memphians, I knew Joe as an astute businessman who started in the family business as a salesman and worked his way up to president and chairman of the board. Joe played a major role in growing Orgill, Inc., the company as it is known today, into one of the largest hardware distributors of its kind in the entire world and the longest running business in Memphis history.

Joe Orgill was a real titan in the hardware industry. Besides leading one of the major privately held companies in the Memphis area, Joe was a real people person. He had the rare ability to connect and to interact with people of all types and, more importantly, treated everyone the same way.

But much more importantly, Joe was a philanthropist who always gave back to his community. Joe Orgill dedicated an incredible amount of his time and resources to charitable organizations throughout the MidSouth: the United Way, Meals on Wheels, Church Health Center, Rhodes College, the Dixon Gallery and Gardens, and many more.

I mentioned Meals on Wheels. Joe took great pleasure in stopping whatever he was doing, whatever meetings, to personally deliver these meals to those most needy. To me, that really personifies Joe Orgill.

But most importantly, Joe enjoyed spending time with his family.

Roberta and I send our condolences to Joe's wife, Irene, as well as his four daughters—Adele, Irene, Anne, and Kate—and to the entire family.

While we mourn the loss of Joe, I know that his spirit lives on in his wonderful family and in the Memphis community, and I have no doubt that Joe Orgill's legacy will inspire generations to come.

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 10 o'clock and 31 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. JENKINS of Kansas) at noon.

PRAYER

Reverend Dom Elias M. Carr, All Saints Regional Catholic School, Glen Cove, New York, offered the following prayer:

O God, beyond all praising, source of light, sustainer of life, significance of liberty, we come before You.

With hearts filled with wonder, we thank You for every gift You send, for blessings without number, and mercies without end.

Turn to us as we lift our hearts before You, and wait upon Your word, honoring and adoring You, our good and gracious Lord.

Then hear us, O God, accepting the love we bring, that we, who know Your favor, may serve You, our unimaginable king.

Look kindly upon these Representatives and their staffs, showering upon them the spirit of wisdom, charity, and justice.

And whether our tomorrows be filled with good or ill, let us triumph through our sorrows and rise to bless You still: to marvel at Your beauty and glory in Your ways and make a joyful duty our sacrifice of praise.

THE JOURNAL

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

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from New York (Mr. SUOZZI) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. SUOZZI 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 REVEREND DOM ELIAS M. CARR

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from New York (Mr. SUOZZI) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. SUOZZI. Madam Speaker, I am here to welcome Father Elias to the Chamber. He is from my hometown of the city of Glen Cove.

Father Elias, as was mentioned, is a canon regular of St. Augustine from Klosterneuburg, Austria, and he and three of his colleagues from Klosterneuburg have been assigned to my parish, St. Rocco's, and our neighboring parish of St. Patrick's since 2011.

He is joined here today by his parents as well as his brother, who is also a priest, Father Richard from Annandale, Virginia.

I just wanted to say that we are so honored to have him here today. He has made such a dramatic difference in our community, along with his colleagues, Father Daniel, Father Ambrose, and Father Gabriel; and a great difference in my family's life as well.

We are so grateful to you for your service to our community and to your faith, and to our faith, and for making such a difference in our lives.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WORKERS AND FAMILIES ARE OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THE NEW TAX CUT LAW

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

Mr. WALBERG. Madam Speaker, as I travel to each corner of my district, I hear from workers and families who are optimistic about the new tax cut law and what it means for their pocketbooks.

There is a momentum in our economy, and the latest jobs report from February is another piece of positive news. Last month, the economy added 313,000 jobs, far exceeding expectations; the unemployment rate remained at a 17-year low for the fifth consecutive month; and labor force participation increased by more than 800,000 workers, the biggest surge in 15 years.

Earlier this week, the National Federation of Independent Business released a survey that found small-business owners' confidence in the economy is soaring, and they are prepared to hire and raise wages without a government mandate. Imagine that.

Madam Speaker, these are encouraging signs that our policies of reducing excessive red tape and cutting taxes are working.

Let's build on these results and continue to advance solutions that improve the lives of the people we represent.

CELEBRATING 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF GOOD FRIDAY AGREEMENT

(Mr. HIGGINS of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Madam Speaker, this weekend, Irish Americans will celebrate St. Patrick's Day with parades and parties of every level of exuberance, including in my hometown of Buffalo, New York.

Buffalo's St. Patrick's Day celebration is one of the most spirited in America.

This year is a special celebration as it marks the 20-year anniversary of peace in Northern Ireland. The 1998

Good Friday Agreement brought peace to Catholics and Protestants after 700 years of armed conflict.

This peace belongs to the people of Northern Ireland and to the world.

Sinn Féin leaders Gerry Adams and the late Martin McGuinness, along with the Democratic Unionist Party's Reverend Ian Paisley took a courageous step no one believed was possible 20 years ago. They denounced violence and committed themselves to a peaceful power-sharing and reconciliation to live in peace together.

Madam Speaker, let this St. Patrick's Day and the 20th anniversary of the Good Friday Agreement stand as a shining light of hope for a gentler America and a more peaceful world.

CIVIL WAR IN SYRIA

(Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Madam Speaker, I rise today to shine light on the ongoing tragedy in Syria.

Today marks 7 years of civil war in Syria, 7 years of indiscriminate killing of women and children, 7 years of intermittent chemical attacks on civilians by the Assad regime, 7 years of bombings, of people thrown out of their homes, of children whose youth has been stolen from them.

The ongoing tragedy in eastern Ghouta is just the most recent of horrific events perpetrated by the Assad regime and their Iranian-backed militia.

The White Helmets group reports that 800 civilians have been killed in the past 2 weeks as the Assad regime continues to pound the rebel-held area, despite the ongoing humanitarian cease-fire.

The blatant disregard regime forces have for civilian life is nothing short of despicable.

We must continue to be engaged in efforts to support the Syrian Democratic Forces and other allies that believe in a free, democratic, and independent Syria.

Without U.S. leadership, the carnage will continue and we will be left with meaningless U.N. resolutions. We must stand with our allies to stop this devastating carnage that is tearing apart families and ruining countless lives.

HONORING DEPUTY DAVID LEE'SEAN MANNING

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

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Madam Speaker, it is with sadness that I rise today to honor the life and work of a young 24-year-old deputy sheriff from Edgecombe County, North Carolina, who was tragically killed during a traffic stop in his community on Sunday, March 11, 2018.

Deputy David Lee'Sean Manning lost his life when his patrol vehicle crashed while engaged in the traffic stop.

The elected sheriff of Edgecombe County, my friend, Sheriff Clee Atkinson, informed me that this loss has resulted in tremendous sadness for the Manning family and the entire law enforcement community, an emotion that we all certainly understand.

On behalf of the United States House of Representatives and the 750,000 citizens of North Carolina's First Congressional District, we honor the life and service of Deputy David Lee'Sean Manning.

May God continue to embrace David's biological family, embrace his law enforcement family in the weeks and months to come, and give them the solace that they need to continue with their lives.

PUBLIC SCHOOLS WEEK

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

Mr. LANCE. Madam Speaker, I rise in honor of Public Schools Week to recognize the incredible work in public education done every day in every State in our Union.

I have the honor of representing some of the finest public schools in the Nation. This did not happen by accident. Our public schools lead the country because of the tremendous work of our public educators.

I attended public schools, I respect our teachers, and I proudly support our public schools here in Congress.

I know the work of educators can be difficult, but the life of a teacher is a vocation, not an occupation. Educators give their lives in service to future generations of leaders, thinkers, writers, doctors, scientists, and visionaries.

We need teachers, and we need the public education system to remain strong in the United States. Public schools are where our students realize their talents and their potential.

We need good educators to continue offering encouragement and advice and to be champions and mentors.

Let us celebrate this Public Schools Week by thanking the teachers and educators in our lives.

PUTTING PENSIONS BACK ON SOLID GROUND

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

Mr. CICILLINE. Madam Speaker, many pension plans across America are on the brink of failure and threatened by massive cuts. If nothing is done, 200 multiemployer plans are projected to fail, many within the next 10 years, and the impacts will be felt by Americans in every State in our country.

Cuts to these pensions would be economically devastating for 1.5 million people who have earned their livings as carpenters, truck drivers, iron and steel workers, bricklayers, and painters.

They paid into these plans. After a lifetime of hard work, they deserve to retire with dignity and peace of mind.

If these plans fail, taxpayers could have to pay billions of dollars if the Federal Government's Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation fails.

That is why Democrats have proposed A Better Deal to save our pensions that provides financing to put failing pension plans back on solid ground to ensure that they can meet their commitments to retirees today and workers for decades to come, prevents a single dollar of cuts to benefits retirees have earned, and it puts safeguards in place so that pension plans remain strong in order to be there for today's workers when they retire.

We need to bring these proposals to the floor so we can work together to protect the pensions that American workers have earned.

CELEBRATING FIVE GENERATIONS AND 125 YEARS OF VARNS AND HOOVER HARDWARE

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

Mrs. WALORSKI. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Varns and Hoover Hardware, which has been a fixture in the Middlebury community for more than 125 years.

The success and longevity of this family-owned business lies in the family's dedication to serving their neighbors and providing high-quality products with a friendly smile.

Small businesses like this are the backbone of the American economy, and it is a privilege to represent a family so devoted to the prosperity of their community for so many years.

To honor Varns and Hoover Hardware is to honor what it means to achieve the American Dream.

With ownership now being passed down to the fifth generation family member, Nathan Miller, I am grateful to be able to recognize such a pivotal moment in the history of this Hoosier family, their small business, and the community that they serve.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Varns and Hoover Hardware and in wishing them the best in all the years to come.

REMEMBERING BOB BANUELOS

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

Mr. CORREA. Madam Speaker, I rise in honor of a remarkable member of my staff and a remarkable member of my community, Bob Banuelos, who passed away suddenly last week.

Bob spent over 30 years working for the people of Orange County. Before joining my team, he also worked for my predecessor, Congresswoman Loretta Sanchez.

Bob had deep roots in our community. He grew up on a small family farm in Fountain Valley and was a long-time member of the Orange County political environment.

Bob worked for the less fortunate throughout his community, and he was a friend to everybody he met.

Bob was also the first Native American candidate to run for Congress in Orange County in 1992, and he came close to winning. He changed Orange County politics forever.

I am saddened by his passing. He devoted his life to making Orange County a better place for everybody to live. We will all miss him, and we will never forget him.

CONGRATULATING THE UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA MEN'S BASKETBALL TEAM

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

Mr. GIANFORTE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the University of Montana men's basketball team for an outstanding season and to wish them success in the 2018 NCAA Tournament.

The Grizzlies were regular season champions of the Big Sky Conference, going 16 to 2 in conference play.

Last weekend, the squad won the Big Sky Tournament.

They begin their journey in the NCAA Tournament tonight with a first-round game in Wichita, Kansas.

The Grizzlies will be strong contenders. Their defense is relentless, leading the Big Sky Conference this year. Every player on the floor contributes to their offense. They represent the spirit of Montana.

Congratulations also to Montana head coach Travis DeCuiere, who was named Coach of the Year in the Big Sky Conference. In his fourth season at the helm, he guided the Grizzlies to a 26-7 record and their first NCAA Tournament appearance since 2013.

I know the folks in the Treasure State will join me in saying: "Up With Montana."

□ 1215

GUN VIOLENCE

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

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Madam Speaker, yesterday marked 1 month since the gunman at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School cut short the lives of 17 students and teachers. These tragedies have become so common that the response of this Congress is practically routine: thoughts and prayers are offered, moments of silence held, and then we move on with no specific action on gun violence.

Madam Speaker, this is not enough. We need to heed the call of thousands of students across the country who organized walkouts and events with a simple message for us: It is time to act.

We need to be able to look these students in the eye and say: "We are doing

everything we can to protect you." But for too long, this institution has refused to do just that. We are not considering legislation to pass universal background checks. We have not debated restricting the sale of military assault weapons, bump stocks, and high-capacity magazines, or even lifting the ban on preventing our government from researching gun safety solutions.

Yesterday we did pass a bill with important resources for school safety, including a bipartisan provision I introduced with Representative MIKE BOST to help schools install panic buttons. That is an important first step, but really protecting our children is not possible without concrete measures to reduce gun violence.

I urge my colleagues to listen to the wisdom of the young people in our districts, and let's all find the courage to pass sensible gun safety laws and, finally, to save lives.

HONORING VETERAN HOMER VAUGHN WAGNON, JR.

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

Mr. PITTENGER. Madam Speaker, I rise in memory of Homer Vaughn Wagnon, Jr., a veteran of World War II who left this world on November 29, having "just satisfied his life's ambitions," per the obituary provided for him.

Mr. Wagnon served our country in the infantry, fighting his way across France, Belgium, Holland, and Germany as he and his fellow members of the Greatest Generation pushed back against tyranny.

He continued his service to our country in private business, helping to build a post-World War II incredible economy as a mechanical engineer. His range of new products included mechanical rubber goods, radio and TV equipment, and items for naval ships and aircraft applications.

Mr. Wagnon leaves behind the love of his life, Darlene Raitt Wright, and Wagnon's 6 children, 11 grandchildren, and 5 great-grandchildren. His grandson Tariq Bokhari followed his grandfather's example: In distinction, he now serves as an outstanding member of the Charlotte City Council.

Madam Speaker, please join me in expressing condolences to the Wagnon family.

TRUMP IN SAN DIEGO

(Mrs. DAVIS of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Madam Speaker, President Trump was in my hometown of San Diego this week. He went to inspect prototypes for his proposed border wall, a wall California doesn't want, doesn't need, and is an overly simplistic approach to a complex issue.

The President was in San Diego for just a few hours and missed a real opportunity to hear from locals about what Americans in California actually need. Had he taken the time to actually listen, he might have learned how connected Mexico and the United States are and how important the cross-border economy is to our region. He might have learned about our infrastructure needs, about the contributions of our immigrant communities, or the environmental issues facing our region.

Instead, he flew 3,000 miles on the taxpayers' dime for a photo-op for his political base, that achieved very little. Something is wrong when a President doesn't listen to the American people.

CHEERING ON SETON HALL PIRATES

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

Mr. PAYNE. Madam Speaker, today begins the best time of the year. March Madness is in full effect as of noon today, and I am here to support a team that I have followed for 50 years in college basketball, the Seton Hall Pirates from South Orange, New Jersey.

Thirty years ago, Madam Speaker, they played for the championship in the Final Four against a Michigan team and lost by 1 point. Today we have another team that has the potential of going all the way.

I would just like to acknowledge the Seton Hall Pirates as they start their journey for a national championship against the North Carolina State Wolfpack and ask that we honor seniors Ismael Sanogo, Khadeen Carrington, Angel Delgado, and Desi Rodriguez as they start their trek.

Go, Pirates.

CALLING FOR FEMA REFORM

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, it is 8 months since Hurricane Harvey devastated parts of the State of Texas and the United States.

We are engaged in an assessment, and I will tell you, after 88 people died, people are still in hotels, houses are still in disrepair, and we are still in need. We are a strong State and a resilient city with great leaders who work very hard.

But I think it is important that, as we try to recover, we work to restructure FEMA, as we are assessing right now in a hearing, so that we can address the questions that 300-plus of my constituents on March 5 in Kashmere Gardens—heavily hit, along with northeast Houston—asked the questions: Why were there so many FEMA denials? Why did the inspectors see 4 inches of rain in your house and it was

4 feet? What is the structure that we can utilize to allow people to come out of hotels and get into housing when they don't have a down payment or they don't have the first month's rent?

This is a holistic approach. We need to reform FEMA from the perspective of housing and the Stafford Act. We need to structure FEMA in the rescue part and the recovery part. We need answers, and my constituents need answers now regarding the many, many denials that have stopped them from proceeding with their lives.

ORONO HOCKEY CHAMPS

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

Mr. PAULSEN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Orono High School boys hockey team on winning the Minnesota State championship, their very first State championship in school history. Their win came against Alexandria under the lights in the Xcel Energy Center.

Orono took the lead early in the first, but their advantage was very short lived. Alexandria's Cardinals came back to tie it up in very little time. Despite outshooting the Cardinals 11 to 1 in the second period, Orono just couldn't connect, which made the winning shot, taken midway through the third period, all the more exciting.

Madam Speaker, the student athletes brought home more than just a statewide trophy. They set the example for their classmates because of their work in the classroom and managing other activities.

Congratulations again to the coaches, the players, the parents, and all of the fans of the Orono High School boys hockey team.

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. Madam Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 780 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 780

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House 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. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. 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 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. 2. Upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House 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. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. In lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Financial Services now printed in the bill, 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 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. Madam Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS), 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. Madam 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. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of the rule and the underlying legislation. The rule makes in order two bills reported favorably by the Committee on Financial Services. Both bills were the subject of multiple hearings before the Committee on Financial Services. Each bill was reported favorably by a bipartisan majority without amendment. The rule adopts the only two amendments that were offered to these bills.

Madam Speaker, yesterday I had the privilege of being here on the floor debating three financial services bills, and I am back with two more today. Last night, the Senate took a significant step toward joining the House in producing a banking reform bill. The negative impacts of Dodd-Frank are enough to finally overcome even the Senate's inertia.

Last year, the House Republicans passed our own plan to reform our banking system and regulate financial institutions in a smarter way. Ever since Dodd-Frank became law, our small town and community lenders have been hamstrung by regulations intended for large Wall Street banks.

As is usually the case, Washington did not regulate in a manner that focused on bad actors or that differentiated between diverse financing institutions. Instead, Federal regulators stamped out one-size-fits-all regulations that have had negative impacts on our local community banks and credit unions.

Under the House Republican plan, we correct this wrongheaded approach by forcing regulators to take into account the size and risk profiles of smaller institutions. The Financial CHOICE Act ensures the security of our financial institutions without creating a too-big-to-fail government support system and encouraging local banks and credit unions to invest in our communities.

Over the past few months, we have put various components of the Financial CHOICE Act on the floor in order to demonstrate to the Senate that there is a bipartisan pathway forward on many of our proposals. We continue that effort today.

The first bill that is made in order by this rule is H.R. 4061, the Financial Stability Oversight Council Improvement Act. This bill enhances transparency and procedural equity of the nonbank systemically important financial institution designation process.

Under Dodd-Frank, systemically important financial institutions were intended to be large banks whose collapse would bring about enormous financial upheaval; however, in the hands of regulators, certain insurance companies and asset managers were designated as systemically important. This was not Congress' intent when allowing regulators to designate nonbanks as systemically important.

The bill before us today will not roll back the ability of regulators to determine that a large nonbank financial institution is systemically important, but it will ensure the process for designating the nonbank as transparent. It also forces regulators to consider other possible regulatory fixes before designating a nonbank as systemically important.

□ 1230

Well, this is all well and good. But what does this mean for Coloradans and other Americans?

In 2014, the life insurer MetLife was designated as a systemically important financial institution by regulators. By 2016, MetLife had prevailed in court and had their designation overturned.

What was revealed was how arbitrary and capricious the designation process seemed to be. Regulators never clarified what level of risk would be acceptable, nor did they clearly identify particular types of financial products or

business activities that would result in too much risk.

So life insurers and others were left wondering how to avoid the important designation. Being designated would not only increase compliance costs and consume resources that could not be invested into the business, it also would have forced the financial company to limit the options they made available to their customers.

So we see the vicious cycle of over-regulation play out again: less growth and fewer choices.

Fortunately, in the case referenced above, the courts stepped in early and halted the process. However, we have the opportunity now to bring about reforms to the designation process that protect Americans from losing access to financial products that serve them well.

When we talk about Washington picking winners and losers, look no further than Dodd-Frank and the systemically important financial institution designation. Let's put an end to these opaque regulatory decisions and allow light to shine on financial regulators.

Madam Speaker, the second bill that this bill makes in order is H.R. 4293, the Stress Test Improvement Act.

The Federal Reserve determines the ability of bank holding companies to withstand certain types of economic turmoil. These determinations have become known as stress tests.

These stress tests have become notorious for their vague rules and the secrecy by which the regulators conduct the tests. Bank compliance officers are often stuck trying to figure on what exactly their bank is going to be examined. Banks not only do not know what they are going to be tested on, they often never know what they were tested on after the stress test is conducted.

Frankly, technocrat regulators playing "hide the ball" from Americans that they are regulating seems like a system of government wholly unlike our own.

A professor from Columbia University testified before the House Committee on Financial Service that: "It is hard to believe that the stress tests' current structure could occur in a country like the United States, which prizes the rule of law and adherence to due process."

Former Senator Phil Gramm testified before a Senate panel and said the following: "What does the stress test test? Not only does no one know, but the regulators see that as a virtue. The Fed's vice chairman has stated that giving banks a clear road map for compliance might make it 'easier to game the test.' But isn't the fact that compliance is easier when you know what the law says the whole point of the rule of law?"

The Stress Test Improvement Act inserts much-needed transparency into the testing process. It alters current regulations to make the internal, company-run test an annual exercise. It also streamlines the number of sce-

narios on which a bank may be tested, while ensuring that banks are still tested on whether they are able to withstand a seriously adverse scenario.

Dodd-Frank was born out of an effort to prevent another collapse of our financial institutions like we experienced in 2008. Unfortunately, the broad brush stroke regulatory regime that it produced has had many unintended consequences.

Hardest hit were our small community banks and credit unions. However, there were also unforeseen negative impacts on larger financial institutions as well.

The bills made in order by this rule restructure portions of Dodd-Frank that have resulted in unreasonable regulation of our financial institutions. They preserve consumer protections while providing the certainty needed to reduce compliance costs and expand the ability of these organizations to provide the best and safest financial services to Americans.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to pass this rule and the underlying legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I thank the gentleman from Colorado for yielding me the customary 30 minutes for debate.

Madam Speaker, today's bills would roll back important consumer and financial protections by undermining the effectiveness of financial regulators' ability to conduct important stress tests, create unnecessary hurdles for regulators to contend with in the future, and limit the Federal Reserve Board's flexibility in determining the health and stability of our financial institutions.

Madam Speaker, including these two measures, the Rules Committee will have considered 30 Financial Services bills this Congress, 15 of which were considered under closed rules. Those 15 are part of a much larger closed process that Republican leadership has wielded with brute force to push through the legislative priorities of powerful special interests. Indeed, this week, we witnessed the 73rd closed rule for this Congress, a style of legislating that is as brazen as it is broken.

This critique of the majority's reliance on a closed process is not just some technical point, but, rather, an important one; because when you close out those on your side of the aisle who are not in leadership and those on our side of the aisle from offering amendments, you do not simply silence us, you silence the American people.

And what has this process wrought for the American people?

Well, let's take a look. Bear with me because it is a doozy.

First, we witnessed the majority—in what I believe was the most chaotic and convoluted process during my 25 years in the House of Representatives—try to take away healthcare from 23 million Americans.

When they couldn't get that done, the majority then honed in on a tax giveaway to corporate America and the ultra-wealthy not only at the expense of the middle class, but also to the detriment of future generations, as that bill will explode our national debt by an estimated \$1.5 trillion over the next 10 years.

Just last week, we watched as our Republican friends attacked Clean Air Act protections to give a handout to specified industries to emit more pollution into the air.

Is this what my Republican friends were sent here to do: To take away healthcare from millions of people? To remove important environmental protections that keep America's air and water safe? To limit the amount of stress tests the Federal Reserve Board should run on our biggest financial institutions so that we can avoid another financial meltdown?

Footnote right there. If these stress tests are so bothersome to these big old banks, how is it that they are making all of this big old money?

They don't seem to have any hindrance when it comes to sopping up the resources of this country.

Madam Speaker, my constituents haven't been calling me or writing or emailing my office asking that we consider or pass any of the measures the House will consider this week. On the other hand, they have written to my office asking what Republican leadership is going to do about addressing the gun violence epidemic ravaging our country. I was meeting in my office just an hour ago with officials from Tamarac, Florida, and we received an alert that two schools near the Parkland school were on lockdown.

My constituents have asked about what Republican leadership will do to ensure that the DACA recipients have a pathway to citizenship. They have asked what Republican leadership will do to address our Nation's needs for serious and sustained investments in our infrastructure. Unfortunately, the answer is little to nothing.

Footnote right there. When I came to this Congress 25 years ago, there were 14,000 bridges in the United States of America in need of a repair. Today, there are 56,000 bridges in this country in need of repair.

Madam Speaker, since 2014, there have been over 1,360 mass shootings in America. Let me let that soak in. Since 2014, there have been over 1,360 mass shootings in America.

In 2018 alone, nearly 500 teens and over 100 children have been killed or injured by guns. Last month, 14 students and 3 teachers were gunned down at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School by a former student using an AR-15 that he bought legally.

And just 2 days ago, American citizens took to the grounds of this Capitol and placed 7,000 pairs of shoes on the front lawn here at the Capitol. Citizens placed a pair of shoes for every child killed by gun violence since the Sandy

Hook massacre. Regardless of your views on this subject, please let that number sink in: 7,000 pairs of shoes.

Madam Speaker, we should not be considering a bill to reform the Financial Stability Oversight Council. We should not be considering a measure that limits the frequency of stress tests on our financial institutions.

What we should be doing is considering a ban on bump stocks. We should be considering a ban on weapons of war. We should be considering protective orders allowing people to petition a court to temporarily remove firearms from an individual in crisis.

We should be considering a measure to provide for comprehensive background checks, and maybe this time try not to sabotage it by attaching a controversial concealed carry provision to the measure.

Madam Speaker, the Republican majority is also ignoring the plight of 22,000 Dreamers who have lost their protected status since President Trump ended DACA, and the other hundreds of thousands of Dreamers who remain in legal limbo. Every day, 120 of them lose their status.

Madam Speaker, 25 times—25 times—House Republicans blocked a vote on the bipartisan Dream Act, which protects innocent Dreamers from this cruel Republican inaction. Every day of inaction on the part of my friends across the aisle means another day that families are needlessly made to live under the threat of being torn apart.

Madam Speaker, all across America, our infrastructure is in need of repair and greater investment. Every Member in the House of Representatives likely received a visit from members of the National League of Cities around the United States of America, and every one of them is talking about infrastructure needs. Every one of them. Yet the Republican majority has stalled on presenting a single infrastructure bill.

Even President Donald John Trump's infrastructure plan faces an obstacle: his own budget cuts.

President Trump claimed the Federal Government was investing \$1.5 trillion to our infrastructure, but, in reality, the White House's plan actually only proposed \$200 billion in Federal funding. At the same time, he proposed slashing critical infrastructure funding to the Department of Transportation by nearly 20 percent, and the Army Corps of Engineers' budget by 22 percent.

How does that work, Madam Speaker?

The truth is, it doesn't.

Madam Speaker, we stand here today with a to-do list a mile long and an ocean wide. I suggest the following: that we stop being forced to spend our time checking off items on the wish lists of powerful corporate special interests, and we turn to the business of the American people—Republican and Democrat, independent, conservative, and liberal American people.

For starters, we could work together to end our country's gun violence epidemic, bring relief to DACA recipients, and bring thought-out and serious legislation to the floor that will invest in our infrastructure.

□ 1245

Now, I am sure that my friend is either thinking or likely to say that we are here about financial services measures, and he is correct. That is what these rules call for. But what these rules are about, in the final analysis, is a diversion from things that we know are more critical.

Why, then, are we not dealing with prioritized matters that we know that the American people want, rather than those that the corporate greedy, needy, big old businesses want?

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BUCK. Madam Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. ZELDIN), the sponsor of H.R. 4293.

Mr. ZELDIN. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. BUCK) for yielding to me.

Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of this important rule and in support of the two underlying bipartisan bills that will improve our banking system and help grow our Nation's economy: H.R. 4293, the Stress Test Improvement Act of 2017; and H.R. 4061, the Financial Stability Oversight Council Improvement Act of 2017.

These are two essential pieces of legislation that cleared the Committee on Financial Services with bipartisan support.

I am the sponsor of the Stress Test Improvement Act, alongside the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. DAVID SCOTT), my Democratic colleague.

Stress tests are one of the aspects of current law that are contributing to the climate of legal and regulatory uncertainty because the Federal Reserve has failed to provide the necessary transparency around this process.

This bipartisan bill will inject transparency, consistency, and fairness into the stress testing process. Without needed reform, rather than ensuring financial stability, the Federal Reserve's stress tests are likely missing real risks while constraining the competitive flow of financial services that is critical to increasing economic opportunity.

While a valuable resource, stress test results may be creating a false sense of security, while at the same time sowing the seeds of financial instability. In order to succeed, a stress test must build from an accurate forecast of the next macroeconomic storm; and even the best forecasts tend to be wrong.

This is a bipartisan bill that was amended in the committee markup with unanimous support of every committee member, including the ranking member. The amendment offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. DAVID SCOTT) that we accepted focused

the bill on core reforms to the stress testing process that will make the rules more transparent, effective, and fair.

We are not gutting standards, but making them work for the real world. This bill is a bipartisan team effort to accomplish those goals. So is the other bill covered by this rule, the FSOC Improvement Act.

Madam Speaker, I urge adoption of this rule, and I urge the passage of both of these important bills.

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

Madam Speaker, it has been one month since the tragic events at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida. The district that I am privileged to serve is adjacent to that school, and I have two of my remaining cousins in life that live in Parkland, and I live within 30 minutes of where that school is situated.

A gunman killed 17 innocent students and teachers. Since that heartbreaking day, Americans from coast to coast have raised their voices and said: Enough is enough.

Yesterday, thousands of students from across our country walked out of their classrooms to protest this body's inaction. Two days ago, as I said earlier, 7,000 empty pairs of children's shoes were laid on the Capitol lawn to commemorate all the children who have been tragically killed by gun violence since the 2012 Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting. I might add, not only at schools, but in Nevada, in California, in Texas, in South Carolina, in churches, in Orlando bars, these mass shootings are occurring. People don't think it is an epidemic.

My friends on the other side of the aisle did bring a bill to the floor yesterday that I voted for that was also co-joined by my friend, TED DEUTCH, whose district is where the Parkland school is. He, too, was involved with that legislation, but it was done to improve school security. Much more needs to be done, and it needs to be done now.

So, today, I offer my colleagues yet another opportunity to show the American people that they value their safety and the safety of their children over the lobbying of the National Rifle Association and the gun manufacturers.

If we defeat the previous question, I will offer an amendment to the rule to bring up four commonsense gun safety bills: H.R. 4240, the Public Safety and Second Amendment Rights Protection Act; H.R. 3464, the Background Check Completion Act; H.R. 2598, the Gun Violence Restraining Order Act; and H.R. 1478, the Gun Violence Research Act.

These bills would close the dangerous gun show and internet sale background check loopholes, prevent the sale of guns without a completed background check, ensure that people who are a danger to themselves or to others can be prevented from possessing a gun, and lift the prohibition on government-

sponsored scientific research on causes of gun violence.

Let me send a message to gun owners in this country. I own a gun. I believe in the Second Amendment. I don't want anybody to take anybody's gun; but nobody can persuade me that anybody, other than military and police officers, are deserving of having in their possession automatic weapons. I believe every American feels the same way.

Madam 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 Florida?

There was no objection.

Mr. HASTINGS. Madam Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. CLYBURN), my very good friend that I knew before we came to Congress together, and the distinguished assistant Democratic leader.

Mr. CLYBURN. Madam Speaker, I thank my good friend for yielding me the time.

Madam Speaker, this rule fails to make in order four significant measures to address the gun violence epidemic that is plaguing our Nation.

In addition to closing the gun show and internet sale loopholes in the background check system, lifting the prohibition on Federal research into gun violence, and creating a process to prevent dangerous individuals from having firearms, the amendment includes my legislation to close the Charleston loophole, which allows gun sales to be completed even if FBI investigations are still going on to determine the outcome of a background check.

The tragic consequences of this loophole were demonstrated on June 17, 2015, when a hate-filled gunman opened fire at the historic Emanuel A.M.E. Church in Charleston, South Carolina, killing nine and injuring three others. In that fateful instance, the shooter attempted to buy a firearm on April 11 and was initially delayed due to possible red flags in his criminal record.

Despite the investigation not being completed in 3 days, he was allowed to purchase the weapon. The FBI later discovered the shooter would not have been allowed to purchase the firearm due to his documented history of drug abuse had they been able to complete the background check.

Madam Speaker, the consequences are too great to allow loopholes like these to persist. We have laws on the books to prohibit dangerous individuals like the shooter in Charleston from buying weapons, but these loopholes prevent them from being enforced. Thousands of weapons are sold each year through the Charleston loophole alone. In fact, I read that over 6,000 such weapons have been sold through this loophole.

I appreciate that many of my colleagues have signaled they are sup-

portive of improving the background check system, but no amount of improvement will protect the American people if all the loopholes are allowed to exist.

For almost 3 years, the people of Charleston, South Carolina, and across the country have been demanding a vote from this House on closing the Charleston loophole. They have yet to get one.

I urge my colleagues to allow this body to take a vote on closing this loophole and giving the American people the protections they need and deserve. I urge a "no" vote on the previous question and a "no" vote on the rule.

Mr. BUCK. Madam Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. ROSS), the sponsor of H.R. 4061.

Mr. ROSS. Madam Speaker, I thank my friend from Colorado for yielding.

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of the rule and my underlying legislation, H.R. 4061, the Financial Stability Oversight Council Improvement Act of 2017.

Madam Speaker, when folks back home save for retirement, college, or a down payment on a house, they expect that the system is both safe and geared towards maximizing their benefit.

A beautiful thing about America's free enterprise system is how anyone can participate in the marketplace, strengthen the economy, and earn a dividend of the American Dream. That opportunity, however, is not guaranteed, and, as lawmakers, we have a duty to protect it.

My bill will help us do just that by improving the Financial Stability Oversight Council's process for reviewing nonbank financial institutions for potential systemic threats. We must be clear that simply designating more companies as systemically important financial institutions doesn't make our system safer.

The FSOC can better serve the American people by working with prudential regulators and the private sector to address threats to our economy before they transform into calamities.

Would you say it is sufficient for firefighters just to identify a house that is on fire?

Of course not. The key is preventing the fire in the first place.

This is the problem that we face with the FSOC's oversight of nonbank financial institutions. The FSOC may be able to identify tinderboxes, but fails to explain how they might be made less flammable, and, instead, the Council defaults to what should be the heavy-handed regulations of last resort.

To be sure, the FSOC has begun to recognize the benefits of leveraging the expertise of prudential regulators, as well as providing increased transparency. In recent years, they have taken steps to improve the designation process, including the February 2015 guidance providing increased transparency in the nonbank SIFI designation process.

These 2015 reforms were welcome, and this legislation will codify many of

them into law, as well as provide a path for a nonbank financial company to eliminate risk rather than be designated.

Importantly, our legislation will ensure a company's primary regulator has a meaningful role in the SIFI designation process. After 8 years, if we don't take steps to address the obvious shortcomings of the FSOC, like the nonbank designation process, the regulator intended to protect financial stability could very well become a liability.

The American Action Forum has found that additional capital requirements resulting from a SIFI designation of asset management firms could affect American retirees in the amount of at least \$100,000 in potential savings over the lifetime of their investments.

That is why these reforms included in H.R. 4061 are critical to the more than 90 million investors who rely on the services of asset management firms to achieve their most important financial goals.

Companies must have a chance to de-risk before the FSOC can saddle their customers with such extraordinary losses. This bill will give them that opportunity. I am proud to have worked with my colleague and friend across the aisle, Representative JOHN DELANEY, on this strongly bipartisan piece of legislation. I want to thank Chairman HENSARLING for his support and leadership in moving this bill through our committee and onto the House floor.

This bill has 58 original cosponsors: 29 Democrats, 29 Republicans. Our bill demonstrates that there can be broad bipartisan support for increased transparency of the FSOC designation process.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this rule and the underlying bill.

□ 1300

Mr. HASTINGS. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. CARBAJAL), a member of the Armed Services and Budget Committees of this House of Representatives.

Mr. CARBAJAL. Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the bipartisan Gun Violence Restraining Order Act.

After the Parkland, Florida shooting tragically took the lives of 17 students and educators, students across the country have stood up and said: Enough is enough. They have demanded that Congress act to prevent these horrific acts of violence.

Since Parkland, NRA officials, Republican lawmakers, and even the President have repeatedly said that we need to disarm individuals who pose a threat to themselves or their community—those posting on social media or telling friends and family that they plan to take lives with a gun.

GVRO laws do just that. That is why California passed these protections

after the shooting at UCSB's Isla Vista. And now Florida is considering similar legislation in the wake of the Parkland shooting.

Only a handful of States currently have legal processes to temporarily remove those firearms. The GVRO Act encourages other States to follow their lead to empower family members or law enforcement officials to petition a judge to temporarily remove firearms from an individual in crisis. No one law will be a panacea, but that is not an excuse for inaction.

Since its introduction, the GVRO Act has gained significant support from my colleagues in the majority. Madam Speaker, we are calling on Speaker RYAN to bring the bipartisan GVRO Act to the floor for a vote. Our children's lives depend on it.

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

Mr. HASTINGS. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. MURPHY), my colleague who represents my home area that I was born in, a member of the Armed Services and Small Business Committees.

Mrs. MURPHY of Florida. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Florida for yielding me time.

Madam Speaker, America has always been a nation of problem-solvers. When our country is confronted with a seemingly impossible challenge, we tackle it head-on. We conduct research, we examine evidence, and we perform studies, and we don't quit until we have made meaningful progress.

From reducing automobile and aviation deaths to eradicating deadly diseases, we always rise to the challenge. In each case, a serious problem was claiming too many lives; and American determination, based on rigorous research, helped solve or mitigate that problem.

However, there is one place where we have deviated from this proud American tradition and abandoned an evidence-based approach to addressing our Nation's most pressing challenges, and that is when it comes to the problem of gun violence.

Homicides in this country occur as a part of the daily drumbeat of violence in our communities. They also take place in the context of mass shootings, like the recent tragedies at Pulse and Parkland, where a single individual transformed a place of life into a war zone.

Let me be clear. Gun violence is a plague upon this Nation and must be treated like the public health crisis it is.

Instead of confronting this problem with courage and candor, Congress has cowered in fear. For over 20 years, a single sentence, known as the Dickey amendment, has been added to the annual bill that funds the CDC and other Federal agencies.

We can debate the exact meaning of the Dickey amendment, what it does and does not allow, but the reality is

that federally sponsored research on ways to reduce gun violence has come to a grinding halt.

I introduced a bipartisan bill to repeal the Dickey amendment, and it currently has 170 cosponsors. There are many steps that we can take right now to protect our communities and our children, while respecting the Second Amendment.

One of these steps should be to empower our Nation to fund independent, unbiased gun violence research that will lead to policies that save lives. It is the right and patriotic thing to do.

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

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

Madam Speaker, I would advise the previous speaker that I knew Jay Dickey, I served with him here, as did many other Members; and my understanding is that, before his death, he indicated that he thought that his measure that has carried forth was a mistake.

Madam Speaker, my friends across the aisle have clearly demonstrated where their priorities lie. And for the benefit of the American public, if it looks like we are ships passing in the night, then doubtless we are when it comes to priorities.

I would ask anyone in this country and anyone in this House: Which do you think should be a priority? Addressing the gun epidemic in this country or bailing out big old banks with more opportunities to potentially carry us to yet another financial disaster by simply disallowing them having to undergo the stress test that they need?

I listened to my friend when he talked about stress tests, that they don't know how they are going to be tested or what part they are going to—well, my goodness gracious. Kids in school don't know what is going to be on the test; so why should the bank know what is going to be on the test?

But in the deal, when it goes down, whether they know or not, they still are making a ton of money; and, therefore, the regulations aren't affecting them in the way that we make it sound here. And there again, I ask the question: Which is your priority, America? Whether we address gun violence in this country and the epidemic that it is or whether we address these financial services regulatory measures that are more for corporate America than they are for you?

Americans working hard to make ends meet need answers—working hard to get their kids off to school, working hard to make sure they can put food on the table at the end of the day, working hard to ensure that they can put a little money aside for their child's education, working hard to ensure that they can put some retirement money aside.

Footnote there. What are we doing to protect the pensions of people in this country? We are not addressing that. We are addressing big banks.

That they don't have to keep working two or three jobs for the rest of their lives, that is what Americans are looking for.

Well, if they are working hard, then we need to be working hard, and we need to be working hard for them. It is with their interests in mind that we are sent here, and we do a disservice to them and to our country when we abandon that responsibility and consider bills like those put before us today rather than addressing the many, many needs that this country has.

Madam Speaker, I urge a "no" vote on the rule, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, I want to thank my friend for his support of the STOP School Violence Act yesterday, along with 406 of our colleagues; that passed overwhelmingly.

Madam Speaker, Dodd-Frank unleashed a torrent of regulation on our financial institutions. While it is understandable that people reacted strongly after the 2008 crisis, most of the Federal response heaped needless red tape onto our banks and credit unions.

Much of this red tape has, at best, done nothing to improve the security of financial customers and, at worst, deprived Americans of crucial capital and financial products.

It is important that we rein in the Federal Government and allow our financial institutions to invest their resources in our communities.

These two bills today continue the regulatory reforms that the House has advanced since last year.

Madam Speaker, I thank Chairman HENSARLING and Chairman SESSIONS for bringing these bills to the floor today. I urge support of the rule and the underlying bills.

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

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 780 OFFERED BY
MR. HASTINGS

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

SEC. 3. That 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. 4240) to protect Second Amendment rights, ensure that all individuals who should be prohibited from buying a firearm are listed in the National Instant Criminal Background Check System, and provide a responsible and consistent background check process. 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. 4. Immediately after disposition of H.R. 4240 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. 3464) to prohibit firearms dealers from selling a firearm prior to the completion of a background check. 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. Immediately after disposition of H.R. 3464 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. 2598) to provide family members of an individual who they fear is a danger to himself, herself, or others new tools to prevent gun violence. 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. 6. Immediately after the disposition of H.R. 2598, 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. 1478) To repeal the pro-

vision that in practice prohibits the Department of Health and Human Services from sponsoring research on gun violence in fiscal year 2017, 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 Energy and Commerce. 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. 7. Clause 1(c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of H.R. 4240, H.R. 3464, H.R. 2598, or H.R. 1478.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. WALORSKI). 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. HASTINGS. Madam 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.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Lasky, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed without amendment a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 2154. An act to rename the Red River Valley Agricultural Research Center in Fargo, North Dakota, as the Edward T. Schafer Agricultural Research Center.

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. 2155. An act to promote economic growth, provide tailored regulatory relief, and enhance consumer protections, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the Senate agrees to the amendments of the House to the bill (S. 188) "An Act 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, and for other purposes."

PERMISSION TO POSTPONE PROCEEDINGS ON AMENDMENT NO. 1 TO H.R. 4545, FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS EXAMINATION FAIRNESS AND REFORM ACT

Mr. HENSARLING. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the ques-

tion of adopting amendment No. 1 printed in part B of House Report 115-595 to H.R. 4545 may be subject to postponement as though under clause 8 of rule XX.

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

There was no objection.

FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS EXAMINATION FAIRNESS AND REFORM ACT

Mr. HENSARLING. Madam Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 773, I call up 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, 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, an amendment printed in part A 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. 4545

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 "Financial Institutions Examination Fairness and Reform Act".

SEC. 2. AMENDMENT TO DEFINITION OF FINANCIAL INSTITUTION.

Section 1003(3) of the Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council Act of 1978 (12 U.S.C. 3302(3)) is amended to read as follows:

"(3) the term 'financial institution'—

"(A) means a commercial bank, a savings bank, a trust company, a savings association, a building and loan association, a homestead association, a cooperative bank, or a credit union; and

"(B) for purposes of sections 1012, 1013, and 1014, includes a nondepository covered person subject to supervision by the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection under section 1024 of the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010 (12 U.S.C. 5514)."

SEC. 3. TIMELINESS OF EXAMINATION REPORTS.

The Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council Act of 1978 (12 U.S.C. 3301 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"SEC. 1012. TIMELINESS OF EXAMINATION REPORTS.

"(a) IN GENERAL.—

"(1) FINAL EXAMINATION REPORT.—A Federal financial institutions regulatory agency shall provide a final examination report to a financial institution not later than 60 days after the later of—

"(A) the exit interview for an examination of the institution; or

"(B) the provision of additional information by the institution relating to the examination.

"(2) EXIT INTERVIEW.—If a financial institution is not subject to a resident examiner program, the exit interview shall occur not later than the end of the 9-month period beginning on the commencement of the examination, except that such period may be extended by the Federal financial institutions

regulatory agency by providing written notice to the institution and the Independent Examination Review Director describing with particularity the reasons that a longer period is needed to complete the examination.

"(b) EXAMINATION MATERIALS.—Upon the request of a financial institution, the Federal financial institutions regulatory agency shall include with the final report an appendix listing all examination or other factual information relied upon by the agency in support of a material supervisory determination."

SEC. 4. INDEPENDENT EXAMINATION REVIEW DIRECTOR.

The Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council Act of 1978 (12 U.S.C. 3301 et seq.), as amended by section 3, is further amended by adding at the end the following:

"SEC. 1013. OFFICE OF INDEPENDENT EXAMINATION REVIEW.

"(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established in the Council an Office of Independent Examination Review (the 'Office').

"(b) HEAD OF OFFICE.—There is established the position of the Independent Examination Review Director (the 'Director'), as the head of the Office. The Director shall be appointed by the Council and shall be independent from any member agency of the Council.

"(c) TERM.—The Director shall serve for a term of 5 years, and may be appointed to serve a subsequent 5-year term.

"(d) STAFFING.—The Director is authorized to hire staff to support the activities of the Office.

"(e) DUTIES.—The Director shall—

"(1) receive and, at the Director's discretion, investigate complaints from financial institutions, their representatives, or another entity acting on behalf of such institutions, concerning examinations, examination practices, or examination reports;

"(2) hold meetings, at least once every three months and in locations designed to encourage participation from all sections of the United States, with financial institutions, their representatives, or another entity acting on behalf of such institutions, to discuss examination procedures, examination practices, or examination policies;

"(3) in accordance with subsection (f), review examination procedures of the Federal financial institutions regulatory agencies to ensure that the written examination policies of those agencies are being followed in practice and adhere to the standards for consistency established by the Council;

"(4) conduct a continuing and regular review of examination quality assurance for all examination types conducted by the Federal financial institutions regulatory agencies;

"(5) adjudicate any supervisory appeal initiated under section 1014; and

"(6) report annually to the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate, and the Council, on the reviews carried out pursuant to paragraphs (3) and (4), including compliance with the requirements set forth in section 1012 regarding timeliness of examination reports, and the Council's recommendations for improvements in examination procedures, practices, and policies.

"(f) STANDARD FOR REVIEWING EXAMINATION PROCEDURES.—In conducting reviews pursuant to subsection (e)(4), the Director shall prioritize factors relating to the safety and soundness of the financial system of the United States.

"(g) REMOVAL.—If the Director is removed from office, the Council shall communicate in writing the reasons for any such removal to the Committee on Financial Services of

the House of Representatives and the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate not later than 30 days before the removal.

“(h) CONFIDENTIALITY.—The Director shall keep confidential all meetings with, discussions with, and information provided by financial institutions.”.

SEC. 5. RIGHT TO INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF MATERIAL SUPERVISORY DETERMINATIONS.

The Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council Act of 1978 (12 U.S.C. 3301 et seq.), as amended by section 4, is further amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 1014. RIGHT TO INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF MATERIAL SUPERVISORY DETERMINATIONS.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—A financial institution shall have the right to obtain an independent review of a material supervisory determination contained in a final report of examination.

“(b) NOTICE.—

“(1) TIMING.—A financial institution seeking review of a material supervisory determination under this section shall file a written notice with the Independent Examination Review Director (the ‘Director’) within 60 days after receiving the final report of examination that is the subject of such review.

“(2) IDENTIFICATION OF DETERMINATION.—The written notice shall identify the material supervisory determination that is the subject of the independent examination review, and a statement of the reasons why the institution believes that the determination is incorrect or should otherwise be modified.

“(3) INFORMATION TO BE PROVIDED TO INSTITUTION.—Any information relied upon by the agency in the final report that is not in the possession of the financial institution may be requested by the financial institution and shall be delivered promptly by the agency to the financial institution.

“(c) RIGHT TO HEARING.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Director shall determine the merits of the appeal on the record or, at the financial institution's election, shall refer the appeal to an Administrative Law Judge to conduct a confidential hearing pursuant to the procedures set forth under sections 556 and 557 of title 5, United States Code, which hearing shall take place not later than 60 days after the petition for review was received by the Director, and to issue a proposed decision to the Director based upon the record established at such hearing.

“(2) STANDARD OF REVIEW.—In rendering a determination or recommendation under this subsection, neither the Administrative Law Judge nor the Director shall defer to the opinions of the examiner or agency, but shall conduct a de novo review to independently determine the appropriateness of the agency's decision based upon the relevant statutes, regulations, and other appropriate guidance, as well as evidence adduced at any hearing.

“(d) FINAL DECISION.—A decision by the Director on an independent review under this section shall—

“(1) be made not later than 60 days after the record has been closed; and

“(2) subject to subsection (e), be deemed a final agency action and shall bind the agency whose supervisory determination was the subject of the review and the financial institution requesting the review.

“(e) LIMITED REVIEW BY FFIEC.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—If the agency whose supervisory determination was the subject of the review believes that the Director's decision under subsection (d) would pose an imminent threat to the safety and soundness of the financial institution, such agency may file a written notice seeking review of the

Director's decision with the Council within 10 days of receiving the Director's decision.

“(2) STANDARD OF REVIEW.—In making a determination under this subsection, the Council shall conduct a review to determine whether there is substantial evidence that the Director's decision would pose an imminent threat to the safety and soundness of the financial institution.

“(3) FINAL DETERMINATION.—A determination by the Council shall—

“(A) be made not later than 30 days after the filing of the notice pursuant to paragraph (1); and

“(B) be deemed a final agency action and shall bind the agency whose supervisory determination was the subject of the review and the financial institution requesting the review.

“(f) RIGHT TO JUDICIAL REVIEW.—A financial institution shall have the right to petition for review of final agency action under this section by filing a Petition for Review within 60 days of the Director's decision or the Council's decision in the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit or the Circuit in which the financial institution is located.

“(g) REPORT.—The Director shall report annually to the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate on actions taken under this section, including the types of issues that the Director has reviewed and the results of those reviews. In no case shall such a report contain information about individual financial institutions or any confidential or privileged information shared by financial institutions.

“(h) RETALIATION PROHIBITED.—A Federal financial institutions regulatory agency may not—

“(1) retaliate against a financial institution, including service providers, or any institution-affiliated party (as defined under section 3 of the Federal Deposit Insurance Act), for exercising appellate rights under this section; or

“(2) delay or deny any agency action that would benefit a financial institution or any institution-affiliated party on the basis that an appeal under this section is pending under this section.

“(i) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section may be construed—

“(1) to affect the right of a Federal financial institutions regulatory agency to take enforcement or other supervisory actions related to a material supervisory determination under review under this section; or

“(2) to prohibit the review under this section of a material supervisory determination with respect to which there is an ongoing enforcement or other supervisory action.”.

SEC. 6. ADDITIONAL AMENDMENTS.

(a) RIEGLE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND REGULATORY IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 1994.—Section 309 of the Riegle Community Development and Regulatory Improvement Act of 1994 (12 U.S.C. 4806) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by inserting after “appropriate Federal banking agency” the following: “, the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection.”;

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (2), by striking “the appellant from retaliation by agency examiners” and inserting “the insured depository institution or insured credit union from retaliation by the agencies referred to in subsection (a)”; and

(B) by adding at the end the following flush-left text: Q02

“For purposes of this subsection and subsection (e), retaliation includes delaying consideration of, or withholding approval of,

any request, notice, or application that otherwise would have been approved, but for the exercise of the institution's or credit union's rights under this section.”;

(3) in subsection (e)(2)—

(A) in subparagraph (B), by striking “and” at the end;

(B) in subparagraph (C), by striking the period and inserting “; and”; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(D) ensure that appropriate safeguards exist for protecting the insured depository institution or insured credit union from retaliation by any agency referred to in subsection (a) for exercising its rights under this subsection.”; and

(4) in subsection (f)(1)(A)—

(A) in clause (ii), by striking “and” at the end;

(B) in clause (iii), by striking “and” at the end; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(iv) any issue specifically listed in an exam report as a matter requiring attention by the institution's management or board of directors; and

“(v) any suspension or removal of an institution's status as eligible for expedited processing of applications, requests, notices, or filings on the grounds of a supervisory or compliance concern, regardless of whether that concern has been cited as a basis for another material supervisory determination or matter requiring attention in an examination report, provided that the conduct at issue did not involve violation of any criminal law; and”.

(b) FEDERAL CREDIT UNION ACT.—Section 205(j) of the Federal Credit Union Act (12 U.S.C. 1785(j)) is amended by inserting “the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection,” before “the Administration” each place such term appears.

(c) FEDERAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS EXAMINATION COUNCIL ACT OF 1978.—The Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council Act of 1978 (12 U.S.C. 3301 et seq.) is amended—

(1) in section 1003, by amending paragraph (1) to read as follows:

“(1) the term ‘Federal financial institutions regulatory agencies’—

“(A) means the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, and the National Credit Union Administration; and

“(B) for purposes of sections 1012, 1013, and 1014, includes the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection.”; and

(2) in section 1005, by striking “One-fifth” and inserting “One-fourth”.

SEC. 7. 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 “\$7,324,285,000”.

(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.

After 1 hour of debate, it shall be in order to consider the further amendment printed in part B of House Report 115-595, if offered by the Member designated in the report, which shall be considered 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 a division of the question.

The gentleman from Texas (Mr. HENSARLING) and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLEAVER) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

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

Madam Speaker, I rise today in very strong support of H.R. 4545, the Financial Institutions Examination Fairness and Reform Act.

It is a strongly bipartisan bill, having come out of our committee by a vote of 50–10. It is authored by the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TIPTON), who serves as the vice chairman of our Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations and is, indeed, one of the leaders in the House in bringing regulatory relief to our community financial institutions. I want to thank him for his leadership on this very, very important issue.

H.R. 4545 creates transparency and accountability among regulators by improving the timeliness of examinations, while also creating a new more independent examination appeals process.

□ 1315

Madam Speaker, this is about, again, transparency. It is about due process. The Office of Independent Examination Review created under this bill will ensure accountability and fairness for financial institutions during their supervisory examinations. It does so by providing the right for these institutions to obtain an independent review of a material supervisory determination contained in a final examination report.

The creation of this independent review process is particularly important for our Nation's community banks and credit unions that will now be able to appeal their examination decisions without fear of reprisal from their regulator.

By reforming the process for examining financial institutions to ensure it is fair and consistent, Congress will indeed enhance the safety and soundness of the financial system overall while ensuring Main Street businesses can access the liquidity and capital resources they need to grow and create jobs. Again, Madam Speaker, this is why this is so important. Ultimately, this is about ensuring a free flow of credit to Main Street businesses and families.

Many of our community financial institutions have felt a very, very heavy hand of burdensome Federal regulations that were intended—or so we were told—for the largest and most complex institutions; and regulators, unfortunately, seem to ignore congressional directive and apply each one of these standards to our smallest institutions. Thus, yesterday, Madam Speaker, we voted on the TAILOR Act, also authored by the gentleman from Colorado, that would also help ensure these regulations are tailored to the size and complexity of the institution.

Without having due process and fairness in this exam review, the result has been catastrophic. This regulatory burden, of which this is a part, has been resulting in the closing or merger of one community bank or credit union per day, on average. And again, they are not being lost to natural causes.

Our community financial institutions serve as the backbone of our American economy, and we simply cannot afford to lose them. As chairman of the Financial Services Committee, in my sixth year, my colleagues on both sides of the aisle are all too familiar with this problem. I hear from credit unions and community banks every day.

I heard from West Community Credit Union in Missouri, who wrote: “This one-size-fits-all approach is simple-minded and has real consequences. We are beginning to make changes that will negatively impact our ability to continue to serve members in meeting their home equity lending needs.”

In fact, Madam Speaker, we know that a number of banks and credit unions have had to leave mortgage lending because of the regulatory burden.

Then there is County-City Credit Union in Wisconsin, who said: “Small credit unions are dropping every day. Unless we get immediate relief, there won't be any left. That would be tragic for our members and the very fabric of our country. Please help us, and help us right now.”

I have good news. Help is on the way if we can get a good, solid vote this afternoon.

The CEO of Commonwealth National Bank in Tennessee wrote: “The fact remains that there are fewer community banks today than there were several years ago, a trend that will continue until rational changes”—for example, like the ones we are speaking of today, Madam Speaker—“are made that will provide some relief to America's hometown banks.”

Again, we are hearing this plea every single day. So there is good reason why H.R. 4545 was reported by this committee with a strong bipartisan vote, 50–10, including a majority support of the Democrats on the committee.

Again, the bill is strongly bipartisan, it is practical, and it is necessary. H.R. 4545 will allow financial institutions, again, to have supervisory determinations reviewed by a newly established

independent examination review board. This will allow for uniformity among regulatory agencies, again, while making the overall exam process more fair and more efficient.

The bill does not prevent a regulatory agency from conducting examinations or imposing restrictions on financial exams, but, again, it will restore fairness, due process, and accountability for the sake of our community banks and credit unions; and, more importantly, for the sake of those who still have the American Dream of either buying their own home, starting their own business, or sending that first kid to college, it is imperative that we enact H.R. 4545.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.R. 4545.

Today we are considering yet another measure that would weaken our system of financial regulation and bog down regulators in their important work. It would ultimately take us right back to some of the problems that led to the largest financial crisis since the Great Depression. The bill puts financial institutions' profits before the protection of consumers and the best interests of the American public.

I rise, Madam Speaker, to say to Members of both sides of the aisle that we must remember the past as we create policies. I was here during that entire period, and it created a very, very heavy darkness over this entire country.

In the years preceding the financial crisis, the Federal Reserve failed to write rules stopping predatory, risky mortgage loans. The OCC and OTS preempted State regulators from reining in mortgage abuses. The Federal Reserve Bank of New York and other regulators failed to stem excesses at large companies and did not downgrade troubled companies until it was too late. Legislation such as H.R. 4545 sets the stage to return us to an ineffective regulatory system.

Republicans have made it a habit to falsely claim that their legislation is designed to benefit small community banks and credit unions. There are some things that could be changed to improve Dodd-Frank and to provide responsible relief for small community institutions, which I believe we all recognize did not cause the financial crisis.

I have said in our committee and I will say openly in any other place, including on the floor here, that there are some things we can repair in Dodd-Frank. But what this bill would do is give all regulated financial institutions an additional way to appeal and, thereby, postpone material supervisory determinations of their prudential regulator and of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.

In other words, messy megabanks and other big financial firms could appeal and delay adverse determinations such as a downgrade of a bank's credit rating for capital asset quality management, earnings, liquidity, and sensitivity to the market risk. It would also enable them to appeal significant deficiencies of their anti-money laundering programs, findings related to the violations of various rules, or a downgrade of their Community Reinvestment Act ratings.

Let's think about this for just a minute. Some banks would be allowed, under this bill, to appeal the OCC's historic and well-deserved double downgrade of its CR rating. Under this bill, Wells Fargo, for example, would be allowed to unleash its army of lawyers to not only fight against the rating, but to tie the OCC up in proceedings. We all know that when the banks who spend millions on legal teams each year deploy those resources, they deploy them to win; and if they win, then American consumers lose.

But let's focus on CRA. CRA was intended to ensure that institutions were making loans and providing services in the lower-income and moderate-income neighborhoods in which they were located to address the problems of redlining.

As highlighted in the recent report by the Center for Investigative Reporting, redlining is not just some relic of the past. Sadly, painfully, and embarrassingly, redlining appears to be still very much an ongoing, troubling problem that continues to harm many minority mortgage loan borrowers in cities all across the United States of America.

This bill will make redlining worse, and that will happen because, instead of improving their ratings and trying to end discriminatory lending practices, bank executives will simply challenge these rates and bully their own regulators into submission.

Now, this may be unintentional, as I would presume to believe, but this bill ignores the fact that prudential regulators and the Consumer Bureau each already have an agency ombudsman and an intra-agency formal review and appeals process. What's more, messy megabanks already have existing avenues to bring a court challenge to any form of regulatory enforcement act.

Thus, what this bill would actually do is create unprecedented barriers to the effective, prudential, and consumer protection supervision of the messy megabanks. It will give messy megabanks and predatory lenders, including payday lenders, an additional way to resist corrective actions to avoid violations of law or safety and soundness risk. As a result, the bill would allow these financial institutions to bog down agencies with frivolous appeals.

In a letter opposing H.R. 4545, the National Consumer Law Center wrote that the effective bill "would be most pronounced at the largest banks who

could appeal dozens or hundreds of material findings from every examination creating enormous roadblocks to supervision. The bank supervision process has been the first line of regulatory defense against threats to bank safety and soundness for a century or more. H.R. 4545 creates unprecedented roadblocks to the effectiveness of bank supervisory determinations and could be devastating to effective regulatory oversight in areas ranging from basic prudential oversight to key consumer protections that make our financial markets fairer."

In addition, the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office found that H.R. 4545 would increase the deficit by hundreds of millions of dollars—by hundreds of millions of dollars. It would increase by hundreds of millions of dollars. Hundreds of millions of dollars it would increase. Millions of dollars would be increased because banks would be more likely to fail and need government assistance.

In sum, H.R. 4545 would weaken our Nation's system of financial regulation, and, in so doing, it would recklessly set the stage for a return to the captive, hamstrung regulatory system that existed in the years before the 2008 financial crisis that enabled the risky profit-fueled activities of large, complex, messy megabanks and other titans on Wall Street to go unchecked. I therefore urge my colleagues to oppose H.R. 4545.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HENSARLING. Madam Speaker, I yield myself 30 seconds just to say to my friend from Missouri, as he recounts his parade of horrors, that this bill was supported by a majority of Democrats on the committee, including Mr. CRIST of Florida, Democrat; Mr. DELANEY of Maryland, Democrat; Mr. FOSTER of Illinois, Democrat; Mr. GONZALEZ of Texas, Democrat; Mr. GOTTHEIMER of New Jersey, Democrat; Mr. HECK of Washington, Democrat; and Mr. HIMES of Connecticut, Democrat.

I think my 30 seconds is winding down, but perhaps I can share the rest of the Democratic Members who supported this excellent piece of legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TIPTON), who is back with us again today. He is the vice chairman of the Financial Services Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations and is the author of H.R. 4545.

Mr. TIPTON. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity today to be able to advance an important piece of bipartisan legislation. The Financial Institutions Examination Fairness and Reform Act seeks to bring fairness to the Federal financial regulators' examination appeals process by instituting a uniform framework free from examination retaliation.

Our community banks and credit unions currently have no independent

recourse in the appeals process of examination decisions. These institutions often lack the experience, capacity, and resources needed to effectively resolve challenges to Federal financial regulators' examination determinations as each regulator has its own different rules and standards for the appeals process.

Under the current examination appeals framework, appeals of material supervisory determinations, which are decisions of significant consequence that can have serious impact on the financial institution's future, run through the agency that handed down the decision in the first place.

□ 1330

Mr. Speaker, that is like asking an arresting police officer to also be the judge and the jury when a case goes to trial.

Put simply, this legislation will move away from that framework and establish an independent office of review to address appeals of serious consequence, and harmonize and consolidate the appeals process across the various Federal regulators so that the review process is fair and predictable.

One banker in Colorado put it to me this way: "The Dodd-Frank Act has added complexity and uncertainty to the entire exam process and to the bank's ability to serve its customers confidently and in full compliance of regulations."

He continues: "For instance, overlap between the OCC and CFPB is an ongoing issue. The OCC lost regulatory oversight with the Dodd-Frank Act and the foundation of the CFPB, especially in the fair lending world. When the CFPB made it clear they were not going to examine the banks over \$10 billion on fair lending the way that the OCC had historically done it, the OCC started expanding the way that they assessed a bank's Compliance Management Program to add questions about fair lending, including transaction sampling and testing. It creates a very burdensome environment as well as duplication and the risk of double jeopardy."

Mr. Speaker, an examination environment that runs the risk of duplication and double jeopardy between agencies isn't tenable and puts our community institutions at risk of being examined into extinction.

This environment is further complicated by the reality that, currently, institutions that want to appeal double jeopardy examination results would have to appeal through two regulators who likely aren't communicating with one another about the other's exam determinations.

The Examination Fairness bill before the House today would solve this problem by establishing an Office of Independent Examination Review, which would function as a consolidated, sober judge of the examination appeals process. This newly created office under the Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council would provide a community bank or credit union an avenue

for independent recourse to appeal a material supervisory determination where fairness, transparency, and timeliness are paramount. Because this new review process only applies to material supervisory determinations, the new process is limited in scope and reserved only for the most serious appeals.

This legislation is also careful not to constrain the power of the regulators to pursue enforcement actions or to prevent them from issuing a further material supervisory determination. In fact, enforcement actions resulting from a determination would continue to be enforced under this new appeals process until the independent office either agrees with the finding of the regulator or overturns a determination of the regulator.

Mr. Speaker, by creating consistency; instituting timeline expectations of examinations and appeals; increasing transparency; and adding independent, sober review of appeals to the rights of the financial institutions, H.R. 4545 will go a long way to usher in a new environment of fairness in the examination appeals process for small banks and credit unions. Giving these institutions independent recourse in the appeals process will create greater certainty that they won't have to reduce their financial service product offerings because of an unfair or untimely review.

Mr. Speaker, that translates to greater assurances for communities across the country that their small banks and credit unions will be able to provide a mortgage for their home, a loan for their car, and capital for their small businesses to be able to grow.

This measure passed out of the Financial Services Committee with strong bipartisan support, with a majority of our Democrat colleagues joining with us to be able to support exam fairness. I would like to thank the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY), for her support of this measure's consideration here today.

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

Mr. Speaker, the inimitable chair of our committee is absolutely right: there are Democrats. This is a bipartisan piece of legislation. But it proves what I was trying to say earlier, and that is that I and many other people believe that we need to make some changes to Dodd-Frank. This is just not one of them.

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

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. LUETKEMEYER), the chairman of the Financial Institutions and Consumer Credit Subcommittee.

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman HENSARLING for his tireless work in bringing this and so many other commonsense bills to the floor. I also want to thank the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TIPTON) for his commitment to this issue.

The lack of consistency and quality in the bank examination process has created serious problems for financial institutions and their customers. Mr. TIPTON's legislation aims to remedy many of the issues we have heard about from the banks and credit unions in our congressional districts.

H.R. 4545 will allow financial institutions to have supervisory determinations reviewed by a newly established independent examination review board. This will create uniformity among regulatory agencies, while making the overall exam process fair and efficient.

The legislation includes several other key reforms, such as imposition of a reasonable time limit on examiners to provide exam results to institutions. It may seem like a simple request in the bill, a simple provision, but, today, institutions may wait as much as a year or more—in some cases, several years—to get the results of a single exam.

How can you be expected to comply with regulations if the regulators don't get back to you in a timely fashion with their feedback?

I myself spent several years as a bank examiner. The relationship between banker and examiner was a collegial one. Examiners would work with bankers to make sure they understood their rules and address the issues that manifested themselves during the course of the examination. If an institution failed to fix those issues, it then faced appropriate repercussions.

Today's exam environment is completely different. Financial regulators seem to play a constant game of "gotcha." The only recourse for a financial institution is to turn to an appeals process that, quite frankly, has a predetermined outcome.

Mr. Speaker, something has to change.

To be clear, this bill does not prevent regulatory agencies from conducting exams or imposing restrictions on financial institutions. What it does is restore order to the exam process, which, for far too long, has been politicized and abused.

This is an incredibly important measure and one that I hope will receive support from all my colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Colorado for his work.

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

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. PITTENGER), who is the vice chairman of the Financial Services Subcommittee on Terrorism and Illicit Finance.

Mr. PITTENGER. Mr. Speaker, I would like to convey my deep appreciation to my colleague on the Financial Services Committee, Mr. TIPTON, for his efforts to improve and reform the examination process for our Nation's financial institutions.

H.R. 4545 is designed to address enduring concerns about the lack of consistency and quality in the bank examination process. The current exam

process can be both opaque and secretive. Coupling this with overburdensome regulations and increased compliance costs have forced many community banks and credit unions to close up shop or reduce their ability to provide for consumers.

Look no further than my State, North Carolina, which has lost about 50 percent of its banks since the financial crisis. In my own city of Charlotte, a decade ago, we had six community banks. Today, we only have one because of the burdensome and costly compliance requirements.

Mr. TIPTON's legislation creates a fair and impartial process for financial institutions to appeal their examinations, which gives the necessary clarity for banks and credit unions to provide services to their customers, leading to a job creation and economic prosperity environment.

That is why I want to thank the gentleman from Colorado for working on this bipartisan piece of legislation. It is long past time that we provide commonsense reforms in a transparent approach regarding regulators' decision-making during the examination process.

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

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ROTHFUS), the vice chairman of the Financial Service Subcommittee on Financial Institutions and Consumer Credit.

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Financial Institutions Examination Fairness and Reform Act.

As the vice chairman of the Financial Institutions and Consumer Credit Subcommittee, and as a longtime advocate for examination and review reforms, I commend my colleague, Representative TIPTON, for his hard work on this issue.

As we all know, our financial regulatory agencies are not without their flaws. From time to time, examiners offer decisions that are misguided, and these decisions deserve to be challenged. Managers of financial institutions that believe that the decisions passed down by their examiners are wrong deserve a chance to challenge those decisions at an independent forum and, if necessary, in the courts. We are all better served by a financial supervisory structure that subjects decisions to the scrutiny of further review.

I know community bankers in western Pennsylvania who have struggled with their examiners for years to get flawed determinations changed. In many cases, these individuals were doing the right thing for their companies and their communities. Without the benefit of a clear timeline, this process has been allowed to drag on.

Without a truly independent review process and protection against retaliation, these men and women working in

our community financial institutions understand that they are facing an uphill battle. The current system is not independent and it is not sufficiently transparent. This is unfair. It is bad for our community financial institutions and it is detrimental to the integrity of our regulatory system.

I again urge my colleagues to support Representative TIPTON's work.

Mr. CLEAVER. Mr. Speaker, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from California (Ms. MAXINE WATERS), and I ask unanimous consent that control she may control that time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MCCLINTOCK). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Missouri?

There was no objection.

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 Tennessee (Mr. KUSTOFF), a hard-working member of the Financial Services Committee.

Mr. KUSTOFF of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Financial Institutions Examination Fairness and Reform Act. I also want to thank Representative TIPTON for bringing this fine legislation.

In the Financial Services Committee, we often focus on relieving the regulatory burdens our smaller financial institutions face. While larger banks have the bandwidth, if you will, to comply with various regulations, our smaller financial institutions have their hands tied with onerous regulations and high compliance costs. Too often, this strains the ability for our smaller banks and credit unions to loan money to people who rely on them for capital.

The legislation that we are discussing today creates more transparency and certainty for community banks and credit unions undergoing each regulators' examination process. Currently, each of the four regulators has its own appeals process. As we know, each regulator has their own rules about what decisions can or cannot be repealed.

In many instances, this exam process can take months and is conducted secretly, often leaving the institution in the dark about the possible violations. If an unfavorable determination results from the exam, the financial institution is then forced to limit its ability to open new branches or from offering certain financial products.

Folks in every community across the country rely on these financial institutions to access credit, grow a business, purchase a new car, or pay for an unexpected expense. This important legislation restores some of the transparency to the examination process and prevents regulators from being the cop, the judge, and the jury.

In addition, this legislation will restore accountability on the part of the

regulators to review their own decisions, and to do so in a timely fashion to limit the impact to our community financial institutions.

As we all can agree, our community banks and credit unions are best equipped to work with communities in which they serve.

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

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

Mr. KUSTOFF of Tennessee. This legislation provides a system of checks and balances by establishing clear standards to ensure the consistency and transparency of all examinations.

I want to thank Chairman HENSARLING and the Financial Services Committee for their hard work. I urge all of my colleagues to support this legislation.

□ 1345

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

This is a very important bill that I am asking the Members of Congress to vote "no" on because we don't want to empower the megabanks and huge conglomerates to be able to skirt adverse supervisory decisions about regulators.

The bill would give all financial institutions, regardless of their size, an additional method to appeal, thereby significantly delaying adverse determinations by creating a new independent review office to conduct de novo reviews without concern for the institution's safety and soundness or the protection of consumers.

This bill goes far beyond relief for community banks and credit unions by enabling megabanks and nonbanks, like payday lenders and Equifax, to pursue limitless challenges to the agency's actions in court.

If you take a look at the examples that we have prepared for you, take a look at Wells Fargo. Wells Fargo has been at the center of attention in this country for the fraudulent accounts that it established using their customers' accounts and information to create more accounts without informing their customers; and then they had the illegal student loan servicing practices that we have all been so concerned about; and even after the fraudulent accounts were exposed and a fine was made because of the harm that they had caused to their customers, we then found that they had inappropriate force-placed insurance, which means that people who were already paying for their insurance were forced to pay again because the bank basically forced them to have additional insurance.

And then there is J.P. Morgan with illegal credit card practices and discriminatory lending, sale of bad credit card debt, and illegal robo-signing.

And Citi with deficient mortgage servicing and foreclosure processing practices; inappropriate fees, mar-

keting, billing, administration of add-on products; and foreclosure abuses.

Bank of America, also mortgage abuses, deficient mortgage servicing and foreclosure processing practices, credit monitoring abuses, deceptive marketing for add-on products, violations of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act.

Now, we find that these banks have determined—they act in ways that we know that fighting is just the cost of doing business. It is a slap on the wrist. And they are going to continue to be able to get away with this. And if they are saying that the bank examiners who come in and find these adverse conditions somehow will be ignored and they can literally get around them, then we are going to add to the problems of our consumers in this country.

Mr. Speaker, I am certainly asking for a "no" vote on this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 2 minutes to say that I just find some of the comments of the ranking member curious.

I know if she continues this attack on the so-called Wall Street megabanks, I just continue to be so curious why she supports bailing them out? She voted against the Financial CHOICE Act that would have ended bailouts to these megabanks. And so she supports a bailout fund in Dodd-Frank to continue to bail out these banks.

Second of all, if she continues to attack them, I guess I am curious also why she supports the Federal Reserve's program to pay interest on excess reserves. She supports taking taxpayer money to pay the so-called Wall Street megabanks not to loan money to Main Street, something that I have opposed as have many other Republicans on this side of the aisle.

And then to make matters worse, Mr. Speaker, on this interest on excess reserves, these banks are getting almost 10 to 15 times what our constituents are getting on their savings accounts.

In many cases, it is the difference between 0.07 percent, versus 1.5 percent. And so I understand, again, she attacks them, but then I am just curious, why does she find so many ways to support them?

So personally, I think in this economy, there is a need for community banks and credit unions. There is a need for regional banks, and there is a need for global banks as well. What we want is accountability. We want less Federal control, and what we want is more private capital. We want to ensure that there are never more taxpayer bailouts.

And again, as I said earlier, as this so-called parade of horrors was brought to the attention of the House, why is it that a majority of Democrats on her committee support this legislation? Sixteen of them support the legislation.

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

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I always have these lively debates with my chairman, and he never fails to point out that I voted for the bailout. And, of course, oftentimes when he comes with one of these deregulation bills, he talks about bipartisan and how he had Democrats. Well, I want you to know the bailout was a bipartisan thing. It was appointed by both Democrats and Republicans at a time when we were in great difficulty in this country.

It was the Bush bailout, and it was Mr. Paulson, appointed by Mr. Bush, who was the Secretary who led it and gave us the advice and had us participate in saving our economy based on the information that he had uncovered about the risk that was now proposed for our country.

So I am not for bailing out big banks at all. We had an emergency situation in this country where, again, it was the Bush bailout that we had to deal with the fact that we were in great danger. But let me just also say this: we have something now that we put into Dodd-Frank reform called the Orderly Liquidation Authority scenario that we are able to look at banks, and, because of the stress testing that they have gone through, if there is a need for an orderly resolution because there are problems with the bank, we cannot only recommend breaking off parts of the bank, but reordering parts of the bank and doing what is necessary to ensure that the bank does not get into a situation where it fails and triggers the failures of others in our economy.

So it is the Orderly Liquidation Authority that I am referring to, and I do not support bailing out big banks. This is one thing that I join with my chairman on. We both agree that we should not be bailing out these big banks. And, of course, that is what Dodd-Frank is helping us to avoid.

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

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased now to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. DUFFY), the chairman of the Financial Services Committee Subcommittee on Housing and Insurance.

Mr. DUFFY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I would just note that the Orderly Liquidation Authority is an authority to bail out big banks, consistent with the bailout that the ranking member voted for in, I believe, 2008, that the chairman, I believe, voted against.

When we talk about those who use rhetoric to say they don't support big banks, but then actually vote for them, I think that is a hard note to take.

But I rise today to support H.R. 4545, the Financial Institutions Examination Fairness and Reform Act, a bipartisan measure introduced by Mr. Tipton.

This bill would amend the Federal Financial Institutions Examination

Council Act of 1978, a long time ago, by updating the definition of financial institutions, establishing new requirements for the final examination report process, and creating an office of independent examination review, giving some independence here, some common sense.

These updates are critical because, in 1994, Congress directed Federal regulators to establish an independent intra-agency appellate process for institutions to seek the review of examination ratings, adequacy of loan loss reserve, and clarifications on loans.

I agree that these entities should be reviewed to ensure that they are financially sound. We want to make sure that we prevent failure so we don't have folks across the aisle voting for bailouts. However, we are hearing from our community financial institutions, the ones that serve most of my district in Wisconsin, that the avenues needed to appeal these determinations are limited. The process is secretive, and the regulators are overempowered.

The intra-agency review process has also been criticized as not being independent because the regulatory determinations are reviewed, not by a third party, but by the employees of the same regulator handing down the verdict. So this is the judge, the jury, and the executioner.

I was a prosecutor, and when I presented a case to a jury and they found someone guilty, I didn't make the defendant appeal the verdict to the same jury that found him guilty. They have got to go to a third-party appellate process, independent reviewers. That is the way the American system works and should work in this scenario as well.

Our community bankers explained that they feel victimized. They feel retribution for challenging the outcomes of these exams, and that is a bad thing. Add to the fear the fact that these examinations lack transparency, and now we have real problems to contend with which is why the solution is so bipartisan. The chairman mentioned 16 Democrats on the committee voted for this commonsense piece of legislation.

That is why the bill is so important. It will embolden our community banks by creating an independent auditor to ensure fairness and transparency.

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 Wisconsin.

Mr. DUFFY. Mr. Speaker, this bill ensures that there is an open forum for these institutions to discuss the examination procedures, practices, and policies without fear of reprisals. It gives them a little bit of freedom.

Importantly, the office would also review regulators' procedures to make sure that their written examination policies are being followed and adhered to.

Lastly, the bill would provide a right to a hearing upon appeal. The decision

as to whether the appeal is heard on the record will be left to the petitioner. Again, you are getting due process. We want due process. That is something we all fight for. No one disagrees on that. Why can't we offer that to our small community banks and credit unions that oftentimes feel victimized? This is a bipartisan bill.

This is common sense, and I would encourage my good friend, the ranking member—who I like so much—to join us and let's get something done for small community banks.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the offer from my good friend to join him, but I don't think I will be doing that today.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD organizations that have sent us information in opposition to this bill. It includes the National Consumer Law Center, AFSCME, the Center for American Progress, and Americans for Financial Reform.

NATIONAL CONSUMER LAW CENTER,
Washington, DC, March 8, 2017.

Re Oppose S. Amdt. 2140 (Moran), HR 4545, The Financial Institutions Examination Fairness Act; creates roadblocks to bank supervision for safety and soundness, consumer protection.

SENATOR,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

On behalf of our low income clients, I urge you to oppose Senate Amendment 2140 to S. 2155, which incorporates HR 4545 (Tipton), The Financial Institutions Examination Fairness Act. The bill would create unprecedented barriers to effective prudential and consumer protection supervision of banks, allowing banks to resist corrective actions to address law violations or safety and soundness risks, bogging down agencies with frivolous appeals.

HR 4545 would grant regulated banks the right to appeal any supervisory determination made by any prudential banking agency or by the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) to a new "Office of Independent Examination Review" established in the Federal Financial Institutions Examinations Council (FFIEC). Upon appeal by a supervised bank, this new office would be required to undertake a repetitive de novo review of the agency's supervisory decision. No deference to the initial examination findings or the agency's judgment would be required in this review.

This new process is duplicative to appeals processes and ombudsmen already present. The CFPB, FDIC, OCC, Federal Reserve, and National Credit Union Administration each already have an agency ombudsman and an intra-agency formal review and appeals process. In addition, banks may bring a court challenge to any formal regulatory enforcement action.

HR 4545 would enormously increase the ability of banks to resist supervisory decisions. This effect would be most pronounced at the largest banks, who could appeal dozens or hundreds of material findings from every examination, creating enormous roadblocks to supervision. The bank supervision process has been the first line of regulatory defense against threats to bank safety and soundness for a century or more. HR 4545 creates unprecedented roadblocks to the effectiveness of bank supervisory determinations and could be devastating to effective regulatory oversight in areas ranging from basic

prudential oversight to key consumer protections that make our financial markets fairer.

I urge you to oppose HR 4545 and any amendment that incorporates the bill.

Yours very truly,

LAUREN K. SAUNDERS,
Associate Director.

AFSCME,

Washington, DC, March 13, 2018.

House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the 1.6 million members of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), I urge you to oppose the Financial Institutions Examination Fairness and Reform Act (H.R. 4545), which would undermine the federal government's enforcement of bank regulations and related systemic risk protections by granting every bank—of any size—a new right to appeal and postpone existing banking regulators' adverse supervisory determinations. Now is not the time to undermine these protections.

AFSCME strongly opposes H.R. 4545 because it would undermine bank regulators' existing authority and related systemic safeguards that protect our economy from risky practices of banks. This would impose added costs and risks on working families and consumers. Specifically, H.R. 4545 would grant regulated banks the right to appeal a prudential banking agency's material supervisory determination. H.R. 4545 installs the new appeals process in a not yet created Office of Independent Examination Review (OIER) located within the Federal Financial Institutions Examinations Council (FFIEC) and would require OIER to initiate a de novo review of the appealed supervisory decision with zero deference to the regulators' prior pre-appeal review, findings, or determinations. By creating a de novo appeals process, H.R. 4545 further incentivizes banks to challenge every supervisory decision and allows banks to more easily circumvent and delay penalties. Furthermore, H.R. 4545 also would grant these appeal rights to any nonbank under supervisory authority of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) and require OIER de novo review.

Unlike the current process with existing prudential regulators, OIER would not be responsible for our banking system's safety and soundness, and thus OIER's decision-making would be narrower in purpose and thereby increase risk to America's economy. We do not need H.R. 4545's appeals process because a formal review and appeals process along with ombudsmen already exist at affected banking agencies, such as CFPB, FDIC, the Federal Reserve, National Credit Union Administration, and OCC. Furthermore, banks already can bring a court challenge to any formal regulatory enforcement action.

H.R. 4545's scope is huge and not merely limited to small, community depository banks. At committee mark-up, an amendment to narrow H.R. 4545's scope to community financial institutions below \$10 billion in assets was rejected clarifying the intent that H.R. 4545 would benefit enormous banks, including Wells Fargo. The tax bill enacted just months ago in December 2017 grants many of these same large banks tens of billions of dollars in new tax breaks. Moreover, many are already earning record profits.

We are nearing the 10th anniversary of the 2008 financial crisis, which triggered U.S. and global recessions, America's multiyear underwater mortgage crises, and bankruptcies for many companies that nearly sank the U.S. economy. The subsequent Dodd-Frank financial reform protections added essential safeguards that stabilized our economy. We

should not weaken these protections. Rather than rolling back Dodd-Frank protections, we should improve protections for working families from the abuses of large banks like Wells Fargo, and take steps to penalize large data companies like Equifax for breaches of its consumer data.

AFSCME opposes this harmful risky bill because it increases the likelihood that banks, both large and small, will continue harming working families and consumers and trigger new systemic economic problems. AFSCME urges you to vote against H.R. 4545.

Sincerely,

SCOTT FREY,

Director of Federal Government Affairs.

CENTER FOR AMERICAN PROGRESS,

Washington, DC, March 12, 2018.

Hon. PAUL RYAN,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Democratic Leader, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER RYAN AND LEADER PELOSI: The Center for American Progress ("CAP") is writing today to express opposition to the following bills impacting the regulation of financial institutions: H.R. 4293, the Stress Test Improvement Act of 2017; H.R. 4545, the Financial Institutions Examination Fairness and Reform Act; H.R. 4566, the Alleviating Stress Test Burdens to Help Investors Act; H.R. 1116, the TAILOR Act of 2017; and H.R. 4061, the Financial Stability Oversight Council Improvement Act of 2017. These bills may be considered on the floor of the House of Representatives in the near-term, so we welcome the chance to share our concerns regarding this series of bills with you and your Members.

H.R. 4293, the Stress Test Improvement Act of 2017, would require the Federal Reserve Board to open up its Dodd-Frank Act Stress Testing (DFAST) and Comprehensive Capital Analysis and Review (CCAR) scenarios, methodologies, loss models, and other information to public notice and comment prior to conducting the stress tests. This is a similar policy proposal to what was included in Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin's banking report released in June 2017. H.R. 4293 would also limit the frequency of the CCAR process to no more than once every two years and would prohibit the Fed from objecting to a firm's capital plan when a firm fails the qualitative portion of CCAR.

These proposed changes to the Fed's stress testing framework would severely undermine the effectiveness of the stress tests. Stress testing is arguably the most important new prudential tool implemented by the Fed following the 2007–2008 financial crisis. The annual stress tests help ensure that banks fund themselves with enough capital to withstand losses from a severe negative shock and economic downturn, while continuing to provide the credit and financial services the real economy needs to grow sustainably. H.R. 4293's requirement that the Fed open DFAST and CCAR to public notice and comment would essentially give the tests to the banks in advance.

If a bank knows what the stress testing scenarios are and has the Fed's loss models, it can tailor its balance sheet to limit its projected losses—and in turn limit its required capital buffer. Opening up the stress tests to this type of gaming and window dressing would be a dangerous deviation from post-crisis best practices. It runs counter to the purpose of stress testing, which is to mimic a financial shock—inherently a surprise that the bank doesn't get a chance to comment on or influence in advance. Moreover, this change could lead to

an increase in the correlation of bank balance sheets across the banking sector, making the financial system in general more vulnerable to certain shocks.

H.R. 4293's requirements that CCAR be conducted no more often than once every two years and that the Fed cannot object to a bank's capital plan if the bank fails the qualitative portion of CCAR are also deeply misguided. A lot can change in two years. Risks can build up and capital positions can deteriorate quickly. CCAR must remain a rigorous, forward looking, and annual exercise. The qualitative element of CCAR, which applies to banks with over \$250 billion in assets or \$10 billion in foreign exposure, is also crucial for improving and maintaining robust capital planning processes and procedures at the largest banks in the country. Taking the teeth out of the qualitative portion of CCAR would take a tool away from the Fed and have a negative impact on the risk management capacity at these massive, complex institutions.

H.R. 4545, the Financial Institutions Examination Fairness and Reform Act, would give financial institutions the authority to appeal any material examination decision rendered by the federal banking regulators or Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) to the Office of Independent Examination Review—a new office created by the bill. Financial regulators already have internal appeals processes in place through their respective Ombudsman offices and financial institutions can pursue legal remedy for flawed examination decisions through the judicial system. This new office and review process is simply an additional hurdle for regulators to contend with when supervising financial institutions and an additional point at which institutions can slow down or avoid punishments. H.R. 4545 would undermine the examinations process at a time when supervisory authority and penalties for financial sector malfeasance should be strengthened.

H.R. 4566, the Alleviating Stress Test Burdens to Help Investors Act, would repeal the Federal Reserve Board's discretionary authority to subject nonbank financial companies, that have not been designated by the Financial Stability Oversight Council as systemically important, to annual stress testing. The bill would also repeal the Dodd-Frank Act requirement that a federal primary regulator subject nonbank financial companies with more than \$10 billion in assets to company-run stress testing. The 2007–2008 financial crisis made it clear that substantial risk can build up outside of the traditional banking sector. The failure or near-failure at nonbank financial companies like AIG, Bear Stearns, Merrill Lynch, and Lehman Brothers helped bring the global economy to the brink of collapse. Workers, homeowners, and savers all felt the immense economic pain from that unchecked risk in the financial sector.

Eliminating the Federal Reserve Board's authority to require stress testing at certain nonbank financial companies would needlessly prevent the Fed from acting when necessary. The ability to test a nonbank financial firm's balance sheet to ensure it has enough capital to withstand a financial shock and economic downturn, while continuing to provide the financial services the real economy depends on, is a necessary authority. The same can be said about the company-run stress testing that a primary federal regulator will no longer be required to implement if H.R. 4566 is enacted.

H.R. 1116, the TAILOR Act of 2017, places new requirements on federal financial regulators to further "tailor" their respective rules to the riskiness and business models of financial institutions. While a laudable goal,

this bill ignores the existing tailoring of regulation by institution type and size. The intent of this bill is to force regulators to minimize regulatory costs without due concern for the significant societal benefits of strong financial regulations. The bill would also give big banks, and small banks alike, ample footing to constantly object to regulations in court—delaying the implementation of important rules on the back-end, or putting pressure on regulators to not even undertake rulemakings on the front-end. Moreover, by mandating a seven-year lookback period under which regulators would be required to reconsider existing rules, the bill completely undermines the regulations enacted under the Dodd-Frank Act, the Credit CARD Act, and other laws.

Separately, CAP sent a detailed letter on H.R. 4061 to you and your Members outlining our strong opposition to the bill—which would render the Financial Stability Oversight Council's authority to designate nonbank financial companies as systemically important, nearly useless.

For these reasons, CAP recommends that Members vote “NO” when these bills are considered on the floor.

Sincerely,

GREGG GELZINS,
Research Associate, Economic Policy,
Center for American Progress.

AMERICANS FOR FINANCIAL REFORM,

Washington, DC, March 12, 2018.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of Americans for Financial Reform, we are writing to urge you to vote in opposition to H.R. 4545, the “Financial Institutions Examination Fairness and Reform Act,” which is being considered on the House floor this week. “Examination fairness” may sound innocuous, but make no mistake—this legislation would put unprecedented new limits on the powers of bank examiners. The impact of this legislation in weakening bank supervision would be especially great at the nation's largest banks. Its effect would be to substantially increase the risk of systemic problems, and of unfair and predatory treatment of consumers.

H.R. 4545 would grant banks the right to appeal any supervisory determination made by any bank regulatory agency, including the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB), to a new “Office of Independent Examination Review” that is outside of any regulatory agency. Upon appeal by a supervised bank, this new office would be required to undertake a de novo review of the agency's supervisory decision. No deference to the initial examination findings or the supervisory agency's judgment would be required in this review.

This new appeals process is an addition to formal appeals processes and ombudsmen already present at the banking agencies. The agencies affected by this legislation—including the CFPB, FDIC, OCC, Federal Reserve, and National Credit Union Administration—each already have an agency ombudsman and an intra-agency formal review and appeals process. In addition, banks are already free to bring a court challenge to any formal regulatory enforcement action.

By layering an entirely new appeals process on top of existing processes, this bill would greatly increase the ability of banks to resist supervisory oversight and ignore or delay changes called for by supervisors. The impact would be most pronounced at the largest banks, which can receive dozens or hundreds of material findings from every examination. The ability to appeal every one of those material supervisory findings, or just to threaten to appeal them, would create an enormous new barrier to effective supervision of big banks.

The bank examination process has been the first line of regulatory defense against threats to bank safety and soundness since at least the 1930s. The “Examination Fairness Act” would create unprecedented new barriers to the effectiveness of bank examiners by empowering banks to delay, resist, or overturn their decisions. In a practical sense, this would make bank regulation even weaker than it was before the 2008 crisis. It would be harmful to effective regulatory oversight in areas ranging from basic safety and soundness supervision to enforcement of key consumer protections that make our financial markets fairer.

The “Examination Fairness Act” thus goes beyond overturning post-financial crisis regulations to make bank oversight even weaker than it was prior to 2008. As we reach the 10th anniversary of the greatest economic and financial crisis since 1929, it should be obvious that this is completely the wrong direction for Congress to take. Since the crisis, fresh scandals like those at Wells Fargo have continued to remind us that we need effective supervision to prevent pervasive and harmful abuse of consumers.

We urge you to vote against H.R. 4545.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

AMERICANS FOR FINANCIAL REFORM.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California.
Mr. Speaker, let me just read one of the paragraphs from the Center for American Progress that I think is so profound.

“The Financial Institutions Examination Fairness and Reform Act, would give financial institutions the authority to appeal any material examination decision rendered by the Federal banking regulators or Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, CFPB, to the Office of Independent Examination Review—a new office created by the bill. Financial regulators already have internal appeals processes in place through their respective ombudsman offices and financial institutions can pursue legal remedy for flawed examination decisions through the judicial system.

“This new office and review process is simply an additional hurdle for regulators to contend with when supervising financial institutions and an additional point at which institutions can slow down or avoid punishments. H.R. 4545 would undermine the examinations process at a time when supervisory authority and penalties for financial sector malfeasance should be strengthened.”

In addition to that, there is another paragraph in the letter from Americans for Financial Reform that I think is extremely important in explaining why this bill should be opposed.

It says: “By layering an entirely new appeals process on top of existing processes, this bill would greatly increase the ability of banks to resist supervisory oversight and ignore or delay changes called for by supervisors. The impact would be most pronounced at the largest banks, which can receive dozens or hundreds of material findings from every examination. The ability to appeal every one of those material supervisory findings, or just to threaten

to appeal them, would create an enormous new barrier to effective supervision of big banks.”

In essence, Mr. Speaker, what we are saying is, we have our bank examiners who are going in and looking for ways to strengthen the banks and hoping that they will not find these adverse conditions, but, if they do, they have a responsibility to the consumers to try and get them corrected or to try and get changes made.

□ 1400

This bill says, despite adverse conditions that are discovered, we don't want to have to comply; we don't want to have to change; we don't want to have to correct. We want to fight you. We want to use our vast resources to say your examiners didn't know what they were doing.

They are not so much concerned about the consumers; rather, they are more concerned about just being a part of the bureaucracy.

It doesn't make good sense what they are saying about the examiners and why they are not important.

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

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 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.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be here for the second time in as many days to discuss a bill from Mr. TIPTON, my friend and our colleague from Colorado. I commend his dedication to find ways to bring more credit options to more Americans. This bill is no exception to that, and I thank him for sponsoring it.

This Nation is founded on the idea that those who enforce the law are not those who ultimately judge those laws.

This idea of due process is something all Americans respect and we enjoy, but in the case of financial institutions, there has been a noted lack of such process during appeals. If a bank or credit union today is assessed a postinspection penalty that they feel is based on inaccurate or incomplete information, the only recourse is back to the regulator that performed the inspection in the first place. Such an argument turns the concept of proper process upside down.

At the very least, I think we would all agree with a number of my colleagues who have noted that the judge, the jury, and the executioner should be separate. There has to be a better way.

This bill provides that better way by giving these institutions a new recourse so they can be assured of fair treatment. We all know this could be an expensive and time-consuming process for a bank or credit union, which is all the more reason to provide fair treatment. Smaller banks and credit unions that go through this appeal process are possibly running the risk of losing an appeal that will severely limit their ability to offer credit.

For that reason, a newer, fairer process will help all Americans by increasing access to credit. I am not pulling that idea out of thin air. The National Bankers Association, which represents minority bankers, supports the legislation. That should tell us how this bill will benefit every American who relies on the financial services and on credit.

Finally, Mr. TIPTON's bill does not change the fact that some banks and credit unions will lose their appeals. No one is saying that bad actors should go unpunished. The point of the bill, however, is to make that process as fair as possible. By consolidating the appeals process into one office that is separate from the four main banking regulators, that fairness can be achieved.

Again, Mr. Speaker, this bill not only supports the concept of due process, but it will also expand credit opportunities for all Americans.

I again commend the bill and the author, and I urge my colleagues to vote in favor.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire as to how much time I have left.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman has 13 minutes remaining.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 4545 is yet another harmful bill that would help out Wall Street and predatory lenders. It has become a theme for the majority to claim that their legislation is meant to provide relief for small community banks, when, in fact, the legislation plainly benefits the Nation's largest banks, including abusive megabanks like Wells Fargo and even payday lenders. This bill is yet another example.

The bill would allow any bank as well as any nonbank supervised by the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau to appeal negative supervisory determinations made by regulators in the examination process.

H.R. 4545 makes it more likely that bad actors, including predatory megabanks like Wells Fargo, would avoid or delay accountability when they break Federal law. It takes our system of financial regulation in exactly the wrong direction.

Megabanks like Wells Fargo already treat the fines they are required to pay for violations of the law as simply the cost of doing business. They don't need more escape routes to avoid accountability for their wrongdoing.

I have made it clear many times that abusive megabanks with egregious patterns of harming consumers should face steep penalties from regulators. Last year I introduced H.R. 3937, the Megabank Accountability and Consequences Act, which would require the Federal prudential banking regulators to fully utilize existing authorities, such as the ability to shut down a megabank and ban culpable executives and directors from working in the banking industry.

To get tough on megabanks that repeatedly engage in practices that harm consumers, Congress should be focused on measures that strengthen consumer protections, provide tailored, responsible relief for community banks, and ensure that abusive megabanks are held accountable. This bill, which would help megabanks and predatory lenders get off the hook when they break the law, should be rejected.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, again, this is a very commonsense bill, which is one of the reasons it is strongly bipartisan. I am sorry that the ranking member has not chosen to be part of that bipartisan ship, but over half of the committee Democrats on our committee support it. Why? Because they understand that it is part of our American DNA to have due process.

When we continue to lose a credit union or a community bank every day in America, on average, with their loss, we are losing home ownership opportunities, opportunities to grow businesses.

Because of that regulatory burden, these exams can mean the difference between a credit union being open and not being open. They can mean the difference between a community bank being open or not open. Thus, it means the difference in our constituents getting homes and small business loans and auto loans.

This is common sense. It simply says you ought to be able to appeal an exam, have a third party take a look at it.

Everybody deserves due process in America, including our community banks and credit unions, so that is why it is so important that we enact H.R. 4545. It came out of our committee with a huge bipartisan vote. Let's make sure credit continues to flow throughout America.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support H.R. 4545, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate on the bill has expired.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MS. MAXINE WATERS OF CALIFORNIA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 1 printed in part B of House Report 115-595.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I have an amendment at the desk made in order under the rule.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Amend section 2 to read as follows:

SEC. 2. AMENDMENT TO DEFINITIONS.

Section 1003 of the Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council Act of 1978 (12 U.S.C. 3302) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (2) and (3) as paragraphs (3) and (4), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (2) the following

“(2) the term ‘community financial institution’ means a financial institution with total consolidated assets of \$10,000,000,000 or less;”.

Strike “financial institution” each place such term appears and insert “community financial institution”.

Page 6, line 5, strike “financial institutions” and insert “community financial institutions”.

Page 6, line 12, strike “financial institutions” and insert “community financial institutions”.

Page 8, line 3, strike “financial institutions” and insert “community financial institutions”.

Page 9, line 14, strike “financial institution’s” and insert “community financial institution’s”.

Page 12, beginning on line 4, strike “financial institutions” and insert “community financial institutions”.

Page 12, line 6, strike “financial institutions” and insert “community financial institutions”.

Page 15, beginning on line 21, strike “—(A)”.

Page 16, line 2, insert a period and a quotation mark before the semicolon.

Page 16, strike lines 3 through 5.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 773, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MAXINE WATERS) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, my amendment is fairly straightforward. It would limit the applicability of the exam reforms under H.R. 4545 to only depository institutions with assets less than \$10 billion.

I have only heard about community banks and credit unions with respect to concerns regarding their exam process and the ability to enhance the opportunity to appeal exam findings. As Ms. Maloney made clear, when the committee marked up this bill, the sole purpose of the bill was to help community banks and credit unions, so my amendment seeks to narrow the scope of the bill's relief to these small firms.

Congress used a similar \$10 billion asset threshold in Dodd-Frank to exempt small banks and credit unions from the Consumer Bureau's supervision, so applying a similar threshold for the purpose of appealing bank supervisory findings makes sense.

Today, 98 percent of all banks and 99.8 percent of all credit unions have less than \$10 billion in assets. While I am in favor of sensible relief for smaller financial institutions, I believe that the 2007–2009 financial crisis showed the dangers of weak oversight of these big banks, including a \$30 billion bank like IndyMac. The bank's costly failure was the fourth largest in the history of the United States and contributed to the most damaging financial crisis in generations.

As the largest firms pose the greatest risk to the country's economy and the safety and soundness of our financial system, it is only prudent to apply a stringent supervisory approach for the largest institutions. In fact, the GAO issued a report last year criticizing the

Federal Reserve's large bank supervision program, underscoring there is more work that must be done.

I have been pushing bank regulators to deploy the full suite of their enforcement tools against megabanks like Wells Fargo that repeatedly and carelessly break the law and harm millions of consumers. That is why I introduced, again, H.R. 3937, the Megabank Accountability and Consequences Act.

So, no, I do not think it is appropriate to let megabanks like Wells Fargo hijack what should be regulatory relief for community banks so that they can challenge their exams. Nonbanks regulated by the Consumer Bureau, like Equifax or payday lenders, do not need this kind of regulatory relief either.

My amendment narrows the scope of the bill on what should garner broad bipartisan support: sensible relief for the community banks and credit unions that need it.

Mr. Speaker, I would urge my colleagues who truly want to help community banks and credit unions rather than Wall Street megabanks to support my amendment.

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

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, again, what we are talking about here is fundamental due process: due process for every American, due process for every institution regardless of its size, regardless of its geography. This is about due process.

As Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes wrote: "Whatever disagreement there may be as to the scope of the phrase 'due process of law,' there can be no doubt that it embraces the fundamental conception of a fair trial, with opportunity to be heard." He is one of the most famous jurists in all of American history.

We are trying to ensure, again, that a bank examiner or a credit union examiner is not tantamount to judge, jury, prosecutor, cop on the beat, and executioner all rolled into one. There is no due process if your only practical appeal is to the person who rendered the judgment in the first place.

So, number one, it is important that all Americans, all institutions receive due process, which is perhaps why even over half of the Democrats on the Financial Services Committee chose to support H.R. 4545.

The ranking member's amendment would set a threshold here, but her threshold, as she talks about these so-called megabanks, at \$10 billion, that is one-half of 1 percent of the size of J.P. Morgan.

So, Mr. Speaker, I don't believe in too-big-to-fail banks. I know my friends on the other side of the aisle do. That is why they voted for the bailout fund to support these too-big-to-fail fi-

nancial institutions with taxpayer funds.

I don't believe in too-big-to-fail institutions, but if I did, Mr. Speaker, if I did, it would be limited to maybe eight or nine banks in America. It certainly wouldn't be applicable to any community bank, credit union, or regional bank.

We have to remember, regardless of the size of the bank, it is their capital that is helping to capitalize our businesses.

□ 1415

I am from Dallas, Texas. One of our major employers is American Airlines. I wish they could do business with First State Bank of Athens, but I suspect they do not. And so sometimes, yes, global banks are necessary to our economy, regional banks are necessary to our economy, community banks and credit unions are necessary to our economy. They are suffering under the sheer weight, load, volume, complexity, and expense of the regulatory burden, which the examination process is part of it.

Let's give them due process. Let's give them fairness and ensure that credit can flow to every small business, every household that is worthy in America. Let's reject the ranking member's amendment, and let's support the underlying bill, H.R. 4545.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois). Pursuant to the rule, the previous question is ordered on the bill, as amended, and on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Ms. MAXINE WATERS).

The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Ms. MAXINE WATERS).

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

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. 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 and the order of the House of today, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

REGULATION A+ IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2017

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 773, I call up the bill (H.R. 4263) to amend the Securities Act of 1933 with respect to small company capital formation, 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 D 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. 4263

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 "Regulation A+ Improvement Act of 2017".

SEC. 2. JOBS ACT-RELATED EXEMPTION.

Section 3(b) of the Securities Act of 1933 (15 U.S.C. 77c(b)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2)(A), by striking "\$50,000,000" and inserting "\$75,000,000, adjusted for inflation by the Commission every 2 years to the nearest \$10,000 to reflect the change in the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics"; and

(2) in paragraph (5)—

(A) by striking "such amount as" and inserting: "such amount, in addition to the adjustment for inflation provided for under such paragraph (2)(A), as"; and

(B) by striking "such amount, it" and inserting "such amount, in addition to the adjustment for inflation provided for under such paragraph (2)(A), it".

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 have 5 legislative days 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 such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in very strong support of H.R. 4263, the Regulation A+ Improvement Act.

I want to thank the sponsor of this bipartisan legislation, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. MACARTHUR). He has been a huge leader on all capital formation issues within our committee and in this Congress. He is a real asset. His business acumen is well positioned to help serve us, and his leadership on this bill should be commended.

Mr. Speaker, although small companies are at the forefront of technological innovation and job creation, they often face significant obstacles in obtaining funding in our capital markets. These obstacles generally stem from the disproportionately larger burden that securities regulations, written principally for large public companies, instead place on small companies when they seek to go public.

In 2012, the Jumpstart Our Business Startups Act, known as JOBS Act, sought to modernize and better tailor some of these regulations, including Reg. A, under our securities law. Reg.

A is a longstanding exemption from SEC registration that permits public offerings without formal registration as long as certain conditions are met.

Prior to the JOBS Act, a small company seeking to use Reg. A was limited to raising \$5 million of securities in a 12-month period. As you can imagine, over time, Mr. Speaker, Reg. A offerings became increasingly rare due to the relatively small offering size that was available and a requirement that Reg. A securities still comply with 50 different State securities law registration and qualification requirements.

Title IV of the JOBS Act attempted to address the antiquated Regulation A by directing the SEC to update it, which the SEC did in 2015, under the moniker Reg. A+, by creating two tiers of Regulation A offerings and allowing certain securities to qualify for preemption from State securities law.

Under the second tier, the SEC increased the amount companies can offer from \$5 million to \$50 million. Mr. MACARTHUR's legislation only pertains to the Tier 2 limit.

Since Reg. A+ was implemented in 2015, small businesses have increasingly been able to use this tool to raise much-needed capital to expand their businesses and create new jobs in our economy. According to the SEC Office of Small Business Policy, as of November 2017, 69 completed Reg. A+ offerings had raised a total of \$611 million.

Unfortunately, the \$50 million cap leaves significant opportunity on the table for our startups, opportunity that could be better realized if the limit were increased to \$75 million, which the Treasury Department has recommended as a potentially less costly alternative for startups to raise capital. Moreover, increasing the Reg. A+ limit will better position companies that want to use the exemption as an on-ramp to list publicly to bear the corresponding compliance burdens and still invest in jobs and growth.

Mr. Speaker, more and more, we have seen IPOs of companies with products that we use every day—Uber, Facebook, Spotify, Snapchat—come after the company is already valued over \$1 billion. For everyday investors, this often means missing out on some of the most dynamic growth stages of the company that would provide the highest rate of returns for them and their family, all while the wealthy, accredited investors and venture capital firms can invest early, and they get to rake in the better rates of return.

With regulations disproportionately stacked against them, it isn't surprising that small companies so often are choosing to stay private. Many have no other choice. Again, after all, the SEC has estimated that the costs of going public, on average, are \$2.5 million in regulatory costs for undergoing an IPO and annual compliance costs averaging \$1.5 million thereafter.

Those costs stand in stark contrast to the \$111,000 the SEC says is the average legal and auditing cost for Reg. A+

offerings. In other words, by utilizing Reg. A+, small businesses can raise significant capital while saving more than \$2 million—\$2 million that can be invested in jobs and research and other growth opportunities. This is why Reg. A+ is so important: it provides a more cost-effective way to raise equity capital early on in the growth stages of these companies.

Additionally, Reg. A offerings enjoy preemption from State securities laws. Mr. Speaker, I hope every Member pays close attention to this. They may not know it.

In 1980, when a startup computer company, by the way, called Apple decided to go public, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts decided the stock was too risky and barred its sale to individual investors in the State. Today, Apple's market valuation is almost \$1 trillion. It is an American iconic brand and one of the largest companies in the world. And it is, again, potentially going to be the first public company with a trillion-dollar market cap. If you had bought 45 shares of Apple when it was offered at its IPO, by the end of last year you would have over \$394,000. That is hardly crumbs, Mr. Speaker.

In short, I strongly urge my colleagues to support this legislation. It is a very smart but modest improvement in a popular JOBS Act provision.

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, H.R. 4263, the so-called Regulation A+ Improvement Act, is a solution in search of a problem that threatens to undermine protections for mom-and-pop investors and the integrity of our capital markets. The bill would arbitrarily and prematurely increase the maximum amount of securities that private companies can sell each year to the public from \$50 million to \$75 million under the Securities and Exchange Commission's Regulation A+ exemption from registration.

Mr. Speaker, such a change makes no sense. First, the SEC only recently implemented Regulation A+ pursuant to the Jumpstart Our Business Startups, the JOBS Act. Effective June 19, 2015, that rule now allows private companies to raise either \$20 million under Tier 1 or \$50 million under Tier 2 from the public with less investor protections and oversight than a public securities offering registered with the SEC.

What little data we have since it became effective suggests that there is no need to raise that \$50 million limit. As of December 31, 2017, only 39 percent of the 172 companies using Tier 2 of Regulation A+ sought the maximum amount of \$50 million; and only three issuers, or 5 percent, of the 61 issuers that have reported proceeds in Tier 2 offerings actually raised the maximum amount.

Second, in the JOBS Act, Congress specifically directed the SEC to review the Regulation A+ limit every 2 years

and report its reasons for not raising it to Congress. On April 5, 2016, the SEC sent Congress its report, stating: "Given the short period of time that the final rules have been in effect and in light of the limited number of Regulation A+ offerings qualified and completed to date, the Commission does not believe that the information currently reported by companies on the amount of capital raised pursuant to Regulation A+ is sufficient to determine whether it would be appropriate to propose an increase in the Tier 2 \$50 million offering limit."

If my Republican colleagues think that the SEC should be doing more, they only have to wait a few more weeks for the SEC's next review and report on the Regulation A+ offering limit. There is no reason why Congress shouldn't acknowledge the SEC's existing efforts to study the empirical evidence instead of making arbitrary decisions devoid of any real analysis.

Finally, and most importantly, the bill may harm retail investors and our markets. What my Republican colleagues fail to acknowledge is that the purpose of Regulation A+ is to provide small private businesses with access to financing from mom-and-pop investors, many of whom are in their community, so that they can grow and eventually enter the public markets as full SEC reporting companies traded on a national securities exchange.

As public companies, they are subject to the full set of investor protections under the securities laws, but also gain access to much deeper sources of capital. Indeed, under the current system, eight Regulation A+ issuers have already listed their shares on an exchange, becoming true public companies. This positive development suggests that Regulation A+ is working as Congress intended, and expanding it could discourage companies from becoming truly public.

However, it is also clear that additional study of the existing Regulation A+ exemption is warranted. A series of recent press articles highlight the high risk of loss that investors face in investing in companies that have used Regulation A+ even when those companies later list their securities for trading on an exchange.

According to a February 2018 article in *The Wall Street Journal*, seven out of the eight companies that listed their securities for trading on an exchange in 2017 following a Regulation A+ offering are trading an average of 42 percent below their offering prices. By comparison, companies that engaged in a traditional initial public offering, or an IPO, in 2017 are trading an average of 22 percent above their offering prices. Moreover, those Regulation A+ companies were trading lower, even as the S&P 500, which tracks 500 large publicly traded companies, has risen 18 percent since the start of 2017.

Congress should better understand why Regulation A+ companies that have gone public fared so poorly compared to the rest of the market before

we go ahead and expand Regulation A+ through legislation like H.R. 4263.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I joined with my friends on the opposite side of the aisle, and Mr. MCHENRY in particular, and supported the JOBS Act, and of course I had some questions about the risk that would be involved with our mom-and-pop investors. I wasn't sure, but I decided to support the JOBS Act and Mr. MCHENRY even with my concerns because I certainly wanted the opportunity for these small businesses to have access to capital that perhaps they would not be able to get otherwise.

□ 1430

Along with that bill, we talked about the review that would be done to determine whether or not we should be increasing, particularly, Tier 2, that would expand the ability for the small businesses to have access to more than \$50 million. So I don't know why we just don't stick with what we did.

I think that, despite whatever we are learning about the A+ regulation, we need to understand thoroughly what the advantages are, what the disadvantages are, and what the risks are to investors, et cetera.

So I am going to ask my colleagues to oppose this legislation.

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

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. MACARTHUR), the sponsor of this legislation and a hard-working member of the Financial Services Committee.

Mr. MACARTHUR. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to advance this bill—this bipartisan bill. I am grateful for my Democratic cosponsor, Congresswoman SINEMA; Democratic Congressman GOTTHEIMER; and Republican Congressman HOLLINGSWORTH, for joining me in this effort.

The purpose of this bill is pretty simple and pretty narrow. Seven out of ten new jobs in this country come from our Nation's 28 million small businesses. When we help those businesses grow, we help them create new jobs.

I think of the biopharmaceutical companies in my home State of New Jersey as an example of companies that desperately need capital to continue to grow, and that growth creates new jobs. The Federal Government cannot do everything, but we can surely help these companies grow in our country.

The 1933 Securities Act laid the groundwork that all interstate security offerings have to be registered with the SEC. It was cumbersome, it was expensive, so that Congress made some exceptions. Regulation A allowed a limited amount of offerings for Main Street investors, and Regulation D allowed unlimited offerings for accredited investors. This bill is working at Regulation A.

Over time, those limits have gone up periodically. The last time it was lifted

was effective 2015. It was raised to \$50 million, and it has been helpful. It has created growth. It has created new jobs.

This bill is a modest improvement, raising that \$50 million to \$75 million. This was contemplated in the original JOBS Act, where we raised it to \$50 million. In that law, the SEC was required to either increase the \$50 million or to explain to us why they weren't doing it. Their deadline for doing that expired at the end of 2017. So this is an overdue increase, and I think it is high time that we do it.

I could offer a lot of anecdotes of how this benefits companies. I thought I would offer the one that is closest to home, my own story.

I was fortunate enough to buy a fairly small business in 2002. I did three capital raises in the years that followed. The first was for \$12 million, the second was for \$75 million, the third was for \$500 million. And those capital raises continued during my period of ownership of the company.

I can tell you, without any question, the smallest capital raises were the hardest for me. It is much harder to raise this much money than it is to raise this much. When I was raising a lot of money, I had a lot of interested parties. When I was raising the smaller amount, it was difficult.

What this bill does is allow growing companies to have another point in the market where they can raise money. It is not just banks or private equity funds; it is regular, Main Street investors.

I heard the remarks that this creates risk. I can tell you that there are dozens of people in my old company who became shareholders, who are living a better life today, them and their families, because they had an opportunity to buy stock in a growing company.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is good for businesses. It is good for employees. It is good for Main Street investors. It is a win, win, win. And, ultimately, it is good for the American economy. I urge my colleagues to support it. Let's not be afraid of making a commonsense change. I urge my colleagues to support it.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. HUIZENGA), the chairman of the Capital Markets, Securities, and Investments Subcommittee.

Mr. HUIZENGA. Mr. Speaker, I want to commend my friend from New Jersey and the work that he has put into this.

I rise today in support of this much-needed legislation that would increase the limit that small companies looking for additional investments and investors can solicit under Reg. A+. These deals would increase from \$50 million to \$75 million. This will enhance capital formation for growing small companies that are exploring crowdfunding as a method to raise capital.

The JOBS Act has proven to be wildly successful, and this program has proven itself successful as well. Yet it can be even more so with this modest increase.

So, specifically, the legislation further strengthens the ability for small- to mid-sized companies to attract more traditional underwriters and more sophisticated investors into the Reg. A+ process.

Reg. A+ has been termed a "Mini IPO" or an "IPO to go," and for good reason. While the cost of doing a full-blown IPO has skyrocketed, and the crowdfunding industry has been adopting Reg. A+ and leveraging it to raise growth capital for a fraction of what a traditional full-blown IPO would be, would cost, while still having access to the capital markets.

Like the chairman, I and many others on the committee have been concerned about the decrease in these initial public offerings, or IPOs, over the last number of years. Reg. A+ has been able to step in and help fill that gap. It provides much greater flexibility and marketing to potential investors, both accredited and non-accredited, while maintaining important consumer protections that everybody agrees needs to be there.

Despite Reg. A+ being cheaper and faster, however, major underwriters and broker dealers have been slow to fully adopt Reg. A+ because the size of the increase up to that \$50 million has really been minimal compared to a traditional IPO.

Raising the Reg. A+ limit to \$75 million is certainly a step in the right direction to alleviate this problem, as it opens Reg. A+ to larger companies that may be considering doing a full-blown traditional IPO.

Additionally, this increased limit will have a positive impact for smaller companies because it can attract some of the more traditional underwriters to the process.

So, again, I want to congratulate my friend from New Jersey on his work on this, and the chairman for really trying to push this issue forward. It is an important piece that we have been dealing with on the capital markets as we are trying to maintain and make sure that our markets are the most liquid and deep in the world, and that maintains that.

So I urge my colleagues to support this important bill.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HULTGREN), the vice chairman of the Financial Services Subcommittee on Capital Markets, Securities, and Investments.

Mr. HULTGREN. Mr. Speaker, this is an exciting, important debate. I rise today to speak in support of H.R. 4263, the Regulation A+ Improvement Act.

Congressman MACARTHUR's bipartisan legislation would increase the offering amount that companies can offer

under Tier 2 of Reg. A from \$50 million to \$75 million, adjusted for inflation by the SEC every 2 years.

This type of legislation, modeled after the bipartisan JOBS Act, typically enjoys strong bipartisan support in Congress. I hope that will be the case again today.

Title IV of the JOBS Act directed the SEC to issue rules to update Reg. A, which exempts small offerings of up to \$5 million within a 12-month period from Federal registration. The updated exemption, now known as Reg. A+, increased the amount companies could offer from \$5 million to \$50 million within a 12-month period of time, and preempts State registration and qualification requirements to make it easier for small- and medium-sized businesses to undertake Reg. A+ offerings by avoiding the oftentimes prohibitively expensive complexities of complying with up to 50 State regulators, all providing different regulations.

Some opponents of this legislation have argued that it is unnecessary because the SEC is required to review this threshold and has the authority to increase it.

On April 5, 2016, SEC staff informed the Financial Services Committee that the \$50 million threshold would remain in place throughout 2018 because of a lack of information available on Reg. A+ offerings since the rule was finalized in 2015.

However, during the comment period for implementing Reg. A+, the SEC received a significant number of comments that Reg. A+ should be expanded beyond the \$50 million threshold. Furthermore, since the amendment to Reg. A became effective, the rate of Reg. A+ securities offerings has increased.

Last year, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce testified before the Capital Markets, Securities, and Investments Subcommittee, noting this legislation “is a way to help make it easier for a small business to access capital to get deals done. To do that, even with the bump up to \$50 million, people are still finding their sea legs. But in terms of driving liquidity, we thought the \$75 million number was important.”

Former SEC Commissioner Dan Gallagher has stated: “The SEC should have exercised our clear authority under the JOBS Act to raise the offering limit to \$75 million.”

Hester Peirce, now an SEC Commissioner, testified during a hearing of the Financial Services Committee that, “Prior to the JOBS Act’s changes to Regulation A, that provision languished unused by companies, so it is important to revisit different avenues for raising capital frequently to ensure their continued usefulness.”

Congressman MACARTHUR’s legislation will help ensure that the SEC focuses on its mission of capital formation, especially for small businesses. This is vital if we are going to continue on the course of economic growth.

And at the end of the day, after all of our debate on the merits of this legisla-

tion, let’s make sure we remember it is simply an inflation adjustment for the amount of shares that can be issued under this exemption. Congressman MACARTHUR is simply proposing to make this financing tool available to more startup companies and their investors. This should not be controversial.

I urge support for Congressman MACARTHUR’s bipartisan legislation.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. HILL), the majority whip of the committee.

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, I, too, want to add my congratulations to Mr. MACARTHUR for continuing to find ways to improve Mr. Obama’s and this committee’s excellent work on the JOBS Act from some 8 years ago. We have learned a lot. We have seen the benefits of the JOBS Act, and today we have a chance to make it even better by improving Reg. A+.

I appreciate Mr. MACARTHUR’s personal story about his entrepreneurship and how this is an opportunity for more investors in our country and more capital for our entrepreneurs.

Mr. Speaker, this week I attended a meeting where people asked: Why do we need more public companies?

Gosh, that is an easy rhetorical question.

Because we have half the number of public companies we had during the Reagan administration, and we need them for our young people to invest in. We need them for our union workers to have an earning asset in their pension fund.

So we need more public companies in this Nation to share the growth and prosperity of this Nation. That is what this legislation is all about.

I thank Mr. MACARTHUR for his very straightforward, bipartisan, commonsense increase in the authority from \$50 million to \$75 million for young, growing companies to raise money under Reg. A+.

Former SEC Commissioner Dan Gallagher advocated the increase in the offering threshold to even \$100 million before the SEC adopted their final rule.

□ 1445

Mr. GALLAGHER expressed his disappointment that this offering threshold was not raised in the final rule from that original statutory cap of \$50 million.

We have support through the commission and through the staff for raising this amount, Mr. Speaker, to help our entrepreneurs. Expanding Reg. A+ to include offerings up to \$75 million will allow private companies to consider a mini-IPO under Reg. A+. This will give us more competition for capital, driving down cost of capital, driving up the number of opportunities for people to take advantage of going public, growing a prosperous company, and

sharing that equity with investors through their exchange-traded fund, through their pension plan, through their 401(k) plan. We want more opportunities to share our Nation’s prosperity.

I thank my friend, Mr. MACARTHUR, for his thoughtful work, and I thank our chairman for his leadership on the committee.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Maine (Mr. POLIQUIN), from the land of moose and maple syrup, a hardworking member of the Financial Services Committee.

Mr. POLIQUIN. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate this opportunity very much. You notice, Mr. Speaker, those who do not live in the great State of Maine are very envious of those who do; so I take full advantage of the moose, bear, and other critters that we have in the State of Maine.

Right now, today, Mr. Speaker, I am talking about H.R. 4263, the Regulation A+ Improvement Act, and I want to congratulate the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. MACARTHUR) for the great work he has done on this bill, and I want to thank Chairman HENSARLING for bringing this bill to the floor. It is very important for all of us to consider this.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we all know what we want in this country, which are more opportunities and more jobs for our kids—better opportunities for our kids so they will have better lives and more freedom. This cannot happen, Mr. Speaker, unless our businesses are able to grow and hire more individuals and pay them more.

Now, that mostly can only happen, Mr. Speaker, if businesses are able to more easily borrow money. The chairman and I both know that the government’s job is to help our economy grow, not get in the way.

That is why Reg. A+ cuts through the red tape such that more small- and medium-sized businesses are able to access capital, grow their operations, and hire more people. In a sense, Reg. A+ has implemented, Mr. Speaker, billions of dollars of new financing and has led economic growth in small to medium businesses to grow and present more opportunities for their workers. So Reg. A+ works. We know that because the evidence is there.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I would like to close by saying, Mr. MACARTHUR’s bill is a commonsense technical adjustment to a bill—a rule, rather, that works. It simply increases the amount that companies are able to borrow under this rule that works.

Please, everybody, Republicans and Democrats, support Mr. MACARTHUR’s bill.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from

Ohio (Mr. DAVIDSON), a hardworking member of the Financial Services Committee.

Mr. DAVIDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer my support for H.R. 4263, the Regulation A+ Improvement Act. I greatly appreciate my colleague, Representative MACARTHUR, for this bill and for our chairman for moving it through our committee, and, frankly, my colleagues from across the aisle who came together to recognize the need for this bill.

As has already been stated, this has broad implications for small capital companies. I spent the past 15 years, prior to coming to Congress, growing small manufacturing companies, and I can greatly appreciate the challenge of raising capital. This is another means of doing that, but I want to highlight another area that it might be suitable.

With approximately \$4 billion of capital raised worldwide in 2017, it is fair to say that initial coin offerings are just another great way for startups to raise capital and grow their businesses. ICOs in Regulation A+ could work great together, and with Mr. MACARTHUR's bill, they can work even better.

An example of this harmonization is the investor-based Reg. A+ allows investors of any wealth to participate. This Democratic process is a pillar for ICOs in terms of the premise behind distributed ledger technology.

Another provision is anti-money laundering. Reg. A+ requires the validation of investors, as well as background checks on the principles of offering companies. This goes hand in hand with improving the credibility of ICO business practices and reducing the risk of loss.

Compliance with Reg. A+ would mean a disclosure memorandum, not just a white paper. Reg. A+ provides ICO entrepreneurs and their startups with a viable path to compliance with SEC security regulation. So it is important that we have guardrails established in this explosive new industry, while not hampering the ability to grow the business. I urge my colleagues to support this vital legislation.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I have extensive information here about what is happening with Regulation A+. At first, I decided that some of this information I wouldn't share because I am so anxious for these small businesses to be able to access capital, but I think that, you know, some of my earlier concerns, perhaps, may have been justified.

H.R. 4263, the so-called Regulation A+ Improvement Act, is opposed by consumer and investor advocates. I would like to take a moment to read some of their statements in opposition to this bill.

Consumer Federation of America:

"This bill would increase the offering limit, despite the fact that the SEC already has unlimited authority to raise

the cap as it deems appropriate. Moreover, the SEC is required to review the offering limit every 2 years, with its next analysis expected to be released next month. . . . A vote for this bill, before the SEC has had a chance to complete its analysis, is a vote against evidence-based policymaking.

"If Congress were to take the time to consider the research that the SEC has conducted on the Regulation A markets since the Regulation A+ rules were adopted, it would find that there currently is no need to raise the limit . . . data suggest that issuers generally are not clamoring for more capital than is currently allowed to them under the rules. . . .

"The market's tepid reaction to Regulation A offerings is surely also related to the largely abysmal performance of Regulation A offerings to date. . . . A recent Barron's article provided an in-depth review of the Regulation A market, describing the 'woeful performance' of the few dozen companies that are currently exchange-listed and the difficulty trading or getting a price quote for the vast majority of companies that aren't exchange listed. The Barron's article further described how 'most Reg. A+ businesses haven't gotten beyond the startup phase known as the pipedream.' Some examples that the article cites include businesses seeking capital for cannabis paraphernalia, flying cars, studying UFOs, telepathy, and light-speed travel. We wonder why the backers of this legislation would spend so much time and effort seeking to artificially prop up businesses of this sort.

"And while Regulation A's supporters have touted Regulation A's job creating potential, the Barron's article states that the only people Regulation A clearly has created jobs for are Regulation A underwriters and promoters on Wall Street, many of whom have 'checked stock market histories.'"

Are these really the sort of jobs Congress is intending to promote?

"In conclusion, because this bill arbitrarily increases the offering limit without evidence that doing so is either necessary or beneficial, and in the face of evidence that Regulation A offerings to date largely have been market failures, we urge you to vote 'no.'"

Let me just continue to quote. Americans for Financial Reform: "This is an unwarranted increase in the threshold. Most fundamentally, Congress should not be undermining public securities markets by expanding the ability of larger companies to make offerings while being exempt from core disclosure and investor protection requirements. Private offerings were designed to permit early stage capital raising from sophisticated investors by small companies, but the current cap of \$50 million per year in private capital raising already permits fairly large companies to take advantage of this route. Additionally, the Securities and Exchange Commission, SEC, already has regulatory authority to increase the

current threshold, which they examine on a biannual basis. . . .

"Seven of the eight companies with Regulation A+ offerings in 2017 are down 42 percent from their offer prices, as compared to conventional offerings made during the same period, which are up 22 percent from offer prices. This is to be expected, given that Regulation A+ permits companies to avoid requirements such as disclosures that were designed to protect investors. If it expanded such exemptions, Congress would facilitate increased harm to investors.

"Members should also take notice that with the blockchain and cryptocurrency fever, SEC filing and disclosure exemptions like Regulation A+ are becoming a popular avenue for initial coin offerings, ICOs. . . .

"In the middle of this SEC crackdown on fraudulent ICOs, H.R. 4263 would potentially expose a larger number of investors—including nonaccredited, unsophisticated investors—to shady companies, Ponzi schemes, and exit scams.

"The widespread use of private offerings reduces transparency and investor protections in capital markets. Raising capital under Regulation A+ should be used as an on-ramp to a true public offering and not as an end in itself for larger issuers. Increasing the annual threshold for exempted Regulation A+ offerings goes in the opposite direction."

Public Citizen had this to say:

"Evidence shows little demand for this measure. A study by the SEC of Regulation A+ offerings found that the average issuer sought only \$18 million. Moreover, these firms pose risk for investors, as the issuers had only an average of \$50,000 in cash; no property, plants, and equipment; no revenues; and no net income. Increasing access to capital with no additional investor protections exacerbates the problem."

And so, yes, I do oppose the bill. Let me just say this. I would like small businesses to do well. I would like our small businesses to have access to the capital that they need to support, you know, good ideas that have been given the kind of research that is necessary to determine the potential for some of these businesses.

You just heard this information from the Barron report. This is serious. What we have seen, despite the fact what we want to happen, is that it is not happening. The fact that we would like very much—and we have done everything that we could do with the JOBS Act to give support to our small businesses because we want them to thrive. We believe that they are job intensive, if they can get up and get going. It is not happening.

What we are doing is we are exposing these little mom-and-pop investors to situations where they are going to lose what small amounts of money they are investing. So let's just be cool, let's be calm, and let's give the SEC the opportunity to do its analysis. There is no reason to push this now.

I would ask my Members on the opposite side of the aisle to rethink and to join with me, oppose the bill so that we can give the SEC the opportunity, again, to do the kind of analysis it needs to do, and let's think about what else can we do to help small businesses, rather than continue down the road of failure, because this is exactly what is being exposed.

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

□ 1500

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. TENNEY), a hard-working member of the Financial Services Committee.

Ms. TENNEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to support this bipartisan legislation, H.R. 4263, the Regulation A+ Improvement Act, introduced by my colleague from New Jersey (Mr. MACARTHUR).

Congratulations to Mr. MACARTHUR and the chairman for bringing this great legislation to the floor.

This legislation would increase, from \$50 million to \$75 million, the offering exemption amount that companies can offer under the Securities and Exchange Commission's, the SEC, Tier 2 of Regulation A, an amendment to the 2012 JOBS Act.

As the owner of a small business, I understand firsthand the vital importance of making our Nation's business climate competitive at all levels. Small businesses create nearly 70 percent of the new jobs in our country. Yet small businesses are only starting to see a resurgence from the struggling ecosystem created in the last Presidential era. Thanks to the recent tax cuts and regulatory changes, we have seen continued growth.

H.R. 4263 would be the next step toward helping small companies raise necessary equity capital to enable them to grow and compete in a changing and dynamic marketplace. This will result in more jobs and more opportunities for our communities.

This bill would expand the SEC's Regulation A+ from \$50 million to \$75 million, and it would allow companies to consider mini IPOs or mini initial public offerings at a less costly alternative to raising capital.

In my district, it is difficult to raise capital and secure a steady line of credit for developing and sustaining small businesses. I have experienced this very difficulty and struggle with clients I have represented in my own legal practice.

This bill would help tremendously in improving access to capital for small companies that ultimately are the drivers of job growth in New York and across the Nation.

Mr. Speaker, I want to again thank Mr. MACARTHUR and the bipartisan group of cosponsors for their hard work, and I urge my colleagues to support this great legislation.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 4263 is just another reckless partisan bill that could harm mom-and-pop investors and weaken the integrity of the U.S. capital markets. It continues the efforts to repeal or weaken important regulatory protections under the guise of supporting jobs.

Not only have my Republican colleagues failed to come up with any real data or analysis to support this claim, but they also completely substitute their own judgment for that of the SEC, the agency with the expertise over these issues.

As I have already said, we only have to wait a few more weeks to see if the SEC decides to expand the Regulation A+ exemption and to understand its rationale for the decision. But I suppose a few weeks is a few weeks too long for my friends on the opposite side of the aisle who are currently pushing for as many of these kinds of bills as possible to be included in the Senate's Dodd-Frank rollback.

Those bad bills would cause further harm to investors by allowing newly public companies to avoid audits of their controls over financial reporting for a decade; by hampering investors' ability to get independent, reliable information ahead of a shareholder meeting; and by making it easier for fraudsters to swindle unsophisticated investors into buying stock in a fake or failing company.

It should come as no surprise that these same harmful provisions show up in the CHOICE Act, which is 10 times worse than the Senate's deregulatory bill.

Mr. Speaker, both Democrats and Republicans want to help small businesses grow and create jobs, but as Members of Congress, we also have the responsibility to protect investors, particularly retail investors, who are looking to save for retirement, to buy a house, or to support our children's education.

As I have repeatedly said, any regulation must strike the right balance between capital formation in our securities markets and investor protection. This bill fails to do that, and that is why it is opposed by consumer and investor advocates like Americans for Financial Reform, Consumer Federation of America, and Public Citizen.

Mr. Speaker, I would urge all Members to join me in standing up for investors and vote "no" on H.R. 4263, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire as to how much time I have remaining.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FERGUSON). The gentleman from Texas has 5½ minutes remaining.

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

Mr. Speaker, I again want to thank the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. MACARTHUR), an entrepreneur, some-

one who brings years and years of experience in capital formation of building a business to help grow jobs and our economy.

H.R. 4263, again, is, in part, an expansion of the JOBS Act, something that was signed into law by President Barack Obama. I didn't agree with that particular President on many occasions, but he got this right, and this has been something good for the American economy.

But what I fear is that, if we don't go forward, we end up going backwards. And what we hear from our friends on the other side of the aisle is: Let's keep the status quo.

But, Mr. Speaker, the status quo is what brought us a 1.6 percent economy. The status quo is what brought paychecks to become stagnant. The status quo ensured that Americans did not recover their savings from the great financial crisis.

Now we have the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, and now we have 3 percent economic growth; now we have the lowest unemployment rate in 17 years; now we have seen the greatest growth in paychecks in almost a decade; now we are seeing 90 percent—90 percent—of wage earners seeing a bigger paycheck, better take-home pay, because of the economic policies of this Republican Congress and of the Trump administration.

So the gentleman from New Jersey has brought us, really, in some respects, an important but modest proposition: that we ought to increase the threshold for Reg A+ to \$75 million.

Again, we don't know where the next Uber is coming from. We don't know where the next Spotify is coming from. We don't know where the next Apple is coming from. But do you know what, Mr. Speaker? We all know they need capital. And this is a valuable alley, chain, path in order to bring capital into our startup businesses.

Now, a constant theme we hear from our friends on the other side of the aisle is consumer protection. Do you know what? Back in the 1980s, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts decided to protect their people from this fly-by-night company called Apple, which now is looking at an almost \$1 trillion market cap valuation, and had you invested at the IPO, you would have a 45,000 percent rate of return. You could buy a home; your children could buy a home; your great-grandchildren could buy a home. You could achieve your American Dream. But a government decided: No, you are too stupid to make this investment decision on your own. We must protect you.

Nothing—nothing—in the bill from the gentleman from New Jersey alters the vast, vast array of consumer protection laws that are already on the books. Nothing in H.R. 4263 prevents the Department of Justice from pursuing criminal prosecutions of fraud. Nothing in the bill impacts the SEC's ability to pursue civil actions for those

who engage in fraud, negligent misrepresentations, negligent transactions.

Nothing in this bill prevents the SEC from entering into cease and desist orders and imposing civil liabilities for those who violate SEC rules. Investors get to pursue Federal civil actions against those who defraud them, those who make untrue statements. So there are plenty of very important laws that are on our books.

What we shouldn't do, though, is protect our hardworking constituents from the ability to make decisions for themselves and participate in these early growth companies that now are only restricted to accredited investors. It is only the wealthiest who get to make these decisions. Well, in the land of the free, maybe a few more should, and maybe we ought to have a few more Apples, a few more Ubers, a few more Spotifys.

I want to thank, again, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. MACARTHUR), who has been a great leader in capital formation and job creation on our committee and in this Congress, and I want to urge all Members to adopt H.R. 4263.

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

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion to recommit at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentlewoman opposed to the bill?

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, I am opposed to it in its present form.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mrs. Beatty moves to recommit the bill H.R. 4263 to the Committee on Financial Services with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith with the following amendment:

Page 3, line 10, strike "\$75,000,000" and insert "\$50,000,000".

Page 3, line 23, insert the following new section:

SEC. 3. EFFECT OF INCREASE IN OFFERING LIMIT.

The amendments made by this Act shall take effect on the date that the Securities and Exchange Commission revises regulations promulgated pursuant to subparagraphs (B) through (G) of paragraph (2) of subsection (b) of section 3 of the Securities Act of 1933 (15 U.S.C. 77c) as necessary to protect investors before increasing the aggregate offering amount described in subparagraph (A) of such paragraph to an amount that is greater than \$50,000,000.

Mrs. BEATTY (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to dispense with the reading of the motion.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Ohio is recognized for 5 minutes in support of her motion.

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, this is the final amendment to the bill, which will not kill the bill or send it back to committee. If adopted, the bill will immediately proceed to final passage, as amended.

Mr. Speaker, this motion to recommit is simple and should be able to garner the support of every Member of this body who seeks to enhance our robust public and private markets while, at the same time, ensuring there are adequate safeguards in place for the benefit of Main Street investors.

Specifically, this motion will accomplish two simple things: one, it will strike the increase in the offering limit to \$75 million; and, two, it will require the SEC to review and revise their bad actor disqualification regulations prior to future increases in the offering threshold.

Unfortunately, as currently written, with all due respect to my Republican colleagues, raising the offering threshold is a solution in search of a problem. Congress designated the SEC with regulating the offering. Congress decided the SEC would administer the offering. The SEC is the expert on Regulation A+, and it should be the one to raise the offering threshold, assuming the data supports such an increase.

Under the law, the SEC will be reporting to Congress whether or not they will raise the threshold just next month. This bill is premature, and for the lawyers in the room, it is not ripe for review. So why wouldn't we wait?

Right now there is zero data to suggest Congress needs to raise the threshold, and it seems prudent to wait until next month to see what the SEC has to say before rushing to increase it.

The majority argues this bill will allow companies to raise more money. I say this bill is a solution in search of a problem because only less than a handful of companies have ever actually raised the current maximum amount of \$50 million.

With regard to updating the bad actor disqualification regulation, Bloomberg recently published an article on Regulation A+ and the companies using the offering and found one executive of a company was convicted for filing false tax returns, another for obstructing justice, and another was accused of selling unregistered stock. For the sake of time, these are just a few examples. Are these really the types of individuals we want selling securities to Main Street mom-and-pop investors?

Another article, appearing in *Baron's*, studied the hundreds of companies that have used Regulation A+ to raise funds, and I quote them: "We were supposed to get new jobs and new industries. Instead, we've gotten GoFundMe-style websites hawking penny stocks and professional wrestlers shilling shares on TV."

They went on to highlight some of the companies and the products availing themselves of the lightly regulated Regulation A+ offering, which included companies trying to make cannabis paraphernalia, flying cars, guns, and my personal favorite, the founder of a rock band seeking to raise money to study UFOs and light-speed travel.

Now, I am not trying to persuade Members that all companies seeking to raise money through Regulation A+ are Wolf of Wall Street or UFO chasers, because back in my home district, a Scottish-based company successfully used Regulation A+ to open their first brewery and restaurant in the United States. That example is exactly what Congress had in mind when it called for the creation of Regulation A+, and it is precisely the type of opportunity for investors that the law was intended to create.

□ 1515

This is why we need to ensure that we maintain the integrity of the Regulation A+ offering and that we prevent bad actors from using it in a way to rip off and scam all of our constituents.

That is why I urge Congress to adopt this motion, to stand up for strong public and private markets, to wait the 30 days when the SEC can come back to us, and to stand up for strong protections for Main Street investors.

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

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, when I have said something incorrect, I wish to correct myself in front of my colleagues in the public. I earlier said that my colleagues were trying to give us status quo. I wish to correct myself. This motion to recommit is worse than status quo. It would take us back even further.

The gentlewoman from Ohio should admit when she is wrong. She is wrong when she says this will not kill the bill. This will kill it. It will gut it. It will bury it 6 feet under. I think she knows that. So she is entitled to her opinion about what Reg. A+ should be, but she absolutely eviscerates the bipartisan bill that is before the House.

Because many who are watching this may somehow think, "Oh, my Lord, there are no consumer protections for Reg. A+ offerings," the basic requirements that are applicable to both Tier 1 and tier offerings include company eligibility requirements, bad actor disqualification requirements, issuer disclosure requirements, ongoing reporting requirements.

And then for Tier 2 offerings, additional requirements: providing audited financial statements; requirement to file annual, semiannual, and current event reports; and limitation on the amount of security nonaccredited and accredited investors can purchase.

Then those that are offered on an exchange have to adhere to the exchange's listing standards, including corporate governance requirement, background checks on the management and board, shareholder approval of certain corporate actions, and the list goes on.

Mr. Speaker, I think there is a good case here. Anybody who picked up a newspaper recently would find out that, yesterday, the SEC charged Theranos with raising more than \$700 million from investors through exaggerated and false statements about the company's technology.

Guess what. In announcing the enforcement decision, here is what the SEC noted:

The charges make clear that there is no exemption—no exemption—from the anti-fraud provisions of the Federal securities laws simply because a company is nonpublic, development-stage, or the subject of exuberant media attention.

In other words, the SEC was thoroughly able to do their job, and they were ready and willing to investigate and bring enforcement actions, as they well should. This is part of their job, investor protection. But guess what. So is capital formation. Capital formation is part of the mission of the SEC. That is why it is so important that we not protect our constituents against great investment opportunities, like Apple, like Uber, and like Spotify.

So when we have so many Americans who are still living paycheck to paycheck, when they finally get a little savings together, shouldn't they be able to invest in great opportunities of early growth companies? Shouldn't these early growth companies have access to capital?

I think so.

You can't have capitalism without capital. Let's get more capital circulating in the system. The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act has done so much good, but we need so much more. We need capital circulating the system, particularly for our startups and our early growth stage companies.

We need to reject the MTR, and we need to vote in support of H.R. 4263.

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 yeas appeared to have it.

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

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 and clause 9 of rule XX, and the order of the House of today, this 15-minute vote on the motion to recommit will be followed by 5-minute votes on:

Passage of H.R. 4263, if ordered;

Adoption of the amendment to H.R. 4545;

A motion to recommit on H.R. 4545, if ordered;

Passage of H.R. 4545, if ordered;

Ordering the previous question on House Resolution 780; and

Adoption of House Resolution 780, if ordered.

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

[Roll No. 109]

YEAS—182

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

NAYS—235

Abraham	Blackburn	Coffman
Aderholt	Blum	Cole
Allen	Bost	Collins (GA)
Amash	Brady (TX)	Collins (NY)
Amodei	Brat	Comer
Arrington	Bridenstine	Comstock
Babin	Brooks (AL)	Conaway
Bacon	Brooks (IN)	Cook
Banks (IN)	Buchanan	Costello (PA)
Barletta	Buck	Cramer
Barr	Bucshon	Crawford
Barton	Budd	Culberson
Bergman	Burgess	Curbelo (FL)
Biggs	Byrne	Curtis
Bilirakis	Calvert	Davidson
Bishop (MI)	Carter (GA)	Davis, Rodney
Bishop (UT)	Chabot	Denham
Black	Cheney	Dent

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

NOT VOTING—13

Carter (TX)	Katko	Slaughter
Costa	Lipinski	Walz
Cummings	Loudermilk	Wilson (FL)
Davis, Danny	Rice (NY)	
Ellison	Ros-Lehtinen	

□ 1548

Messrs. OLSON, RUTHERFORD, ABRAHAM and STEWART changed their vote from "yea" to "nay."

Messrs. LARSEN of Washington, Meses. SHEA-PORTER and BLUNT ROCHESTER changed their vote from "nay" to "yea."

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

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 yeas 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 246, nays 170, not voting 14, as follows:

[Roll No. 110]

YEAS—246

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

NAYS—170

Adams Boyle, Brendan F.
 Aguilar Brady (PA)
 Barragán Brown (MD)
 Bass Brownley (CA)
 Beatty Bustos
 Bera Butterfield
 Beyer Capuano
 Bishop (GA) Carballo
 Blumenauer Cardenas
 Blunt Rochester Carson (IN)
 Bonamici

Connolly Kelly (IL)
 Cooper Kennedy
 Courtney Khanna
 Crist Kihuen
 Crowley Kildee
 Davis (CA) Kilmer
 DeFazio Kind
 DeGette Krishnamoorthi
 Delaney Kuster (NH)
 DeLauro Langevin
 DelBene Larsen (WA)
 Demings Larson (CT)
 DeSaulnier Lawrence
 Deutch Lawson (FL)
 Dingell Lee
 Doyle, Michael Levin
 F. Lewis (GA)
 Engel Lieu, Ted
 Espallat Loebback
 Rice (SC) Lofgren
 Esty (CT) Lowenthal
 Evans Lowey
 Foster Lujan Grisham,
 Frankel (FL) M.
 Fudge Luján, Ben Ray
 Gabbard Lynch
 Gallego Maloney,
 Gomez Carolyn B.
 Gonzalez (TX) Matsui
 Green, Al McCollum
 Green, Gene McEachin
 Grijalva McGovern
 Gutiérrez McNeerney
 Hanabusa Meeks
 Hastings Meng
 Heck Moore
 Higgins (NY) Moulton
 Himes Murphy (FL)
 Hoyer Nadler
 Huffman Napolitano
 Jackson Lee Neal
 Jayapal Nolan
 Jeffries Norcross
 Johnson (GA) O'Halleran
 Johnson, E. B. O'Rourke
 Jones Pallone
 Kaptur Panetta
 Keating Pascrell

NOT VOTING—14

Carter (TX) Katko
 Costa Lipinski
 Cummings Rice (NY)
 Davis, Danny Ros-Lehtinen
 Ellison Scalise

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1555

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS EXAMINATION FAIRNESS AND REFORM ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the question on agreeing to amendment No. 1 printed in part B of House Report 115-595, offered by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MAXINE WATERS), to 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, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 184, nays 233, not voting 13, as follows:

[Roll No. 111]

YEAS—184

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

NAYS—233

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

NOT VOTING—13

Carter (TX)
Costa
Cummings
Davis, Danny
Ellison

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1603

Mr. TROTT changed his vote from “yea” to “nay.”

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated against:

Mr. THOMAS J. ROONEY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I incorrectly voted. I had intended to vote “nay” on rollcall No. 111.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. 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.

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 will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 283, nays 133, not voting 14, as follows:

[Roll No. 112]

YEAS—283

Abraham
Aderholt
Aguiar
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Arrington
Babin
Bacon
Banks (IN)
Baretta
Barr
Barton
Bera
Bergman
Beyer
Biggs
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Blunt Rochester
Bost
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Budd
Burgess
Bustos
Byrne
Calvert
Cárdenas
Carter (GA)
Chabot
Cheney
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comer
Comstock
Conaway
Connolly
Cook
Cooper
Correa
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Cuellar
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Curtis
Davidson
Davis, Rodney
Delaney
DeBene
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Dunn
Emmer
Estes (KS)
Esty (CT)
Farenthold
Faso
Ferguson
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Flores
Fortenberry
Foster
Foxy
Frelinghuysen
Gaetz
Gallagher
Garrett
Gianforte

Westerman
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman

Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho

Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Zeldin

NAYS—133

Adams
Barragán
Bass
Beatty
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (MD)
Brownley (CA)
Butterfield
Capuano
Carbajal
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Courtney
Crist
Crowley
Davis (CA)
DeFazio
DeGette
DeLauro
Demings
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Engel
Eshoo
Español
Evans
Frankel (FL)
Fudge

NOT VOTING—14

Carter (TX)
Costa
Cummings
Davis, Danny
Ellison

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1610

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on ordering the previous question 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, 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.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 232, nays 182, not voting 16, as follows:

[Roll No. 113]

YEAS—232

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

NAYS—182

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

NOT VOTING—16

Carter (TX)	Lipinski	Slaughter
Costa	Nolan	Walz
Cummings	Reichert	Welch
Davis, Danny	Rice (NY)	Wilson (FL)
Ellison	Ros-Lehtinen	
Katko	Scalise	

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1617

So the previous question was ordered. The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated against:

Mr. WELCH. Mr. Speaker, had I been present, I would have voted “nay” on rollcall No. 113.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. 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. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 235, noes 177, not voting 18, as follows:

[Roll No. 114]

AYES—235

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

NOES—177

Adams	Bishop (GA)	Brown (MD)
Aguilar	Blumenauer	Brownley (CA)
Barragán	Blunt Rochester	Bustos
Bass	Bonamici	Butterfield
Beatty	Boyle, Brendan	Capuano
Bera	F.	Carbajal
Beyer	Brady (PA)	Cárdenas

Carson (IN)	Jackson Lee	Pascarell
Castor (FL)	Jayapal	Payne
Castro (TX)	Jeffries	Pelosi
Chu, Judy	Johnson (GA)	Perlmutter
Ciциlline	Johnson, E. B.	Peters
Clark (MA)	Kaptur	Peterson
Clarke (NY)	Keating	Pingree
Clay	Kelly (IL)	Pocan
Cleaver	Kennedy	Polis
Clyburn	Kihuen	Price (NC)
Cohen	Kildee	Quigley
Connolly	Kilmer	Raskin
Cooper	Kind	Richmond
Courtney	Krishnamoorthi	Rosen
Crist	Kuster (NH)	Roybal-Allard
Crowley	Langevin	Ruiz
Cuellar	Larsen (WA)	Ruppersberger
Davis (CA)	Larson (CT)	Rush
DeFazio	Lawrence	Ryan (OH)
DeGette	Lawson (FL)	Sánchez
Delaney	Lee	Sarbanes
DeLauro	Levin	Schakowsky
DelBene	Lewis (GA)	Schiff
Demings	Lieu, Ted	Schrader
DeSaulnier	Loeb sack	Scott (VA)
Deutch	Lofgren	Scott, David
Dingell	Lowenthal	Serrano
Doggett	Lowey	Sewell (AL)
Doyle, Michael F.	Lujan Grisham, M.	Shea-Porter
Engel	Luján, Ben Ray	Sherman
Eshoo	Lynch	Sires
Espallat	Maloney,	Smith (WA)
Esty (CT)	Carolyn B.	Soto
Evans	Maloney, Sean	Speier
Foster	Matsui	Swailwell (CA)
Frankel (FL)	McCollum	Takano
Fudge	McEachin	Thompson (CA)
Gabbard	McGovern	Thompson (MS)
Gallago	McNerney	Titus
Garamendi	Meeks	Tonko
Gomez	Meng	Torres
Gonzalez (TX)	Moore	Tsongas
Green, Al	Moulton	Vargas
Green, Gene	Murphy (FL)	Veasey
Grijalva	Nadler	Vela
Gutiérrez	Napolitano	Velázquez
Hanabusa	Neal	Visclosky
Hastings	Norcross	Wasserman
Heck	O'Halleran	Schultz
Higgins (NY)	O'Rourke	Waters, Maxine
Himes	Pallone	Watson Coleman
Hoyer	Panetta	Welch
Huffman		Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—18

Carter (TX)	Ellison	Rice (NY)
Cartwright	Joyce (OH)	Ros-Lehtinen
Costa	Katko	Scalise
Cummings	Lipinski	Slaughter
Curbelo (FL)	Nolan	Walz
Davis, Danny	Reichert	Wilson (FL)

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE
The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1623

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.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall No. 110, "nay" on rollcall No. 111, "yea" on rollcall No. 112, "yea" on rollcall No. 113, and "yea" on rollcall No. 114.

ADJOURNMENT FROM THURSDAY, MARCH 15, 2018, TO MONDAY, MARCH 19, 2018

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet on Monday, March 19, 2018, when it shall convene at noon for morning-hour debate and 2 p.m. for legislative business.

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

There was no objection.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H. RES. 774

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CULBERSON) be removed as a cosponsor of H. Res. 774.

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

There was no objection.

PERMISSION FOR MEMBER TO BE CONSIDERED AS PRIMARY SPONSOR OF H.R. 138

Mr. NORCROSS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that I may hereafter be considered to be the primary sponsor of H.R. 138, 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 New Jersey?

There was no objection.

FRANKLIN-SIMPSON SPORTS ANNOUNCERS

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

Mr. COMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. James Mooneyhan and Mr. Steve Thurmond for their contributions to Simpson County in the First Congressional District of Kentucky.

These two community leaders have not only served as ambassadors for Franklin-Simpson High School throughout their careers and collectively witnessed over 33 years of sports history, but have contributed to the economic development and well-being of their fellow citizens during their careers in public service.

Off air, Steve Thurmond is the executive director of the Franklin-Simpson Chamber of Commerce, and James Mooneyhan has served as Simpson County's jailer. From state championship titles to their children's successes, their commentary continually showcased the fervent pride Simpson Countians hold for their community.

The excitement and spirit resulting from the unique blend of their personalities will be extremely difficult to replace, and their retirement marks the end of an era for this storied program.

Although the voices of Franklin-Simpson athletics will soon be broadcast throughout the region for the last time, I join with the entire community to thank them for the laughs and unforgettable memories they have provided over the last 25 years. I look for-

ward to seeing these Wildcat fans on the sidelines for years to come.

RUSSIAN CHEMICAL ATTACK IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

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

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to strongly condemn the March 4 chemical attacks conducted by the Kremlin in Salisbury, England, against former Russian intelligence officer Sergei Skripal and his daughter Yulia. Detective Sergeant Nick Bailey, the first on the scene, has also been hospitalized.

Mr. Speaker, Vladimir Putin continues to display a pattern of interfering with and undermining the democratic processes and institutions in contravention of the rules-based international order. We have seen that in Russia's frequent disruptive cyber operations and now chemical warfare.

How far will they push things?

Mr. Speaker, that is why I, along with Representatives MEEKS, WILSON, COLE, HOLDING, and SIRES, introduced a resolution this afternoon condemning this attack, calling for accountability for this and all chemical and biological attacks and standing in firm partnership with our friends and allies in the United Kingdom.

Mr. Speaker, I hope my colleagues will join me in cosponsoring this important statement of solidarity in condemnation and also in praying for the health of Sergei, Yulia, and Nick.

□ 1630

THANKING PENN STATE STUDENTS FOR THEIR FIGHT AGAINST PEDIATRIC CANCER

(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, I rise today to thank Penn State students for their fight against pediatric cancer.

THON, a 46-hour dance marathon, took place February 16 through 18, and students raised \$10,151,663 for the Four Diamonds Fund at Penn State Children's Hospital. Four Diamonds ensures that families that are battling pediatric cancer are not faced with any costs, allowing them to fully focus on the needs of their child.

THON is the largest student-run student philanthropy in the world, but it all began in 1973 by a group of students looking to add excitement to a dreary February in central Pennsylvania and for a way to give back to the community. Today, THON engages more than 15,000 students each year and has inspired other university, high school, middle school, and elementary school students across the Nation to start dance marathons of their own, all in hopes of conquering pediatric cancer.

Mr. Speaker, I am in awe of the power of our Penn State students and their care and concern for others, and I thank them for this outstanding contribution to the community.

OUR FAILURE TO STOP THE SLAUGHTER IN SYRIA IS SHAMEFUL

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, today, the brutal conflict in Syria enters its eighth year. As we meet, safe and secure in this Chamber, the Syrian regime, with the support of its principal ally, Russia, is pulverizing Eastern Ghouta.

On February 24, the U.N. Security Council unanimously passed a resolution demanding a 30-day cease-fire across Syria. This was supposed to permit a "durable humanitarian pause" so that aid could be delivered and people who are critically sick and wounded could be evacuated.

It hasn't worked. Instead, a brutal campaign of airstrikes, shelling, and ground offensives has intensified. Populated areas remain under siege. The targeting of civilians continues, and hundreds more men, women, and children have been killed.

In the words of the U.N. Secretary General: "Syria is bleeding inside and out."

Mr. Speaker, our failure to stop this terrible slaughter is shameful. It is unacceptable. We must urgently work with our allies, put an end to this nightmare, and find a path forward.

CONGRATULATING JOHNSTOWN'S ENVIRONMENTAL TANK AND CONTAINER COMPANY

(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, I want to congratulate Johnstown's Environmental Tank and Container Company, a division of JWF Industries, for being named Manufacturer of the Year at the Sixth Annual 2018 Oil & Gas Awards.

The Manufacturer of the Year Award recognizes the outstanding contributions that a manufacturer has made to the industry in the region, such as advances made in environmental stewardship, efficiency, innovation, community leadership, and health and safety, and I am proud of ETC's achievement.

Manufacturing is a key to a nation's prosperity and drives the American economy. As America competes on a global scale, it is critical that this industry continues to grow, creating a wealth of job opportunities for all Americans. Over 500,000 people in Pennsylvania rely on the strength of the manufacturing sector.

Before the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, the United States had the highest busi-

ness tax rates in the industrialized world. Now this law is removing this economic choke hold, putting American businesses at a more favorable corporate tax rate than their foreign competitors, and also allowing companies to write off the full cost of new equipment when it is purchased.

America is gaining its competitive edge, and the manufacturing industry is at the forefront of this success story.

HONORING THE LIFE OF CHRIS HAZENCOMB

(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 Chris Hazencomb. Chris attended the Route 91 festival in Las Vegas on October 1.

Chris was a sports junkie who loved the Angels, Raiders, and Lakers. He worked at the local Walmart and is remembered by all of his customers as being very friendly.

Chris was close to his mother, Maryanne, and even had a gift for her with him while at the festival. Chris died shielding his friend, Nikki, from gunfire with his own body. He is remembered for his love of helping people and his constant need to put others before himself.

I would like to extend my condolences to Chris' family and friends. Please know that the city of Las Vegas, the State of Nevada, and the whole country grieve with you.

HONORING THE LIFE OF STEPHEN HAWKING

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

Mr. YOHO. Mr. Speaker, yesterday our world lost the beloved Stephen Hawking, a man who spent his life defying all obstacles and pursuing the depths of human knowledge. He is the epitome of proving your circumstances don't define you.

Hawking faced being told in his early twenties that he only had a few years to live. Fearlessly, he went on to not only beat those odds, but, along the way, demonstrated the beginning and the end of our universe as we know it today.

Hawking taught us that, if you dare to dream and work hard, you can succeed; and I know he is responsible for inspiring many of our scientific minds, both young and old alike.

As we celebrate his life, let us remember not only his accomplishments, academic and otherwise, but his fighting spirit. We are grateful for all he taught us and the legacy he left our world. Let us all remember him by embracing his steadfast determination and lead lives of action, as he did.

MAPLE WEEKEND

(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 an exciting spring tradition in upstate New York and, particularly, the 22nd Congressional District.

Vernon-Verona-Sherrill School District, or VVS, is holding its Maple Weekend this coming weekend. Maple Weekend is run for two weekends each year by the Future Farmers of America, also known as FFA. This FFA organization has approximately 125 members, and its success has been recognized both on the State and national levels.

Despite the two nor'easters that New York has received in March alone, VVS' FFA organization has worked tirelessly to prepare for the upcoming maple season. This weekend, VVS will join 170 other local organizations across New York to prepare demonstrations on how to harvest and produce maple syrup products, host pancake breakfasts which feature our award-winning syrup, and provide tours of the mouthwatering "sugar shack," where maple products are created.

Last year, VVS' Maple Weekend extravaganza drew more than 2,000 visitors. I am thrilled to attend each year and to take part in this educational and delicious local event that is expertly organized each year by high school students from FFA.

These same FFA members from VVS travel throughout New York State, from Buffalo to New York City, using their Maple Syrup Trailer to educate other high school students across our State, teaching them how to produce maple syrup and to produce maple candies and other delicious maple products.

New York State still produces the very best maple syrup in the world and is continually winning the award for the best maple syrup.

I would like to congratulate these outstanding VVS and FFA students on their hard work, and I wish them and the hundreds of other maple producers across the State the best of luck during this very difficult season for maple production.

CELEBRATING THE 106TH BIRTHDAY OF THE GIRL SCOUTS OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Girl Scouts of the USA on their 106th birthday and to commend the organization for helping girls become leaders in their communities and in our Nation. It is fitting that the Girl Scouts' birthday falls during Women's History Month.

In 1912, Juliette Gordon Low founded the first Girl Scout troop, with 18 girls, in Savannah, Georgia. 106 years later, more than 50 million women are Girl Scout alums, and the program reaches nearly 2 million girls. Today, Girl Scout alums launch rockets into space, serve as CEOs of international companies, sit on academic boards, and more.

As we celebrate the Girl Scouts' 106th birthday this week and Women's History Month, I applaud the Girl Scout councils that serve girls in my State for building girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place.

I am proud that this program was founded in the First Congressional District of Georgia and in my hometown of Savannah, Georgia.

TERMINALLY ILL PATIENTS DESERVE THE RIGHT TO TRY

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

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to voice my displeasure that the House was unable to pass the Right to Try Act this week. This bill would have allowed very sick or terminally ill patients to request access to drugs and treatments that have yet to be approved by the FDA.

For any patient dealing with a serious, life-threatening illness, a sliver of hope can go a long way. Yet, for some reason, even after the Senate, of all places, passed this proposal nearly unanimously, some of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle blocked this measure from passing.

Sick patients deserve the right to utilize every possible tool at their disposal, even if it is still experimental. The government really has no business telling a terminally ill patient they cannot pursue a certain avenue of treatment, and, as its name suggests, this legislation gives them the right to try.

I thank Mr. RUTHERFORD for his work on this legislation. I urge the House to bring this back to the floor and pass it as quickly as possible.

THE PARALYSIS THAT BESETS THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS

THE SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. COMER). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. RASKIN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to have the opportunity to share some thoughts with you during this Special Order hour at the request of the minority leader.

I am a professor of constitutional law, as those of you who watch our proceedings here may know by now, and I would like to talk about the Constitution, and I will get there before this is over.

But I want to start, Mr. Speaker, with a basic question of political science, which is: Why does it seem as if it is so hard for us to get the people's business done in Congress these days?

Why does it seem so difficult that, even when we have a vast consensus on what to do about a particular issue, we still can't get it done?

Why is it that the approval rating of our institution, according to the most recent Rasmussen poll, is at 15 percent, which I think most people would agree is a pretty dismal showing for the people's Congress and here in the people's House.

Well, I want to talk about this problem in some historical and constitutional perspective, and I hope that it opens up some roots of thinking and feeling that might enable us to transcend some of the paralysis that now besets the United States Congress.

Of course, the simple explanation that is often given colloquially is that everybody in Washington is just fighting, and you have got the two parties at each others' throats, and everybody is so divided that nothing happens.

This explanation, although it turns out to be wrong, of course, has a long lineage to it. In fact, the Founders wrote very widely at the time our Constitution was adopted about the problem of faction, and they said, if you look at James Madison in *Federalist* No. 10, for example, he identifies faction as the central problem in the political life of a democracy. But he says that the latent causes of faction are sewn in the nature of man, and we see them everywhere.

Madison cites a zeal for different opinions concerning religion, concerning government, and many other points, as well as speculation as a practice. He cites, also, an attachment to different leaders ambitiously contending for preeminence and power; and he invokes the human passions that have divided mankind into parties, inflaming them with mutual animosity.

So strong is this propensity of mankind to fall into mutual animosities, Madison writes, "that where no substantial occasion presents itself, the most frivolous and fanciful distinctions have been sufficient to kindle their unfriendly passions and incite their most violent conflicts."

□ 1645

In other words, even when there is not something real and big to be fighting about, people will find something small, trivial, and petulant to fight about. And those of you with little brothers and sisters might agree that is just the way it is. Sometimes it is in human nature for people to fight.

But the Founders understood that faction was something that would arise in a democratic society where people have the liberty of thought and expression. In fact, Madison said one of the ways that you could deal with the problem of faction is to destroy the lib-

erty that gives rise to faction, but that, of course, plunges us into authoritarianism, monarchy dictatorship. One way you get rid of all the different views is you go to one party. You create a one-party state like they have got in North Korea, and then there is no conflicts because everybody does what the one party says.

So Madison dismisses that and says that is not going to work. We are not going to be able to remove the sources of faction, but why don't we try to control the effects of faction. And the way you do that, he said, is that if—in order to control the effects of a majority tyranny is you have a bill of rights that defends the rights of the minority so that people in the majority can implement their policy preferences, but they can't extinguish the rights of the minority, the right to speak, the right of press, the right to dissent, the right to vote, and so on.

But also, Madison said, if you extend the size of the republic, if you create a big country, then even if you get a majority on one particular issue, the majorities are shifting because then you will have a different majority on another issue and a different majority on another issue and so on.

But what happens, he says, if you have a faction that is tyrannizing the society, but it is not a majority faction, it is a minority faction? What if you have a small group that is able to hijack the process and prevent the majority from having its way? Well, he thought, there, democratic processes and Republican government would take care of it.

He says this: "If a faction consists of less than a majority"—a minority of people—"relief is supplied by the republican principle, which enables the majority to defeat its sinister views by regular vote."

The minority "may clog the administration, it may convulse the society, but it will be unable to execute and mask its violence under the forms of the Constitution."

In other words, Madison is assuming that, when it comes to public policy, the majority will eventually get its way if the governmental process is working correctly.

Now, let's fast-forward to 2018. I am taking three issues where the vast majority of the American people agree as to what should be done to deal with this serious, serious public policy problem.

Let's start with the problem of high prescription drug prices. Now, Congress passed a law saying that the government could not negotiate for lower prescription drug prices in the Medicare program with the big pharmaceutical companies, and it will not surprise you to learn that the big pharmaceutical companies who invest a lot of money and campaign contributions also paid for a lot of lobbyists to go and lobby for that provision to be put into the law.

So the Federal Government can negotiate for lower prescription drug prices

in the Medicaid program, it can negotiate for lower prescription drug prices in the VA program, but for Medicare, because this provision got slipped into the law, we can't negotiate; and it is costing the taxpayers \$25 billion to \$30 billion a year, and, of course, driving up everybody's prescription drug prices. The majority of Americans have at least one prescription drug, and one-fifth of Americans have four or more prescription drugs.

Well, 92 percent of Americans support allowing the Federal Government to negotiate free-market style with the prescription drug companies for lower prices in Medicare—92 percent of Americans support that. All right. So that is case number one. Hold that in mind.

Case number two. This is something that should be familiar to you, in the wake of the discussion about the Parkland massacre that took place. I tried not to lapse into calling it a tragedy. Romeo and Juliet, that is a tragedy. Hamlet, that is a tragedy. Macbeth, that is a tragedy. What happened in Parkland, Florida, was a massacre. It was terrorism that took place in a public school. It was a preventable public policy debacle that that young man could walk into a gun store and purchase an AR-15 and that AR-15s are so available that people can get them even when they are not qualified to possess even a handgun.

In any event, after Parkland and after the Pulse massacre, and after the Las Vegas massacre, and after the San Bernardino County massacre, and after the Sandy Hook massacre, and after the Virginia Tech massacre, guess what, 95 percent of American voters—95 percent support a universal criminal and mental background check on all firearm purchases in the United States. That is more than 9 out of 10 Americans—19 out of 20 Americans.

If you include the margin of error, it might be 98 percent. It might be almost everybody except for the leadership of the NRA and the CEOs of gun manufacturers who support a universal background check.

If you go to a licensed gun dealer and you can't purchase a gun because you failed the background check, why should you be able to go to a gun show and buy one? Why should you be able to go to the internet or the parking lot of a 7-Eleven and buy one? It doesn't make any sense.

So the common sense of the American people, 95 percent of American voters favor universal background checks, yet nothing is happening. Just like with giving the government the power to lower prescription drug prices, despite the fact that more than, you know, 9 out of 10 Americans support it. The President of the United States, President Trump, called for it in both of his two State of the Union Addresses. I think the vast majority of the Members of Congress would vote for it if it were brought up for vote, yet nothing happening. So that is case number two.

Let's look at case number three. Another thing that has been very much on the mind of the public and in the public policy debate, 83 percent of Americans favor continuing the DACA program and passing the Dream Act and allowing the Dreamers a path to citizenship in the United States. These, of course, are 800,000 young people who were brought to America with their families when they were kids, grew up here, know this as their country, are in the armed services, are working here, are in school. And we have 83 percent of the American people who say, quite logically, exercising their common sense, let's create a pathway for those people if they are in school, if they are working, if they are in the armed services, to stay here and to become American citizens, yet, again, nothing happening in Congress. Okay.

Now, why not? What is it that is going on? So we go back to the problem of faction. Obviously, people are going to have different views. That is the oxygen of democracy. There is nothing wrong with that. We are not ashamed of that. We have different political parties here. It is much better to have two parties or more than that, than to have one party, a one-party system.

You know, Thomas Jefferson, in his first inaugural address, said: "We are all republicans, we are all federalists." Lincoln tried to strike the same note when he first took office, and Lincoln said: "We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affection."

So our greatest Presidents and our greatest leaders have understood we fight like cats and dogs in elections. That is how it works in a democratic society. There is a political contest. But once we are in, we try to stand for the whole public, the whole common good. We try to remember that we are not just here to represent one party.

Washington reminded people that the word "party" comes from the French word "fete", a part, one part of the whole. You represent a party. You are just representing a part of the whole. We have got to try to aspire to represent everybody. Yet, given the human condition, given the nature of political passions and moral passions that Madison discusses in Federalist 10, we know that parties are inevitable.

Okay. We accept that in a democratic society. We cherish the fact that people can form political parties that articulate different agendas and different values. So that is not the problem. So what is the problem? Why is it the case that the United States Congress cannot even bring to a vote three measures that have overwhelming public support: to allow the government to negotiate for lower prescription drug prices; to pass a universal criminal and mental background check; and to pass the Dream Act to help deal with the crisis of these young people who have been thrown into a limbo because of President Trump's action last year? Why can't we do it?

Well, there are a couple of reasons I want to identify, and then I want to call on all of us in Congress to try to take us to a higher ground. The young people who are protesting about the nightmare of gun violence, which makes America an absolute outlier state—in terms of industrialized countries, our rate of homicide and suicide by gun violence is simply off the charts when you compare it to other industrialized countries like the United Kingdom or Canada or France or Japan. It is not even close. We are losing tens of thousands of people a year.

The point I was making here is that we have this puzzlement about why we can have massive popular agreement and consensus, political consensus as to what to do, yet a bottleneck in Congress where we get this paralysis and this inaction.

The young people who have ignited a revolution across the country against political complacency with respect to gun massacres in public places like schools and movie theaters and concerts and churches and so on, they are focused very heavily on the problem of money and politics, and I think that the vast majority of the American people exercising their common sense would agree that money and politics distorts the public agenda.

We know that the NRA has put tens of millions of dollars into our politics, just as we know the prescription drug manufacturers have put tens of millions of dollars into our politics, so I think the right to identify that is one strand of the problem.

But even with that, I think here, in Congress, there is a major failure of political leadership, Mr. Speaker, and I think it goes to something that, at least, used to be called the Hastert Rule. Well, the former speaker has been discredited, but the rule, unfortunately, is still operational. And the Hastert Rule is a rule that has been adopted by the majority caucus, which says that no legislation will be brought to the floor of the House of Representatives unless it passes the Republican caucus first.

Now, think about what that means. If you have got legislation like the Dream Act or like a universal criminal/mental background check act, which has unanimous support by the Democrats and substantial support by the Republicans, such that it would pass overwhelmingly in this body, it never sees the light of day on the floor of the House of Representatives because their rule is they won't bring it out of the GOP caucus to the floor for a vote unless it can get a majority within the caucus.

This means that the majority will, not just of the country, but the majority will of this body is thwarted and frustrated by the Hastert Rule, which I wish Speaker Hastert had taken with him when he left the House of Representatives, because it is fundamentally undemocratic, and we are seeing right now the cost of this rule, which

enshrines minority preferences and minority control against majority public opinion.

Now, I hasten to say, of course, we have got a bill of rights, so what we are talking about is not allowing the majority to trample the constitutional rights of the minority. What is happening here is that a political minority is trampling the policy rights of the majority so that the majority policy preferences of the American people and of Congress are being stymied by virtue of minority control in this body.

□ 1700

Now, this is something that our distinguished and thoughtful colleagues on the other side of the aisle can fix. They can say they are no longer going to abide by that rule. They will allow us to have a hearing on a universal criminal background check. They will allow us to have a hearing on whether the government can negotiate for lower prescription drug prices. They will allow us to have a hearing on the Dream Act, and they will allow us to have a vote on it.

We are not saying everybody has got to agree. They have got the right to vote against it. But doesn't the minority at least have a right to a vote on those issues which reflect the massive policy preferences of the American people?

Don't we think that has got something to do with the very low esteem within which we are held by the American people today? That, when it is very clear what almost all Americans want, we cannot legislate their preferences into law?

Mr. Speaker, in Federalist Paper No. 10, Madison told us that the problem of democracy is the problem of faction. And right now we have got a tiny minority faction driving the entire train of government, and there is not enough space, there is not enough room, for the will of the people to govern.

That is why America is disenchanted with the leadership of Congress and what is happening here. We are seeing it in election results around the country. We are seeing it in public opinion polls. We are seeing it in marches and rallies and walkouts all over the country, and that is good.

Because in their wisdom, the Founders also gave us the First Amendment, which gave the people a right to petition for redress of grievances, a right to assemble, as the young people assembled yesterday on the lawn of the Capitol building and in front of the White House.

It gives us the right of free press so we can write about what is actually taking place here in Congress. It gives us a right against establishment of religion and for free exercise of religion. It gives everybody the right of free speech so we can talk about what is going on.

The Founders never guaranteed us perfection. Madison said, if people were perfect, we wouldn't need government

in the first place. But they gave us a structure within which we could improve things, reform things, and make things better.

Yet, the Members of Congress who are now in charge, in the driver's seat, are blocking off the hall. They are thwarting progress across the board on everything from prescription drug prices to the ban on assault weapons and a universal criminal/mental background check, and to the Dreamers. The American people are increasingly unsatisfied and frustrated with this situation.

So I come back, finally, to the responsibility of each one of us who has been entrusted with the high honor and responsibility of coming to Congress.

Madam Speaker, the original democratic philosophers distinguished between sovereignty and government. Government is just the people who go to do the job. Sovereignty belongs always with the people. We the people.

That is why the right of free speech and protest and assembly are so critical. That is where the people come together and tell us what they want; the right to come to the town meetings, to call us up, to email us, and so on.

But we have got a high responsibility. Those of us who aspire and attain to public office are nothing but the servants of the people. There are no kings here. There are no queens here. There are no titles of nobility in the United States of America. It is in the Constitution. We have no slaves here. We have no serfs here. Just equal citizens, all of us. Those of us who get into public office are acting as the servants of those people we are sent here to represent.

Madam Speaker, our people want us to get past all of the procedural obstacles and choke holds that have been put up here at the behest of big money and big special interests, and they want us to get a job done.

Let us start with these three things, which the vast overwhelming majority of the American people—Democrats, Republicans, Independents alike, everybody—agree we need:

A universal criminal/mental background check on firearm purchases in America. We need to give the government the power to negotiate in Medicare for lower drug prices for our people so our mothers and fathers and grandparents can get the prescription drugs they need at affordable prices. We need to pass a Dream Act so we can deal with the crisis situation of hundreds of thousands of young people whose lives have been thrown into limbo over the last year.

We can do those things. We can make that happen.

Madam Speaker, I would invite you or any other Member of Congress to respond. I reach out in a spirit of openness, affection, and, as much as possible, transpartisanship to say: We have got to get America moving in the right direction again.

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

FURTHER MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A further 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. 3210. An act to require the Director of the National Background Investigations Bureau to submit a report on the backlog of personnel security clearance investigations, and for other purposes.

A message also announced that the Senate has passed a bill of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 1869. An act to reauthorize and rename the position of Whistleblower Ombudsman to be the Whistleblower Protection Coordinator.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled a bill of the House of the following title, which was thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 1177. An act to direct the Secretary of Agriculture to release on behalf of the United States the condition that certain lands conveyed to the City of Old Town, Maine, be used for a municipal airport, and for other purposes.

SENATE ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

The Speaker announced his signature to enrolled bills of the Senate of the following titles:

S. 188. An act 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, and for other purposes.

S. 324. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the provision of adult day health care services for veterans.

BILLS PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported that on March 13, 2018, she presented to the President of the United States, for his approval, the following bills.

H.R. 3893. To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 100 Mathe Avenue in Interlachen, Florida, as the "Robert H. Jenkins, Jr. Post Office".

H.R. 4042. To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1415 West Oak Street, in Kissimmee, Florida, as the "Borinqueneers Post Office Building".

H.R. 4285. To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 123 Bridgeton Pike in Mullica Hill, New Jersey, as the "James C. 'Billy' Johnson Post Office Building".

H.R. 3821. To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 430 Main Street in Clermont, Georgia, as the "Zack T. Addington Post Office".

H.R. 3638. To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1100 Kings Road in Jacksonville, Florida, as the "Rutledge Pearson Post Office Building".

H.R. 3655. To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1300

Main Street in Belmar, New Jersey, as the “Dr. Walter S. McAfee Post Office Building”.

H.R. 3369. To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 225 North Main Street in Spring Lake, North Carolina, as the “Howard B. Pate, Jr. Post Office”.

H.R. 3109. To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1114 North 2nd Street in Chillicothe, Illinois, as the “Sr. Chief Ryan Owens Post Office Building”.

H.R. 2815. To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 30 East Somerset Street in Raritan, New Jersey, as the “Gunnery Sergeant John Basilone Post Office”.

H.R. 2873. To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 207 Glenside Avenue in Wyncote, Pennsylvania, as the “Staff Sergeant Peter Taub Post Office Building”.

H.R. 2464. To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 25 New Chardon Street Lobby in Boston, Massachusetts, as the “John Fitzgerald Kennedy Post Office”.

H.R. 2672. To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 520 Carter Street in Fairview, Illinois, as the “Sgt. Douglas J. Riney Post Office”.

H.R. 2254. To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 2635 Napa Street in Vallejo, California, as the “Janet Capello Post Office Building”.

H.R. 2302. To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 259 Nassau Street, Suite 2 in Princeton, New Jersey, as the “Dr. John F. Nash, Jr. Post Office”.

H.R. 1858. To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 4514 Williamson Trail in Liberty, Pennsylvania, as the “Staff Sergeant Ryan Scott Ostrom Post Office”.

H.R. 1988. To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1730 18th Street in Bakersfield, California, as the “Merle Haggard Post Office Building”.

H.R. 1208. To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 9155 Schaefer Road, Converse, Texas, as the “Converse Veterans Post Office Building”.

H.R. 294. To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 2700 Cullen Boulevard in Pearland, Texas, as the “Endy Nddibong Ekpanya Post Office Building”.

H.R. 452. To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 324 West Saint Louis Street in Pacific, Missouri, as the “Specialist Jeffrey L. White, Jr. Post Office”.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. RASKIN. Madam Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 5 o'clock and 7 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until Monday, March 19, 2018, at noon 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:

4272. A letter from the Acting Administrator, National Organic Program, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — National Organic Program

(NOP); Organic Livestock and Poultry Practices [Document Number: AMS-NOP-15-0012; NOP-15-06] (RIN: 0581-AD75) received March 14, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Agriculture.

4273. A letter from the Acting Administrator, Rural Housing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's direct final rule — Truth in Lending — Real Estate Settlement Procedures (RIN: 0575-AD11) received March 14, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4274. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Education, transmitting the Department's final priorities and definitions — Secretary's Final Supplemental Priorities and Definitions for Discretionary Grant Programs [Docket ID: ED-2017-OS-0078] (RIN: 1894-AA09) received February 28, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

4275. A letter from the Director, Regulations Policy and Management Staff, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Food Additives Permitted in Feed and Drinking Water of Animals; Silicon Dioxide as a Carrier for Flavors [Docket No.: FDA-2017-F-5528] received March 14, 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.

4276. A letter from the Deputy Bureau Chief, Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Wireless Emergency Alerts [PS Docket No.: 15-91]; Amendments to Part 11 of the Commission's Rules Regarding the Emergency Alert System [PS Docket No.: 15-94] received February 28, 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.

4277. A letter from the Deputy Chief, Legal Policy, Auctions and Spectrum Access Division, Wireless Telecommunications Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Connect America Fund Phase II Auction Scheduled for July 24, 2018; Notice and Filing Requirements and Other Procedures for Auction 903 [AU Docket No.: 17-182] [WC Docket No.: 10-90] received March 14, 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.

4278. A letter from the Associate General Counsel, Department of Agriculture, transmitting two (2) notifications of a nomination, and an action on nomination, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 3349(a); Public Law 105-277, 151(b); (112 Stat. 2681-614); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4279. A letter from the Deputy White House Liaison, Department of Education, transmitting eighteen (18) notifications of a federal vacancy, designation of acting officer, nomination, action on nomination, change in previously submitted reported information, or discontinuation of service in acting role, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 3349(a); Public Law 105-277, 151(b); (112 Stat. 2681-614); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4280. A letter from the Chairman, National Transportation Safety Board, transmitting the Board's FY 2017 No FEAR Act report, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 2301 note; Public Law 107-174, 203(a) (as amended by Public Law 109-435, Sec. 604(f)); (120 Stat. 3242); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4281. A letter from the Acting Director, U.S. Government Publishing Office, trans-

mitting the Office's Annual Report for fiscal year ending September 30, 2017; to the Committee on House Administration.

4282. A letter from the Deputy AA for Regulatory Programs, Office of Protected Resources, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Taking and Importing Marine Mammals; Taking Marine Mammals Incidental to Testing and Training Activities Conducted in the Eglin Gulf Test and Training Range in the Gulf of Mexico [Docket No.: 170831846-8105-02] (RIN: 0648-BH21) received March 14, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4283. A letter from the Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting a report titled, “Department of Justice Activities Under the Civil Rights of Institutionalized Persons Act Fiscal Year 2017”, pursuant to 28 U.S.C. 522(a); Public Law 89-554, Sec. 4(c) (as amended by Public Law 94-273, Sec. 19); (80 Stat. 615); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

4284. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement, Department of the Interior, transmitting the Department's final rule — Civil Monetary Penalty Inflation Adjustments [Docket No.: OSM-2017-0012; S1D1S SS08011000 SX064A000 189S180110; S2D2S SS08011000 SX064A00 18XS501520] (RIN: 1029-AC75) received March 9, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

4285. A letter from the Deputy General Counsel, Office of General Counsel, Small Business Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Civil Monetary Penalties Inflation Adjustments (RIN: 3245-AG96) received March 9, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

4286. A letter from the Acting Administrator, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's report to Congress titled, “Assistance Provided to Foreign Aviation Authorities for FY 2017”, pursuant to 49 U.S.C. 40113(e)(4); Public Law 103-272, Sec. 1(e) (as amended by Public Law 112-95, Sec. 207); (126 Stat. 39); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4287. A letter from the Reg. Policy Dev. Coord., Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Office of the Secretary (00REG), Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's final rule — Revise and Streamline VA Acquisition Regulation to Adhere to Federal Acquisition Regulation Principles (VAAR Case 2014-V002) (RIN: 2900-AP82) received February 28, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

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. HENSARLING. Committee on Financial Services. H.R. 4566. A bill to amend the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act to provide relief to nonbanks from certain stress test requirements under such Act; with an amendment (Rept. 115-601). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

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. SOTO (for himself, Mr. VELA, Mrs. TORRES, Mr. PAYNE, Ms. ROSEN, Ms. SANCHEZ, Ms. BARRAGAN, Mr. AGUILAR, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. CORREA, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. SABLAN, Mr. LAWSON of Florida, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. CARBAJAL, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. COSTA, Ms. NORTON, and Ms. CLARKE of New York):

H.R. 5292. A bill to establish a task force to review new decennial census questions and their impact on response rates for minorities, the accuracy of the census, redistricting, costs and funding distribution, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. TED LIEU of California (for himself and Mr. GOODLATTE):

H.R. 5293. A bill to make technical amendments to update statutory references to certain provisions that were formerly classified to title 50, Appendix, United States Code; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BARLETTA (for himself, Ms. TITUS, and Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky):

H.R. 5294. A bill to amend title 40, United States Code, to address the impact of drug abuse on economic development in Appalachia, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. NADLER (for himself and Mr. GOODLATTE):

H.R. 5295. A bill to make technical amendments to update statutory references to provisions classified to chapters 44, 45, 46, and 47 of title 50, United States Code; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. NADLER (for himself and Mr. GOODLATTE):

H.R. 5296. A bill to make technical amendments to update statutory references to certain provisions classified to title 2, United States Code; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. NADLER (for himself and Mr. GOODLATTE):

H.R. 5297. A bill to make technical amendments to update statutory references to certain provisions classified to title 52, United States Code; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. ROE of Tennessee (for himself and Mr. SUOZZI):

H.R. 5298. A bill to amend the Controlled Substances Act to deem drugs or other substances that act as opioid mu receptor agonists to be in schedule I, subject to exceptions for substances intended for legitimate medical or research use, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, 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 Mr. HARPER:

H.R. 5299. A bill to direct the Secretary of Agriculture to transfer to Scenic Rivers Development Alliance certain National Forest System land in the State of Mississippi; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Mr. PALMER:

H.R. 5300. A bill to provide agencies with discretion in securing information technology and information systems; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. DEFAZIO (for himself, Mr. JONES, Mr. TURNER, Mr. WITTMAN,

Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. COLE, Mr. PETERSON, Mr. PEARCE, Ms. LOFGREN, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Ms. GABBARD, Ms. ROSEN, Ms. PINGREE, Ms. ESTY of Connecticut, Mr. TIPTON, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. KILMER, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. CAPUANO, and Mrs. ROBY):

H.R. 5301. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to prohibit the Secretary of Veterans Affairs from requiring a surviving spouse of a veteran to return certain payments for a month in which the veteran dies; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. DEFAZIO (for himself, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. COHEN, Mr. MCNERNEY, Ms. NORTON, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. TONKO, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, and Mr. NADLER):

H.R. 5302. A bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to provide that an individual's entitlement to any benefit thereunder shall continue through the month of his or her death (without affecting any other person's entitlement to benefits for that month) and that such individual's benefit shall be payable for such month only to the extent proportionate to the number of days in such month preceding the date of such individual's death; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. BISHOP of Utah (for himself, Mrs. LOVE, Mr. STEWART, and Mr. CURTIS):

H.R. 5303. A bill to amend title 13, United States Code, to provide for the more accurate and complete enumeration of certain overseas Americans in the decennial census, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. RASKIN (for himself, Mr. COHEN, Ms. JAYAPAL, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mrs. LAWRENCE, and Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania):

H.R. 5304. A bill to prohibit Federal agencies from using Government funds to pay for the lodging of agency employees at establishments that are owned by or employ certain public officials or their relatives; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. HARPER (for himself, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mrs. COMSTOCK, Mr. WALKER, Mr. LOUDERMILK, Ms. LOFGREN, and Mr. RASKIN):

H.R. 5305. A bill to amend title 44, United States Code, to ensure the availability of no-fee public access to government information, to reform the Federal Depository Library Program, to authorize the activities of the Superintendent of Documents, and for other purposes; to the Committee on House Administration, 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. GUTHRIE (for himself and Mrs. DINGELL):

H.R. 5306. A bill to reauthorize the Money Follows the Person Demonstration Program; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. KNIGHT:

H.R. 5307. A bill to require that certain Federal education funds be used for the improvement of security at elementary and secondary schools; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Ms. LEE (for herself and Mr. POLIQUIN):

H.R. 5308. A bill to amend title 31, United States Code, to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint and issue quarter dollars in commemoration of the Nineteenth Amendment, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Ms. ADAMS (for herself, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, and Mr. KELLY of Mississippi):

H.R. 5309. A bill to amend the Second Morrill Act to authorize the transmission to Congress of annual reports prepared by colleges endowed under such Act; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Mr. BABIN (for himself, Mr. HUIZENGA, Mr. NORMAN, Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. YODER, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. WEBSTER of Florida, Mr. PERRY, Mr. SANFORD, and Mr. CHABOT):

H.R. 5310. A bill to waive certain procurement provisions for a project that receives funds from certain Federal agencies; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and in addition to the Committees on Science, Space, and Technology, Agriculture, and 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 Mrs. BLACKBURN (for herself, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire, and Mr. MACARTHUR):

H.R. 5311. A bill to reauthorize and expand the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act of 2016; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committees on the Judiciary, and 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 Ms. BONAMICI (for herself and Mr. KILMER):

H.R. 5312. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to reauthorize the Federal work-study program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. BROOKS of Alabama (for himself, Mr. MEADOWS, Mr. LABRADOR, Mr. SANFORD, and Mr. HARRIS):

H.R. 5313. A bill to provide for automatic continuing appropriations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Appropriations, and in addition to the Committee on the Budget, 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. CARTWRIGHT (for himself, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. NEAL, Mr. PETERS, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. KILMER, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. JONES, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. KILDEE, Mr. RUSH, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. O'ROURKE, Mr. HECK, and Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico):

H.R. 5314. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for unlimited eligibility for health care for mental illnesses for veterans of combat service during certain periods of hostilities and war; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. DONOVAN (for himself and Mr. COHEN):

H.R. 5315. A bill to direct the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration to promulgate regulations to prohibit the storage of live animals in overhead compartments of airplanes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. FASO:

H.R. 5316. A bill to authorize appropriations for the seniors farmers' market nutrition program for fiscal years 2019 through 2023; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER (for herself, Mr. KILMER, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. HECK, and Mr. COLE):

H.R. 5317. A bill to repeal section 2141 of the Revised Statutes to remove the prohibition on certain alcohol manufacturing on Indian lands; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. HUFFMAN:

H.R. 5318. A bill to establish State infrastructure banks for education; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. MAST (for himself, Mr. HASTINGS, and Mr. DEUTCH):

H.R. 5319. A bill to transfer Coast Guard property in the Town of Jupiter Island, Florida, for inclusion in Hobe Sound National Wildlife Refuge; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and in addition to the Committee on Natural Resources, 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. MEADOWS (for himself and Mrs. BUSTOS):

H.R. 5320. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to prohibit the Secretary of a military department from entering into a lease of real property for the use of the department unless the Secretary first certifies that facilities of real property owned by the United States may not be reconfigured to support the purpose of the proposed lease in an appropriate and cost-effective manner, to require the Secretary of the Defense to provide more accurate information on the costs incurred in leasing real property for the use of the Department of Defense, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. MOULTON (for himself, Mr. MEADOWS, and Mr. LOEBBACH):

H.R. 5321. A bill to improve communication from Federal agencies to individuals by requiring clear instructions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Ms. NORTON:

H.R. 5322. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for a national program to conduct and support activities toward the goal of significantly reducing the number of cases of overweight and obesity among individuals in the United States; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. BARLETTA (for himself and Ms. TITUS):

H. Con. Res. 115. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the National Peace Officers Memorial Service and the National Honor Guard and Pipe Band Exhibition; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. CONAWAY:

H. Res. 785. A resolution expressing support for continued cooperation between Israel and the United States to ensure adequate capabilities to counter Iran's destabilizing activities and support shared interests, including stability and safety in the Middle East, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. LANGEVIN (for himself, Mr. COLE, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. SIREN, and Mr. HOLDING):

H. Res. 786. A resolution condemning the chemical weapons attack on Sergei Skripal, a former Russian intelligence officer, and his daughter on March 4, 2018, and extending its sympathies to those affected by the attack, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

166. The SPEAKER presented a memorial of the General Assembly of the State of New Jersey, relative to Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 176, urging Congress and the President of the United States to enact a long-term reauthorization of the Children's Health Insurance Program; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

167. Also, a memorial of the Senate of the State of California, relative to Senate Resolution 73, urging the President and the Congress of the United States to permanently safeguard and protect the Pacific Coast's Outer Continental Shelf from new oil and gas leasing, and declaring the Senate's unequivocal support for the current federal prohibition on new oil or gas drilling in federal waters offshore of the Pacific coast, its opposition to the proposed 5-year National Offshore Oil and Gas Leasing Program on the Outer Continental Shelf or any attempts to modify that prohibition, and its determination to consider any appropriate actions to maintain the current prohibition; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

168. Also, a memorial of the General Assembly of the State of New Jersey, relative to Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 111, memorializing the United States Congress to enact legislation to reduce the risk of harm from firearm sales; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

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. SOTO:

H.R. 5292.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. TED LIEU of California:

H.R. 5293.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

U.S. Constitution, Article I, Section 8, Clause 18

By Mr. BARLETTA:

H.R. 5294.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution, specifically Clause 1 (relating to providing for the common defense and general welfare of the United States) and Clause 18 (relating to the power to make all laws necessary and proper for carrying out the powers vested in Congress) and Article I, Section 10, Clause 3 (relating to interstate compacts).

By Mr. NADLER:

H.R. 5295.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

U.S. Constitution, Article I, Section 8, Clause 18.

By Mr. NADLER:

H.R. 5296.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

U.S. Constitution, Article I, Section 8, Clause 18.

By Mr. NADLER:

H.R. 5297.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

U.S. Constitution, Article I, Section 8, Clause 18.

By Mr. ROE of Tennessee:

H.R. 5298.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1, with respect to the power to "lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts, and Excises," and to provide for the "general Welfare of the United States."

By Mr. HARPER:

H.R. 5299.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article IV, Section 3, clause 2 (Property Clause)

By Mr. PALMER:

H.R. 5300.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The Congress shall have Power To . . . make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. DEFAZIO:

H.R. 5301.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 (relating to the power to make all laws necessary and proper for carrying out the powers vested in Congress)

By Mr. DEFAZIO:

H.R. 5302.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 (relating to the power to make all laws necessary and proper for carrying out the powers vested in Congress)

By Mr. BISHOP of Utah:

H.R. 5303.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 3 of Section 2 of Article I of the Constitution

By Mr. RASKIN:

H.R. 5304.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 (Necessary and Proper Clause)

By Mr. HARPER:

H.R. 5305.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8: "To make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing powers, and all other powers vested by this Constitution in the government of the United States, or in any department or officer thereof."

By Mr. GUTHRIE:

H.R. 5306.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. KNIGHT:

H.R. 5307.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 and Article I, Section 8, Clause 18

By Ms. LEE:

H.R. 5308.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8.

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;

MEMORIALS

Under clause 3 of rule XII, memorials were presented and referred as follows:

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 Ms. ADAMS:

H.R. 5309.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. BABIN:

H.R. 5310.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

By Mrs. BLACKBURN:

H.R. 5311.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause I: The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States

By Ms. BONAMICI:

H.R. 5312.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I Section 8

By Mr. BROOKS of Alabama:

H.R. 5313.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. CARTWRIGHT:

H.R. 5314.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I; Section 8; Clause 1 of the Constitution states The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States. . .

By Mr. DONOVAN:

H.R. 5315.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 and/or Article I, Section 8, Clause 18.

By Mr. FASO:

H.R. 5316.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution

[Page H132]

By Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER:

H.R. 5317.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. HUFFMAN:

H.R. 5318.

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, and with the Indian Tribes;

By Mr. MAST:

H.R. 5319.

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. MEADOWS:

H.R. 5320.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 14 states "The Congress shall have Power To . . . make Rules for the Government and Regulation of the land and naval Forces. . ."

By Mr. MOULTON:

H.R. 5321.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1 of the Constitution of the United States

By Ms. NORTON:

H.R. 5322.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

clause 3 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 113: Mr. CASTRO of Texas.

H.R. 291: Mr. FITZPATRICK.

H.R. 303: Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico.

H.R. 539: Ms. CLARKE of New York.

H.R. 750: Ms. JAYAPAL.

H.R. 785: Mrs. HANDEL.

H.R. 795: Mr. MARSHALL, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. PETERSON, Ms. BARRAGÁN, and Mr. O'ROURKE.

H.R. 823: Mr. FOSTER and Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire.

H.R. 881: Ms. LOFGREN.

H.R. 930: Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mrs. HARTZLER, Mr. LOBIONDO, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. BROWN of Maryland, Mr. CRAWFORD, and Mr. RICHMOND.

H.R. 1071: Mr. CONNOLLY.

H.R. 1120: Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee.

H.R. 1239: Mr. PANETTA and Mr. FORTENBERRY.

H.R. 1318: Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. MEEHAN, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Mr. TONKO, Mr. CULBERSON, Mrs. DINGELL, Mr. O'HALLERAN, Mr. DENT, and Mr. KHANNA.

H.R. 1507: Mr. MACARTHUR.

H.R. 1563: Mr. SCHNEIDER.

H.R. 1818: Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. HIGGINS of New York, Mr. SMUCKER, and Mr. NORCROSS.

H.R. 1828: Mr. O'HALLERAN.

H.R. 1876: Mr. MESSER and Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 1928: Mrs. LAWRENCE.

H.R. 1957: Mr. PRICE of North Carolina and Mr. BERA.

H.R. 2024: Mr. RATCLIFFE.

H.R. 2212: Mr. BRAT and Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi.

H.R. 2598: Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. TONKO, and Mr. UPTON.

H.R. 2841: Mr. HASTINGS.

H.R. 2902: Mr. KILMER and Mrs. TORRES.

H.R. 2913: Mr. TONKO.

H.R. 2938: Mr. SCHNEIDER.

H.R. 3032: Mr. SMITH of New Jersey.

H.R. 3111: Mr. CROWLEY.

H.R. 3170: Mr. MARSHALL.

H.R. 3378: Mr. POLIS.

H.R. 3528: Mr. SCHNEIDER.

H.R. 3566: Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York.

H.R. 3605: Mr. GALLAGHER.

H.R. 3617: Ms. JACKSON LEE.

H.R. 3733: Mr. VELA.

H.R. 3845: Mr. MCNERNEY.

H.R. 3941: Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire.

H.R. 3988: Mr. MCKINLEY.

H.R. 4044: Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, Mr. LAMBORN, and Mr. ROHRBACHER.

H.R. 4099: Mr. BERGMAN and Mr. WITTMAN.

H.R. 4106: Mr. O'ROURKE.

H.R. 4257: Mr. GARAMENDI and Mr. CURTIS.

H.R. 4265: Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee.

H.R. 4311: Mr. CRAWFORD, Mr. SMITH of Missouri, Mr. THORNBERRY, and Mr. COOPER.

H.R. 4342: Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania and Mr. HASTINGS.

H.R. 4343: Mr. SOTO and Mr. HASTINGS.

H.R. 4344: Mr. HASTINGS.

H.R. 4392: Mr. CALVERT.

H.R. 4548: Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. NOLAN, Mrs. TORRES, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. RUSH, and Ms. BROWNLEY of California.

H.R. 4575: Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS.

H.R. 4584: Mr. GAETZ.

H.R. 4605: Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina.

H.R. 4606: Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina.

H.R. 4647: Mr. MCNERNEY, Ms. LOFGREN, Ms. DELBENE, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. HUFFMAN, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. SCHRADER, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. O'ROURKE, Mr. KILDEE, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. LONG, Mr. TIPTON, Mr. ROUZER, Mr. MOULTON, Mr. HILL, Mr. POLIS, Mr. HUDSON, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. MULLIN, Mr. MARINO, Ms. STEFANIK, and Mr. SMITH of New Jersey.

H.R. 4681: Mr. SHERMAN.

H.R. 4706: Mr. RYAN of Ohio and Ms. LOFGREN.

H.R. 4710: Mr. ROE of Tennessee.

H.R. 4732: Mr. TAKANO.

H.R. 4747: Mr. GARAMENDI and Mr. BISHOP of Michigan.

H.R. 4770: Ms. TENNEY.

H.R. 4775: Mrs. NAPOLITANO.

H.R. 4886: Mr. MESSER.

H.R. 4940: Mr. KEATING.

H.R. 4963: Ms. DELBENE and Mr. CAPUANO.

H.R. 5011: Mr. SCHRADER, Mr. SIRES, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. MCEACHIN, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Ms. MOORE, Mr. COHEN, Mr. ESPAILLAT, Mr. RUSH, and Mr. TONKO.

H.R. 5031: Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire and Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 5034: Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. BROWN of Maryland, Mr. CARBAJAL, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. KILMER, Mr. BEYER, Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania, and Mr. SCHNEIDER.

H.R. 5047: Mr. CALVERT.

H.R. 5105: Mr. BUDD.

H.R. 5108: Mr. TAKANO, Mr. KHANNA, and Mr. MCGOVERN.

H.R. 5121: Mr. LOBIONDO, Mr. PETERSON, and Mr. KING of Iowa.

H.R. 5138: Mr. SMITH of Missouri.

H.R. 5141: Mr. KUSTOFF of Tennessee, Mr. PAULSEN, Mr. VARGAS, Ms. ROSEN, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. JOYCE of Ohio, Mr. GRAVES of Missouri, Mr. DESANTIS, Mr. HUDSON, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mrs. NOEM, Mrs. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. KNIGHT, Mr. DELANEY, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Ms. TENNEY, Mr. GROTHMAN, Mr. LATTA, Mr. VALADAO, Mr. PETERSON, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California, Mrs. LOVE, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. LOBIONDO, Mr. HENSARLING, and Ms. MENG.

H.R. 5142: Mr. SANFORD and Mr. DAVIDSON.

H.R. 5143: Mr. SANFORD and Mr. DAVIDSON.

H.R. 5153: Mr. MESSER.

H.R. 5173: Ms. LOFGREN.

H.R. 5180: Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. CUMMINGS, Ms. LEE, Mr. KEATING, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, and Ms. ROSEN.

H.R. 5202: Ms. STEFANIK and Mrs. HANDEL.

H.R. 5243: Ms. TENNEY.

H.R. 5272: Mr. LATTA.

H.R. 5275: Mr. HOLLINGSWORTH.

H.R. 5278: Mr. CURBELO of Florida.

H.R. 5281: Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia and Mr. POSEY.

H.R. 5282: Mr. CURBELO of Florida, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mrs. NOEM, and Mr. SCHRADER.

H. Con. Res. 45: Mr. KHANNA.

H. Con. Res. 66: Mr. HASTINGS.

H. Con. Res. 81: Mr. LOEBBACH.

H. Con. Res. 111: Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. SESSIONS, Mrs. MURPHY of Florida, and Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD.

H. Res. 58: Mr. NORCROSS and Mr. KHANNA.

H. Res. 201: Mr. KHANNA.

H. Res. 220: Mrs. COMSTOCK.

H. Res. 274: Mr. WALDEN, Ms. BLUNT ROCH-ESTER, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. JEFFRIES, and Mr. DENT.

H. Res. 466: Ms. SPEIER.

H. Res. 578: Mr. LYNCH.

H. Res. 621: Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN.

H. Res. 644: Mr. CONNOLLY.

H. Res. 673: Mr. MOOLENAAR.

H. Res. 733: Mr. SOTO.

H. Res. 756: Mrs. LAWRENCE, Ms. SHEA-POR-TER, Mr. HIGGINS of New York, Mr. LOWENTHAL, and Mr. PETERS.

H. Res. 760: Ms. MOORE.

H. Res. 774: Mr. ROHRABACHER, Mr. SIMP-SON, and Mr. COLLINS of New York.

DELETIONS OF SPONSORS FROM PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were deleted from public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H. Res. 774: Mr. CULBERSON.

DISCHARGE PETITIONS— ADDITIONS AND WITHDRAWALS

The following Members added their names to the following discharge petitions:

Petition 6 by Mr. THOMPSON of California on the bill (H.R. 4240): Mr. Vela and Mr. O'Rourke.

Petition 7 by Mr. CLYBURN on the bill (H.R. 3464): Mr. Vela, Mr. Suozzi, Mr. O'Rourke, Mr. Yarmuth, and Mr. Ted Lieu of California.



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No. 46

Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Eternal God, as we join our hearts in prayer, we praise You for protecting and preserving this land we love.

Remind our lawmakers that by themselves, they aren't sufficient for the challenges of our times. Give them the wisdom to solve the problems that require more than human ingenuity. May they never fail to do the very best they can, striving to please You in their every endeavor. Lord, when they are perplexed, provide them with the clarity of Your guidance. May Your will be done and Your purposes carried out above party and personality.

We pray in Your strong Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore 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.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. YOUNG). The majority leader is recognized.

TRIBUTE TO JOHN MCCAIN

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, this week marks an important anniversary for an exceptional American. Forty-five years ago yesterday, our friend and colleague JOHN MCCAIN was released after more than 5½ years as a prisoner of war in Vietnam.

The "Hanoi Hilton" was the site of unspeakable brutality, but it was also

a crucible of character, where a brave patriot was tested and grew into a generational leader.

Here in the Senate, we are not only grateful that JOHN MCCAIN was welcomed home, we are especially grateful that he answered yet another call to serve, bringing that leadership to this body for more than 30 years. His leadership and his example are as important today as they have ever been.

APPOINTMENT OF LARRY KUDLOW AND NOMINATION OF KEVIN MCALEENAN

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, on another matter, yesterday the President named Larry Kudlow as the next head of the National Economic Council.

Larry is well known as a happy warrior for pro-growth economics and widely respected for his expertise in fiscal policy. The country will be lucky to have Larry serving in this role. I look forward to continued engagement with the White House team that will now benefit from his insight.

Speaking of highly qualified personnel, here in the Senate yesterday afternoon, we voted to advance Kevin McAleenan's nomination to serve as Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection. This is an essential post, and Mr. McAleenan is an excellent nominee.

I urge everyone to join me in voting for his confirmation when we return on Monday.

ALLOW STATES AND VICTIMS TO FIGHT ONLINE SEX TRAFFICKING BILL

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, yesterday, the Senate took a big step forward for community banks, credit unions, and other small lenders on which communities across America rely for access to credit.

On a strong bipartisan vote, we passed Senator CRAPO's legislation to

streamline the Dodd-Frank Act so regulations intended for Wall Street place less of a crushing burden on Main Street.

Next up is legislation to combat sex trafficking. Debate on this issue will begin today.

It might be easy to imagine sex trafficking doesn't happen here. It would be easy to pretend it is only a problem in other parts of the world, but that is dead wrong.

Trafficking is a crisis right here in the United States. From 2010 to 2015, the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children saw reports of suspected child sex trafficking increase more than eightfold—an eightfold increase. Last year alone, more than 8,500 cases of human trafficking were reported to the National Human Trafficking Hotline.

As Senator PORTMAN has been informing us throughout his tireless work on this issue, sex trafficking has moved from the street corner to the smartphone. That is, in large part, because a 1996 law meant to protect online speech is now misused as a shield to stop sex traffickers and those who profit from their crimes from facing the rightful consequences.

I am as strong a defender of the First Amendment as you will find. I was in the Congress in 1996. I voted for the Telecommunications Act that included this provision, as did the vast majority of my colleagues. Let me assure you, not one of us intended to create a special protection for platforms that knowingly allow sex traffickers to exploit children.

The legislation we will consider would ensure that institutions that knowingly facilitate sex trafficking can be held accountable for their actions.

There is a reason why 67 Senators have joined Senator PORTMAN in support of legislation to accomplish this. There is a reason why the White House

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



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is strongly supportive. American children should not be sold—online or anywhere else. America's families should not be victimized by such evil, and America's laws should not be misused to protect those who perpetrate these crimes or those who, according to the stunning subcommittee report, knowingly give them space and tools to operate while profiting in the process.

Several of us have worked hard on this issue for a number of years. It is now past time to take this additional step. When we vote next week, that time will have come.

TAX REFORM

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, on one final matter, few subjects are closer to the heart of parents than their children's education. That is why Republicans made sure the historic tax reform we passed last year included a provision, championed by Senator CRUZ and others, that will help parents choose an education for their children that makes sense for their family.

A recent article in the *Courier-Journal* in Louisville, KY, shared the story of one family whose second grade son had struggled with an undiagnosed learning disability. He had trouble keeping up with his public school class. So like many parents facing similar challenges, his family decided to send him to a private school with smaller classes and more individual attention, but that was a tough financial decision. Even though both parents worked, affording tuition was a struggle.

Families like this are why Republican tax reform gave parents more flexibility in paying educational expenses. The law builds the foundation for important expansions of the tax-advantaged college savings accounts known as 529 plans. As a result of tax reform, we are empowering families to use these tax-exempt accounts not only for college expenses but also for tuition at private and religious schools, K-12.

The philosophy here is simple: More choice is better than less. That really is the moral of the story on tax reform—getting government out of the way, letting families keep more of their own income, and empowering Americans to make the economic choices that make sense for them.

Parents know best what works for their children. So if we can get government out of the way so the IRS takes less from families and parents, and parents get more control over their kids' education, we ought to do it.

The young man from Louisville is in the fifth grade now. His new private school was able to properly diagnose and approach his dyslexia. He is thriving. Now, thanks to tax reform, school choice will soon become more affordable for families like his.

Historically, helping families save for schooling costs has been a bipartisan priority. In 1996, I worked with Senator Bob Graham and other friends

across the aisle to create section 529 in the first place. Five years later, I sponsored legislation to let families tap into 529 plans tax-free. It ended up in the 2001 tax cuts—again, a bipartisan affair, but this time was different.

No Democrats in the House or the Senate—not a single one—voted for this historic tax reform law. They tried to block this law to help families across America afford schooling of their choice. This time, Republicans had to do it all by themselves. Fortunately, we got it done for American families.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

ALLOW STATES AND VICTIMS TO FIGHT ONLINE SEX TRAFFICKING ACT OF 2017—MOTION TO PROCEED

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to H.R. 1856, which the clerk will report.

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.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

REPUBLICAN TAX BILL

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, since the Republicans jammed through a massive corporate tax cut in December, hardly a day goes by that we don't read about a corporation using the savings to purchase its own stock. The average citizen may ask: What is that all about?

Well, when a company purchases its own stock, it is sort of artificially making less stock, buying it back, and raising the price of the shares. Why do they do that? There are two reasons, both to benefit the corporate CEOs but not the workers. First, corporate CEOs have a lot of the stock themselves, so they make money; second, they look better when the stock price goes up. But the stock price isn't going up because the company has sold more goods, been more productive, bought new machinery, or found a new product. The stock simply goes up because they have decreased the number of shares. It is a scam in a certain sense,

helping corporate CEOs, helping shareholders—80 percent of the shares are held by the top 10 percent, so it doesn't really help average Americans, and that is including 401(k)s—but it doesn't help the worker.

We have heard many claims from our Republican friends: Pass this tax bill, and the workers will benefit. Well, unfortunately, now we see who is really benefiting. Just as we predicted, it is the corporate CEOs and the wealthiest of Americans.

Just recently, the total amount of share buybacks surpassed \$220 billion this year. According to the market data firm, TrimTabs, share buybacks in 2018 averaged \$4.8 billion a day—a day—double the pace for the same period last year.

For a few weeks, right after the President passed his tax bill, what happened? They had these companies announce bonuses for average workers. Very few Americans saw those bonuses—a lot of hoopla, but not much else. The bonuses—not wage increases, not new hires, but one-time annual bonuses—anyone who gets them, God bless them; there have just been so few. Those bonuses are being overwhelmed by a deluge of corporate share buybacks, which do not benefit the average worker, but benefit the CEOs and the heads of the companies.

According to an analysis by JUST Capital, only 6 percent of the capital allocated by companies from the tax bill has gone to employees, while nearly 60 percent has gone to shareholders—again, to the corporate CEOs who own those shares, the wealthiest of Americans who own the vast majority of shares. Ten times more capital is going to shareholders than to workers.

So this bill, which is poorly structured and aimed at the wealthy, ain't working. The more Americans see it—you know, there was an initial thrust: Oh, we like the tax bill. At first, it was unpopular as we talked about it here on the floor. Then, with these bonuses and the stock market going up, popularity went up a little. Now it is flattening out and even heading down. In the last three polls, fewer people liked this tax plan, and that is going to keep happening, my Republican friends, because they know what it was aimed at and you know what it was aimed at—the corporate CEOs who came to lobby you and the wealthy individuals who came to lobby you. It is no wonder the American people are starting to turn on the Republican tax bill. Polls have shown its popularity is underwater and trending downward, not up.

This idea that tax cuts would be a political panacea for Republicans come November is losing altitude fast. Remember, that is what our Republican friends said: Well, maybe people are upset with the President's tweets, and maybe this and that are not going so well; maybe they are not accomplishing that much, but now, with the tax bill, we will win the election.

Well, look at the Pennsylvania election where a Democrat won the district

that Trump carried by 20 points. This is the kind of district that our Republican friends need to carry. These are Republican suburbs in blue-collar Southwest Pennsylvania.

Early in the race, what did Republicans do? They tried running ads about the tax bill to help their candidate, Rick Saccone, during the first few weeks of February. These were the super PACs, the Koch brothers, and all the others who will benefit hugely from the tax bill. Somehow they believe that because they will benefit, everyone is going to think they have benefited.

They ran these ads, often paid for by the Kochs. Two-thirds of the ads mentioned taxes—two-thirds of all Saccone's ads, both by the Koch-like super PACs and by Saccone himself. The next week, 36 percent mentioned taxes. Guess what. After 2 weeks of these tax ads, our Republican friends tested it out, and they got rid of taxes as an issue. It wasn't working. It wasn't working with fairly well-off middle-class Pittsburgh suburbanites or blue-collar workers in Greene County and Westmoreland County and Washington County in Southwest PA, which are areas where people had voted for Trump.

It is eerily similar, folks, to the Governor's race in Virginia—the same thing. That was before the bill passed, but still, Republican candidate Ed Gillespie started his campaign on a tax plan similar to the Republican tax plan. He had to give it up because it wasn't getting traction.

The American people are smart about this. They know what is going on. They know the vast majority of this goes to the wealthy. They know the amount that is going to them is small. They know their tax break is temporary and the corporate tax break is permanent. Most of all, they know we have created a huge deficit. And how are some of our Republicans friends saying we pay for the deficit? Cut Medicare. Cut Social Security. Cut healthcare. That is not what the American people want.

Poll after poll shows healthcare is far more important to the American people than tax cuts. Do you know why? If you get a break on your taxes of \$20 a week and your premiums go up several thousand dollars in a month or even several hundred dollars in a month, that little increase is wiped away. Our Republican colleagues, even in their tax bill, caused premiums to go up by monkeying around with healthcare.

The Republican Party needs to wake up and realize that by giving massive benefits to corporations and the wealthy, it is never going to be a popular issue for them in the election because it is a terrible policy for the average middle-class and working Americans. It gets to the contradiction at the core of the Presidency. The President talks like a populous but governs like a plutocrat. Let me repeat that. The President talks like a populous but governs like a plutocrat. He just got rid of a Wall Street executive—Gary

Cohn—and now he is putting in as his economic adviser Larry Kudlow, who has favored the wealthy, Club for Growth policies—help the wealthy and all of America will benefit—throughout his whole career. That is not how Trump ran. That is not what he tells working people when he goes to a big tent in Pennsylvania. But that is what he is doing. Sooner or later, it catches up with you. The Pennsylvania election showed it is catching up faster than our Republican friends would like. The President talks like a populous but governs like a plutocrat.

President Trump said that his tax bill would be a middle-class miracle, but the actual legislation is a miracle for the wealthy corporations and the richest 1 percent. As I said, part of the problem is that the President surrounds himself with the wealthy elite. Those are his advisers. These wealthy elites push for tax cuts for the rich and rhapsodize failed economic orthodoxies like trickle-down. That applies to Larry Kudlow. Here is a man who is a cheerleader for Bush-era economics. He ignored the housing bubble and actually recommended—Larry Kudlow, the man who is now going to give the President economic advice—that Americans buy stock in the fall of 2008 when everyone else saw that the economy was about to collapse. Does anyone think Larry Kudlow is going to bring a renewed focus on improving the middle class? Forget it. He believes in the plutocracy. He has his whole career. That is who President Trump picked. He is getting rid of one and putting in another, like going from the frying pan into the fire.

By the way, I think the President loves having the big crowds of working-class people in those tents, but who are his real friends? They are the very wealthy. That is who he hung out with in New York. He cares what they think, and that is why his policies are so aimed at them.

My Republican friends, in a nutshell, this is the problem you face. Your rhetoric is all about helping working people, but your policies and the people developing them are all about helping corporations and the rich.

I am not against the rich or corporations. God bless them. Let's hope they do well. But average Americans need far more help than the top 1 percent and wealthy corporations. Give it to average folks. They need it. They are still struggling with paying for college, affording a vacation, helping their elderly mom and dad through a healthcare problem. They are who need the help, not the top 1 percent. But our Republican colleagues aim everything at that top 1 percent.

If we would only get rid of Citizens United, that awful decision that allows the wealthy to have such huge influence on the Republican Party, the super PACs—individual Members have super PACs funded by the wealthy. I wish we could get rid of it on both sides, Democratic and Republican. Un-

fortunately, it doesn't look like the Supreme Court is doing it.

The rhetoric of Republicans: Help working people. The policies of Republicans: Help the wealthy corporations and the rich. As we have seen in poll after poll and in recent elections, the American people are waking up to that reality.

It is hard to make a tax cut unpopular, but Republicans have managed to do it by designing a bill that will direct 83 percent of the benefits to the top 1 percent and \$1.5 trillion to the deficit and then threaten to cut Medicare and Social Security to make up the difference. My colleagues, that is a toxic combination, and Republicans will not be able to run on it because only a very few wealthy Americans support that agenda.

RUSSIA

Mr. President, now on a different matter—Russia. A little more than a week ago, our friends in the United Kingdom—England, Great Britain—suffered an attack on two individuals by a nerve agent. In a joint statement today, the leadership of the United States, the UK, France, and Germany agreed that Putin was behind it. To her great credit, Prime Minister May demanded an immediate response from Putin and promised appropriate countermeasures. She has already expelled 23 Russian diplomats, and I hope she takes additional action. Expelling 23 diplomats is strong action, but we need more.

Mr. Putin—he is a bully. I grew up in Brooklyn. There are a lot of bullies around Brooklyn. You have to stand up to them, or they will keep taking advantage of you. That is how a bully works.

Let's compare Prime Minister May's action to President Trump's. It is a study in contrast when it comes to Russia. Prime Minister May was quick and decisive about countering Russia's aggression. President Trump can hardly seem to utter a peep in criticism of President Putin—a man who is trying to undermine the power of the United States, a man who is trying to undermine the very democracy of the United States, the beauty of America. It was on full display this week when, instead of personally defending our ally Britain, President Trump didn't say a word about the attack, directing everything through aides or statements.

President Trump warns all the time that “we need to get smart” about other countries taking advantage of the United States. I agree. I tend to agree with the President on China. China is taking advantage of us, and President Trump, to his credit, is doing more than the Bush or Obama administrations did. But guess who is taking advantage of us even more than China. Russia. They meddle in our elections, continue to sow division on social media through Russia-linked bots or building an intelligence machine to meddle in our elections again later this year. Putin constantly attacks our allies, our friends.

President Trump, when are you going to get smart about the threat Russia poses to the United States and our allies?

We in Congress, 98 to 2, the Democrats and Republicans together—Leader MCCONNELL and I worked this out. We voted to implement mandatory sanctions against Russia. Guess what, America. President Trump hasn't even implemented them. What is he afraid of? What is he hiding?

Hopefully, we will get an announcement today that maybe he is implementing sanctions after what Russia did, but that is not enough. As my friend from New Jersey has suggested, the President should further sanction Putin and anyone else involved under the Biological Weapons Control and Warfare Elimination Act for this heinous attack in the UK.

We are still waiting for President Trump to direct our intelligence agencies and the State Department to use the resources we have provided them to combat Russian cyber attacks. We have heard from officials who are in charge of cyber security. They have gotten no direction from the White House, no orders to do anything. We are still waiting for actions to harden our election security, and we are still waiting for President Trump to utter one word of public criticism for what Putin is doing to the United States and democracies around the world.

I say to President Trump: Your silence speaks on this issue. Your silence speaks volumes to the Russian Government and America's other adversaries, as well as our friends and allies. Finally, it speaks volumes to the American people. More and more Americans are asking: Why is President Trump so afraid to take on probably our No. 1 menace, Russia? What is he hiding? What is going on? Why?

It is ringing in America's ear. The President is not going to escape it.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I rise today to talk about the issue before the Senate, and I am very pleased the Senate is finally taking up this legislation. It has to do with stopping sex trafficking specifically—a growing scourge in our country and really a stain on our national character—which is girls, women being sold online.

The legislation is called the Allow States and Victims to Fight Online Sex Trafficking Act. It includes the Stop Enabling Sex Traffickers Act, or SESTA. That has gone through a process here in the Senate. We had hearings on it. We had a markup. This is an issue many of us have been working on for many months—in fact, for the last couple of years—doing the investigations to come up with how to deal with this problem.

I am very pleased that we now have the opportunity here in the Senate to take up this legislation and begin the process of turning the tide, changing

this horrific situation where, in this country, in this century, we actually have an increase in the trafficking of human beings—specifically women and children being trafficked online. I thought the speech earlier by Majority Leader MITCH MCCONNELL laid this out very well. He talked about the fact that there has been an eightfold increase, in the most recent data from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children; that is, between 2010 and 2015, there was an eightfold increase in the incidence of trafficking. He also talked about the fact that this is growing because of this growth of the internet, that the internet—specifically this one website—has caused this increase that Congress has the ability to address through a change in a Federal law that can be targeted and focused and can make a huge difference in the lives of those who would be trafficked and undergo the intense trauma that results.

I am very pleased we are taking up this legislation. I thank Majority Leader MCCONNELL for putting the bill on the floor.

I know we have an important omnibus spending bill coming up, and I know the Senate needs to focus on that, but first let's get this common-sense legislation passed. Let's take this opportunity to do something that is actually going to help immediately on this issue of sex trafficking.

I also thank Senator JOHN THUNE. He is the chairman of the Commerce Committee, which had the hearings and marked up this legislation. I also thank his colleague, Ranking Member BILL NELSON, for his work on this. We held a powerful hearing. I had a chance to testify there and testify about the work we had done in another committee investigating this issue. We heard from victims, and we heard from experts. At the end of the day, that vote in the Commerce Committee was unanimous—Republicans and Democrats alike saying: We get it. We need to address this issue.

We have had a lot of collaboration on this over the last couple of years. I would say it has been a truly non-partisan effort, not just a bipartisan effort, which is rare around this place. In particular, I would like to thank the coauthor of the legislation we are dealing with, and that is RICHARD BLUMENTHAL, who, as a former prosecutor, understands these issues because he prosecuted sex trafficking cases.

I also thank Senator CLAIRE MCCASKILL because it was Senator MCCASKILL and I who headed up the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, which looked into this issue. We spent a year and a half studying it, and we were able to find out shocking information about what is going on online.

I also thank Senator JOHN CORNYN, Senator HEIDI HEITKAMP, Senator AMY KLOBUCHAR, and Senator TED CRUZ. They are a group of Senators who were the initial cosponsors of this legisla-

tion and have helped us put this legislation together in a way that addresses the issue in a very focused and targeted way, so we are going to actually have the result we are looking for but without affecting what some were concerned about, which was the freedom of the internet. We all believe in the freedom of the internet, but we also know that committing these kinds of horrific crimes on the internet has to be something people are held accountable for.

I want to take a moment to recognize a couple of other leaders in this effort, one of whom is a Senator, and the other is his spouse, and that is Cindy and JOHN MCCAIN. I hope they are watching these proceedings over the next week as we take up this legislation, debate it, and I hope pass it on the floor of the Senate, because they have been very involved.

JOHN MCCAIN from the start, as one of the leaders on this issue here in the Senate, helped us put together the legislation. He was with me on the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations as we looked into this matter. JOHN can't be with us here on the floor, but I know his presence is felt. I will tell my colleagues that it is felt by me, as well as the influence he has had on this legislation and on many of us in bringing up this issue.

One reason he brings up this issue a lot is that he has a spouse who is passionate about it and has spent a lot of time working on it. The McCain Institute has specialized on this issue of human trafficking, and Cindy McCain has been a tireless advocate globally on this issue. So I thank both Cindy and JOHN for their inspiration. Again, I am confident that as we get it across the finish line here, they will be celebrating with us.

We have 68 cosponsors of this legislation now, and, again, for those who follow scorecards around here, that is unusual. We have a majority of Republicans, and we have a majority of Democrats. We have a situation here where everybody is affected by it in their States. They get it, and they understand that this is a Federal responsibility to change this law because it is a Federal law that creates this opening for websites to engage in this kind of behavior without accountability. They are effectively shielded from prosecutions or from lawsuits. This legislation takes away that shield.

We have heard from the FBI, the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children; we have heard from Polaris, which runs the national tip line on human trafficking. All kinds of experts have told us that trafficking is not just increasing, but it is increasing because of the ruthless efficiency of the internet.

One website—backpage.com—is involved in the majority of online sex trafficking. One anti-trafficking organization has said that backpage is involved in about 75 percent of the online trafficking reports it receives from the public. Another organization, Shared

Hope International, says it is even more than that. So think about that. We have this increase in trafficking. It is primarily being caused by this movement from the street corner to the smartphone, as victims have told me back home, and there is one website that has the majority of this activity. That is what we studied.

As we looked into it further, Senator McCASKILL and I were shocked to find out that not only is this activity going on on this website, but they were complicit in the sense that they knowingly facilitated criminal sex trafficking, including coaching users—people who were placing ads with them—to post clean ads so that they wouldn't indicate—which was very obvious in the initial ads that were presented—that these were underage girls. As an example, taking out words like "schoolgirl" or "cheerleader"—they told them to do that so they could still place the ads; in other words, get the money for the ads. As you can imagine, this is a very lucrative business. So they were saying that they needed to clean it up. That practice covered up evidence of these crimes. It actually also made it harder for law enforcement to follow up on these cases. They did it for a very simple reason. They wanted the ads because they increased their profits, but obviously they had an incredibly detrimental impact, and still do, on women and children around our country.

I spoke earlier this week on the floor about Kubiiki Pride because she testified before us and she is also part of a documentary called "I Am Jane Doe." If you are interested in this issue, check it out. It is on Netflix.

Kubiiki Pride told us this alarming story of a mom whose daughter goes missing. She can't find her. She was told to look on this site called backpage. She does, and she sees her daughter's photographs there—sexually explicit photographs.

She calls backpage and says: That is my daughter; she has been missing. She is 14 years old, and she is on your website. Thank you for taking down the ad.

Their response: Did you pay for the ad?

She said: No, of course I didn't pay for it. I am the mother.

They said: We can't take down the ad because you didn't pay for it.

That story tells us how evil these websites are.

Let me tell you another story about Yvonne Ambrose. Yvonne testified before the Commerce Committee, and you could have heard a pin drop when she was telling her story. Her daughter was 16 years old and she was trafficked on backpage.com. She was sold for sex on backpage.com at 16 years old. Yvonne got a call on Christmas Eve 2016, the call no parent ever wants to get. The call was from law enforcement saying that her daughter, Desiree, who was being trafficked at the time on backpage.com, had been murdered.

Yvonne is honoring Desiree's memory by getting engaged in this issue

and helping us to pass this legislation. I appreciate her challenge and her grief. But she is also sure that this legislation is the thing that would have kept girls like her daughter from getting involved in this, because when she went after backpage to try to hold them accountable, she was told: I am sorry; they have immunity under Federal law.

That Federal law, by the way, is called the Communications Decency Act. It was put in place with good intentions to help protect the freedom of the internet. It protects websites from liability when users put something on their site, but it was never meant to protect criminal activity. It has been misinterpreted, in my view, by the courts, but it also needs to be clarified, because it is not as clear as it should be, and that is what our legislation does.

This legislation, by the way, was enacted back in 1996—22 years ago, when the internet was in its infancy. There needed to be something to help provide protection from liability. But, unfortunately, it has been used as a shield by these criminals to be able to sell women and children online without accountability.

The same law that was actually written back then was also focused, in part, on keeping indecent material—pornography—from going to children, ironically, and now it is being used to shield these traffickers. I know Congress did not intend that broad immunity, and I know we need to fix it.

By the way, the district attorneys around the country agree with us on this—prosecutors. They have asked us to change this law. Their associations have even been involved in this issue. Fifty State attorneys general have written to us, asking us to do this, including, by the way, some former State attorneys general who are now Members of this body.

In the most blatant call on Congress yet, we had a court in Sacramento, CA, say: You have to fix this law because, otherwise, we can't do anything to keep people from exploiting women and children online. A number of courts have said this and basically have called on Congress—welcomed us to enter into it. The one in California said: "If and until Congress sees fit to amend the immunity law, the broad reach of the Communications Decency Act even applies to those alleged to support the exploitation of others by allowing trafficking."

In other words, they are asking Congress to step in and do something.

That is what this does. It allows online sex trafficking victims to get the justice they deserve and it allows prosecutors to hold these websites accountable.

We do it with two very narrow changes. First, allowing these victims to get the justice they deserve by removing the broad liability protections for a narrow set of bad actors. In fact, we actually say that for the good ac-

tors, there is a Good Samaritan provision: If you want to clean up your website and get the offensive material off, you are protected.

Second, it does allow for the State prosecutors to go after these websites, which they can't do now. So it takes the Federal standard—it is not a new standard; it is Federal law, which is already a criminal act—and says, allow these State prosecutors, these State attorneys general, to prosecute these websites that violate these Federal laws.

It is incredibly important to pass this. We did it narrowly. We have a knowing standard here; in other words, to be affected by this, you have to knowingly be facilitating, supporting, or assisting sex trafficking. We did that because we wanted to be sure it was focused on this issue and not affecting the broader freedom of the internet.

We have a lot of support now. A couple of weeks ago the White House announced its support for this legislation. I mentioned that 68 Senators are now supporting it. It passed in the House of Representatives about 10 days ago with over 300 votes.

It has support from around the country, most importantly. All of the groups are focused on this issue of how to avoid women and children from getting caught in this web of human trafficking and then how to help them when they get out to provide for the important recovery efforts that are needed from the trauma of this. Those groups, of course, are strongly supportive.

Law enforcement has been terrific. The Fraternal Order of Police stepped up early on in strong support of this legislation. So have all of the other law enforcement groups represented here in Washington through their national offices. We appreciate their help.

We appreciate the fact that parents have been willing to come forward and tell these difficult stories, as was the case of Kubiiki Pride, as was the case of Yvonne Ambrose, whom I talked about earlier, and her daughter, Desiree. They told their stories from their heart in order to get Congress to wake up and do the right thing. We now need to do that.

This legislation is now before this body. We expect to have a vote next week on it. We need to do all we can to address this stain on our national character. We need to do all we can to provide these victims the justice they deserve. We need to do all we can to ensure that we stop the selling of women and children online.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

FARM SERVICE AGENCY LOAN FLEXIBILITY BILL

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, I rise today to honor Michigan's farmers. Agriculture is a vital part of Michigan's economy. Our State is home to more than 51,000 farmers who contribute

over \$100 billion to the Nation's economy.

Michigan is also the second most diverse farm State in the Nation, growing more than 300 commodities, including a significant portion of our Nation's milk, corn, cherries, cucumbers, and much more.

Michigan farmers and farmers across our country feed the Nation and the world, and we must do what we can to support them. Our agricultural businesses rely on the ability to access the resources they need to keep growing, creating jobs, and contributing to our national economy.

Access to these resources can be especially challenging for new farm operations that are just getting started, including small farms that make up 82 percent of Michigan's agricultural producers. Small farms that are just starting out and are facing tough economic conditions sometimes struggle to have access to affordable credit. These businesses rely upon important services provided by the Farm Service Agency, which works with lenders to guarantee and deliver small-dollar loans to the small farmers who need it most.

Farm Service Agency loans and guarantees can help farmers cover urgent operating costs like feed, seed, and fertilizer to get them through the season. Without these loans, farmers could lose their ability to purchase equipment and other necessities for the planting season and could be forced to curtail their operations.

Currently, more than 2,300 farms in Michigan have Farm Service Agency loans, totaling more than \$630 million. Across the country last year, the Farm Service Agency made and guaranteed almost 40,000 loans, totaling over \$6 billion.

This program is in such high demand that in 2016, the Farm Service Agency ran out of money to finance operating loans. This included more than 1,000 loans that have already been approved. This led to a backlog, and farmers were forced to wait for months until Congress passed emergency funding to get the loans they needed for their day-to-day operations.

Access to capital is critical across a range of businesses, but it is incredibly important for our small farmers. They can lose out on an entire growing season if they can't buy the equipment and the supplies they need while they wait on Congress to fund the Farm Service Agency.

This year the FSA loan programs are again on track to exceed available funding, and if that happens, farmers will again be stuck waiting on Congress to receive the loan they deserve and need.

That is why I introduced bipartisan legislation this week with my colleague, Senator DAVID PERDUE of Georgia, to provide greater flexibility to the FSA loan program to continue serving farmers during periods of high demand.

My bill—the Farm Service Agency Loan Flexibility Act—would allow the

FSA program to increase its loan authority in years when the demand for loans unexpectedly exceeds the supply of funding.

The legislation would enable FSA to increase the available loan funding by up to 25 percent for the fiscal year for self-funding loans and guarantees that do not require appropriation. It would also authorize FSA to increase the loan cap by up to 25 percent for FSA direct loans that require budget authority and would allow FSA to draw stopgap funding for these direct loans from the Commodity Credit Corporation.

I am proud to have the support of the Michigan Farm Bureau, the Michigan Agri-business Association, the American Bankers Association, and the National Farmers Union, among many others.

Like our small businesses, students, and families, America's farmers deserve to have affordable loan options. They deserve our attention and they deserve our support.

I urge my colleagues to support the Farm Service Agency Loan Flexibility Act to help meet the financial needs of our farming communities as they support and sustain us each and every day.

Thank you.

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

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

ECONOMIC GROWTH, REGULATORY RELIEF, AND CONSUMER PROTECTION BILL

Mr. PERDUE. Mr. President, it is not often I get to come to the U.S. Senate with an uplifted heart, but today I do. Yesterday, two-thirds of this body got together on an issue that is so important to Main Street America and agreed.

After weeks of negotiation and going back and forth, we passed a bipartisan banking bill, and I believe historians will look back on this week and this bill as being a watershed event. It was a measured bill. It didn't blow up Dodd-Frank; it didn't do away with it. It didn't go as far as some people wanted; it did more than others wanted, but two-thirds of us put the national interests above our own self-interests and passed a bill that will change the face of lending for small community banks and regional banks across our country.

Last year, when President Trump became President, he said: Job one is growing the economy. After 8 years of the lowest economic performance in our history, he knew that if you are ever going to deal with the long-term debt crisis we have, you have to first grow the economy. He was right. His instincts were exactly right on.

So what did we focus on? The President had us focus on regulations, en-

ergy, and taxes. I am happy to tell you, this body collectively agreed, and we got those things done. We reversed 860-some rules and regulations last year. We unleashed our energy potential, as the Presiding Officer knows very well. Late last year, we passed an earth-shattering, historic tax cut and tax modification bill that will unleash our potential and make us competitive with the rest of the world.

Why was all that necessary? Well, we had gone through an experiment where Big Government—more regulation and more control—was the call of the day, and we saw the result of that. So what we have been doing is, in a measured way, reversing many of those onerous fiscal policies that kept the monetary policy from igniting the economy again. That is all this is.

At the beginning of last year, some \$7 trillion almost was not at work in our \$20 trillion economy. That is historic. That is unbelievable. You can't even describe that to people outside this country. There was some \$2 trillion on the balance sheets of the Russell 1000. That is now being employed. We see announcements every week where companies are announcing capital plans, capital expenditure plans, for the next few years largely as a result of the pull-back on regulations last year.

Second, we see that by eliminating our archaic repatriation tax that was part of the tax bill, there is some \$3 trillion of unrepatriated U.S. profits overseas, and most of that will be coming back. The banking bill we just did that reverses some of the more onerous provisions of Dodd-Frank on small banks and community banks will free up some \$2 trillion potential in lending capacity. I think this is historic.

After Dodd-Frank, we created a two-street economy: We had Wall Street and we had Main Street. I have a chart here that explains. This happens so often in Washington, where well-intended people who have very little experience in the free enterprise system make decisions that have unintended consequences—and this is one. Dodd-Frank was intended to rein in and control the big banks. Yet what it did inadvertently was penalize the small banks and make big banks better business.

This chart calls out—the way I would measure this is the lending activity. The dark blue line here shows, since the 2008 crisis, large business loans coming out of the major money-centered banks have increased dramatically. Even that hasn't driven the recovery we talk about because a lot of the job creation comes in smalltown America and small companies.

This light-blue line is small business loans, less than \$1 million. We are not even back to where we were in 2008. We will be, now that this bill just passed, because it releases or changes the reserve requirements for small and community banks and regional banks. It also changes the definition of what is a regional bank and increases it to \$250

billion from \$50 billion. That lowers the regulatory burden and the cost of compliance for these small banks. That gets translated into money flow—cashflow—into businesses that create jobs.

This is an innovation economy. We know how to create jobs. We just need to get the Federal Government out of the way. One-size-fits-all regulations do not work. Yesterday, we pulled back on a blunt instrument law—Dodd-Frank—done with a supermajority, by the way. Dodd-Frank was totally ineffective and got the opposite result of what they really wanted.

Those small banks and community banks did nothing to cause the 2008 and 2009 crisis, but since Dodd-Frank was enacted, over 1,700 small banks, primarily, have gone out of business—1,700—many because they were unable to cope or afford to comply with the 2,319 pages and 390 new regulations imposed by Dodd-Frank. Let me say that again: 390 new regulations were imposed by Dodd-Frank. My goodness.

These small banks had nothing to do with the crisis of 2008. Many of these banks were community and regional banks that actually support small businesses on Main Street, give small businesses the needed capital, and sponsor Little League baseball parks. I grew up in a Little League baseball park sponsored by the three banks in my hometown. My father was a board member of one of those small banks. I remember those days. They were involved in the community. When you borrowed money from them, they knew you personally. What we have done is created an environment that just shut down lending activity in these small banks.

Small business lending—which we all know is a driver in every recovery since World War II—took nearly 8 years to barely get back to where we were in 2008, and I am not sure we are totally there, if you go across the board, entirely.

I am so glad to stand here and say that finally the U.S. Senate took action. I am also proud to say, even though it didn't go as far as I would like, that we got to a measured approach here that both sides could agree.

I remind everybody in this body that two-thirds of us agreed to this. I can't think of another issue that has come before this body. I think we had one vote, 98 to 2, to allow the head of the VA to run his human resources practices the way people in the real world do, and we have seen over 1,500 people now replaced at the VA to clean that place up. I can't think of another thing that has brought us together like this because we all know small banks have been inappropriately affected by Dodd-Frank.

Republicans and Democrats proved this week, and over the past several weeks, that we can put our self-interests aside and get to the better good. I am proud to be a part of this. That is why I ran for the Senate. That is why

the Presiding Officer ran. We didn't come up here to not get anything and to just get reelected. The American people are fed up. That is how Donald Trump got elected President. That is how I got elected.

I would dare say, the American people have the right idea about the future of America, if we would just listen to them. Nobody has all the right answers, but freeing up capital right now to put to work in our economy is the only way we are going to grow this economy north of 3 percent, and I believe we can breathe life back into our rural communities.

I had lunch yesterday with the Secretary of Agriculture. They are focused on redeveloping our rural communities that have been ignored for the last decade. These communities share the values that built America. Yet they have been ignored by past administrations that led to big city, big urban focus. I think this bill, more than anything else we have done since I have been in the Senate, will actually breathe life back into those rural communities.

I applaud our Democratic partners across the aisle. Seventeen of them took the heat from their own party and from K Street and from the vested lobbyists who did not want this to happen. I applaud them for their courage and for standing up for the people back home. That is what we are here to do. It doesn't always work out this way, but sometimes 15 or 16 of our Republican Party will work with them and get a bill they want to do. That is what this Senate body is supposed to do.

I know there are some on the other side of the aisle who really want a one-size-fits-all bigger government and more intrusion. We heard the speeches this week: It is going to be so draconian. They just don't understand how this bill will breathe life back into capital formation, which is the cornerstone of a capitalistic society, but I believe most people in America have seen the dark side. They have seen the punitive nature of large regulatory bodies by a Federal Government that wants to dominate every aspect of our life, and Dodd-Frank was one of the ramifications of that—accomplished, as I said, only during a supermajority.

The irony of Dodd-Frank is that it is just another example of Washington overreach that hurts the very people it claims to champion and fails to help the working middle class. We see from this chart, large businesses had no problem getting loans, but the small startup entrepreneur is having trouble today, and that is what this bill goes a long way toward helping to alleviate. Small businesses should look at this and say: We are back in business. We are open for business. I believe this will breathe life back into many communities around our country.

Community and regional banks and, by extension, communities and small businesses across the country have been unduly punished for something they had nothing to do with. It is time to correct that, and this bill does that.

I am proud to be a Member of the U.S. Senate today. I haven't said that many times here. I am proud because we took action, we put our self-interests aside, and this is exactly the kind of result the American people want us to deliver.

This rollback—which I believe is very measured—combined with last year's regulatory rollback, President Trump's steps to unleash our energy potential and, yes, our historic tax bill, go a long way to be a big win for our economy. It sends a message to the rest of the world.

I am hopeful the House is going to pass this bill as soon as possible and that President Trump is going to be able to sign it into law very soon. President Trump has a vision for America. It is born out of Main Street America. I believe this puts us back on the track to greatness and leadership in the world economically, socially, politically. It is the right thing to do for our country. It is the right thing to do for every person in America.

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

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

GUN SAFETY

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President, I rise today to talk about gun ownership and gun safety in Virginia and in the United States. I speak as a gun owner, and I speak as a strong Second Amendment supporter. I want to do a couple of things in this speech, but one thing I want to do is put to rest the idea that gun owners, gun ownership, and the Second Amendment are incompatible with reasonable gun safety rules.

I accept the ruling, the holding, and the principle announced by the Supreme Court in the Heller decision that the Second Amendment conveys an individual right to bear arms and conveys that right to the American public. There was, and there remains, some controversy over the ruling. Some have argued that the text of the amendment discusses only the right to bear arms in the context of participating in a militia, which in 1787 was a necessary strategy for defending the Nation during a time when we had no standing Army. For years, many scholars and courts accepted that notion and argued that the Second Amendment was sort of different from the others in that way. In Heller, the Supreme Court ruled that the Second Amendment, like all the other amendments, conveys an individual right, and I accept and believe that interpretation.

But the Heller decision came with an important caveat. The Second Amendment is the only amendment that uses the phrase "well regulated." The amendment may convey a personal

right to gun ownership, and it does, but it explicitly acknowledges that regulations are part of what may be necessary. Courts subsequent to *Heller* have frequently held that the particular regulations are well within the scope of the Second Amendment.

The NRA and other organizations often pretend that the phrase “well regulated” doesn’t even appear in the amendment. Often, they will print a copy of the Second Amendment or the text, and they will have only the second clause, omitting the “well regulated” phrase. While that phrase, like the text of the amendment itself, is set in the context of a militia, it is clear from its usage that the Framers knew firearms were dangerous, though necessary, and there needed to be rules to ensure their safe use. In other words, the phrase “well regulated” in the text is not there to refer to the kind of uniform that a militia member would wear, whether they should have a beard or not. It is there to refer to the need for discipline and training to keep those people who bear arms behaving in a reasonable and safe manner.

Even if the phrase “well regulated” did not appear in the text of the Second Amendment—and that phrase “well regulated” appears in no other amendment, only the second—it would still be pretty clear that the Second Amendment right, just like other constitutional rights, is not absolute and free from any governmental rules. The *Heller* decision, authored by Justice Scalia, stated this very clearly: A ruling of individual ownership and use of firearms does not restrict the government from imposing reasonable rules on their use. Many subsequent cases have affirmed these reasonable rules over time.

The First Amendment, for example, guarantees the right to free speech and makes clear that no law infringing upon such a right is constitutional. But the Supreme Court has long held that government agencies can place reasonable limits on the time, place, and manner of speech, so long as the limits don’t discriminate on the content of the idea that is expressed. An easy example is, a city can ban sound trucks with megaphones from driving through neighborhoods blaring ads in the middle of the night while people are sleeping. The right to free speech is subject to reasonable limitation.

Similarly, the First Amendment guarantees freedom of the press, but States punish civil libel through their civil litigation and court processes. A newspaper trashing somebody through a knowingly false statement can be subjected to civil liability, and that paper can’t claim the right to free press to shield it from accountability.

The Second Amendment, in this way, is similar to the First Amendment, and I could go through other examples. While the right to ownership, to bear and use arms—not just ownership but using arms—may not be infringed, reasonable rules regarding gun usage are

explicitly contemplated by the amendment and constitutionally allowable.

It is important to recognize that we all tolerate reasonable limits on gun use. One common use of firearms in Virginia and Alaska—I know from my one visit to Alaska that this is the case—is hunting. In Virginia, the voters of our State, by referendum, amended our State constitution in 2000 to guarantee to all a right to hunt, fish, and gather game subject to rules prescribed by our general assembly. I was legal counsel for this effort, before I was in State office, arguing the validity of the amendment when a citizens group sued to try to keep it off the ballot. We prevailed in the litigation, and the amendment passed overwhelmingly, with more than 60 percent of the vote. That vote showed our population both embraced the right to hunt but also embraced the acceptance of the notion that this right should be subject to reasonable rules imposed by the legislature.

We have many State-imposed rules on hunting in Virginia, just as I am sure is the case in Alaska. The State determines the seasons in which hunting can occur—those seasons can differ depending on what you are hunting—where it can occur, the license you need, the training you must complete, which days of the week are open for hunting, what kinds of weapons can be used in hunting, and even the size of a magazine in any automatic or repeating weapon that can be used in hunting.

For example, in Virginia, by statute, you can hunt with a repeating shotgun, but the magazine can contain no more than three rounds. If the magazine on a weapon is larger than that—a larger magazine—you are required to have a plug or filler in the magazine that will reduce its capacity to no more than three total rounds, as measured either in the magazine or in the chamber itself.

The bottom line for these regulations, which are well accepted and understood in Virginia, is clear. Even the use of firearms for hunting, protected by the Virginia Constitution as well as by the Second Amendment, is subject to safety rules that society fully accepts. The clear constitutionality of gun safety rules and the public acceptance of these rules pose stark questions to Congress.

Why, in the face of escalating tragedy, are we so unwilling to adopt commonsense gun safety rules designed to reduce gun violence? Why does Congress shield gun manufacturers from liability with a Federal protection that we don’t give to the manufacturers of other products? Why does Congress limit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention from using its resources to research gun violence? Why does Congress limit the ability of law enforcement to fully trace the use of guns that are used to commit crimes? Why does Congress prohibit weapon use and ownership by certain classes of

dangerous individuals but resist a universal background check system that would be necessary to enforce that prohibition? Why won’t Congress enact the same kinds of magazine limitations on weapons used to kill people that we embrace on weapons used to kill deer? Why won’t Congress ban weapons of war—weapons of war that are used by trained officials, as was the case with the Presiding Officer in his military service or my son in military service, but why won’t we ban those weapons of war from the streets of our country?

Self-defense, sport, hunting are all protected and encompassed within the broad protections of the Second Amendment. There is not, there has never been, and there never will be an effort to confiscate all weapons in the country because of their popular acceptance and because of the clear commands of the Constitution. But why can’t we have reasonable safety rules?

America’s children—so many of them appeared here yesterday, children from a middle school in Northern Virginia, some high schoolers from Thomas Jefferson High School; I visited with students from Florida—posed some even starker questions to us.

Does Congress care more about its children or more about contributions from the NRA and gun manufacturers? Can adults act like adults and try to keep children safe? Those were the questions that I heard from the students on the Capitol steps yesterday.

I applaud the children of the country who are asking these questions. They stand together with an overwhelming majority of Americans who believes we can do better and we need to do better. I have seen the tragedy of gun violence, but I have also seen that we can do better and that part of that is having better rules on guns.

When I was elected to the city council in Richmond in 1994, we had the second highest homicide rate in the United States. That was the only top 10 list we were on. That is not the one you want to be on. I went to too many funerals and too many wakes and too many crime scenes, and I was in too many church basements with support groups of homicide victims’ families, and I don’t want to do those kinds of things again.

Yet, through the pain of that—multiple efforts by multiple people—we helped reduce our violent crime rate risk. We dropped the homicide rate by 60 percent. We dropped the aggravated assault/violent crime rate by nearly the same number. We did a number of things, but one of the things we did was to recognize that we had a problem with guns. It was not just about people or just about mental health. Those were issues, sure, but we had a high gun carry rate in Richmond. The gun carry rate means: In 100 stops that the police would make, what percentage of the time were people carrying weapons? In Richmond, we just had an unusually high percentage compared to other cities for a variety of the reasons.

What we decided to do is, if we could bring down the gun carry rate, we may not make bad people good people, but we could avoid an argument's breaking bad and then turning into a homicide or an aggravated assault. We were able to do things that brought the gun carry rate down, that made people leave their guns at home, if they were leaving their homes, instead of putting them in their pockets. By doing that, we helped to bring down gun violence. We found that you could take concrete steps to make people safer.

I was the Governor at the time of what was the worst shooting in the history of the United States. The weird thing to say about my own State is that I wish it had always been the worst shooting—the tragedy at Virginia Tech in April of 2007, when 32 people were killed. It has now been eclipsed by shootings in Orlando and Las Vegas and Newtown. So many other tragedies have happened since then that even some of the particulars of the Virginia Tech shooting start to recede in memory as new tragedies happen.

It was painful. I interacted with the 32 families who had lost their kids and who had lost their parents who were professors, and I have continued to interact with them over the years and to learn what went wrong that day, and a lot of things went wrong. Vowing to the families that we would try to fix them has been a cause of my life for the last 11 years.

We also learned through the pain some things we could do to make our communities safer. In this particular case, there were problems with mental health, and there were problems with privacy rules, and there were problems with campus safety protocols. Yet a significant problem was that we had a flaw in the background record check system. A young individual who had been adjudicated mentally ill and dangerous and was prohibited from owning a weapon was able to slip through the cracks in the system to get a weapon that he shouldn't have had. So the lesson we learned is, with a better background check system, you reduce the risk of tragedy.

Whether it is a common street crime of the kind that occurs every day and may not get the attention on the weekly news or whether it is a mass shooting that gets the attention on the weekly news, I have had some scar tissue over this, but at least the scar tissue has taught me a few things. One of the things I have learned is you can take meaningful steps, and if you do so, you make communities safer. If you know that you can take steps to make people safer, then you must. You must.

I will conclude and just say this.

We need a debate on the floor of this Chamber about how to reduce gun violence and promote gun safety. We haven't had one since April of 2013. It has been 5 years, and the list of tragedies is getting longer and longer and longer. We shouldn't be afraid to enter-

tain both Republican and Democratic proposals for reducing the scourge of gun violence. There will be different kinds of proposals, and that is as it should be.

It is just like the debate we had about Dreamers a few weeks ago. There were different proposals put on the table that were going in different directions. We know in this body that we need to get 60 votes to get anything passed, which means nothing will pass unless there is some bipartisan support. Yet we shouldn't be afraid of having that debate. We have been afraid to have the debate, but our children are afraid for their lives. If they are showing the courage to speak out for change, the least we can do is show that we are listening.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

THE FIRST SAINT PATRICK'S DAY

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, before the Senator from Virginia leaves, since he is the cochairman of the United States-Spain Council, I want him to hear my very brief remarks.

As will be officially announced today at 4 o'clock on the new website, La Florida, the following has been discovered by historian Dr. Michael Francis, of the University of South Florida at St. Petersburg, who is one of the eminent Spanish colonial scholars in the world: The first St. Patrick's Day was not in Boston in 1737. Neither was the first St. Patrick's Day parade in New York in 1762. As discovered by Dr. Francis in the Spanish archives in Seville, the first St. Patrick's Day was celebrated by an Irish priest, Richard Arthur, better known as Ricardo Arturo, in St. Augustine in 1600, to be followed by the first St. Patrick's Day parade in the New World, in St. Augustine, in 1601.

Needless to say, it is not going to make our friends in Boston and New York happy to hear that they have been eclipsed by well over a century and a half. However, it shows the strong roots of the Irish people in America all the way back to Saint Patty's Day in 1600 in St. Augustine, FL.

I thank the Presiding Officer.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from the great State of Alaska.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I enjoyed that little bit of history there. I am sure that the Irish everywhere—and those who are, perhaps, not quite as Irish—will find good reason to celebrate on March 17 whether one is in Florida or in the Northeast or in Alaska, as the Presiding Officer certainly knows.

THE IDITAROD

Mr. President, I am here to share a little bit of Alaska. I know that the Presiding Officer will also appreciate the update on an event that we in Alaska celebrate every year and have for the past 46 years—the annual Iditarod race.

This is a sled dog race of international fame, a race that begins just

outside of Anchorage, AK, and ends in Nome. It is about 1,000 miles. I think this year's southern route was 998 miles to be exact. It is one of the longest sled dog races on Earth, and it travels over some pretty interesting terrain. "Interesting" is a choice word to use as you cross mountains and frozen tundra and forests and the frozen ice. The Iditarod is, truly, a race for only the most hardy, only the best.

The Iditarod, itself, commemorates the deadly 1925 diphtheria outbreak that happened in Nome. There was no way to get the diphtheria antitoxin from the coastal area, down in Seward at the time, all the way up to Nome. This was before we had air transport as a viable option. So the real question was, How do you move this? How do you move this quickly? It was the middle of the winter. This was not a race. This was a lifesaving mission to move serum, again, 1,000-plus miles to the north to save a community. They resorted to a relay of dog sleds, of dog teams, to move that serum.

Today, the Iditarod is no longer a relay. It is a race of individual sled dog teams. Again, it is about a 1,000-mile race. It is a test of determination, certainly, of the K-9 mushers, and it is tough. It is always in the first weekend of March. At this time of year in Alaska, sometimes conditions can be pretty good—above zero. Sometimes they can be 30 degrees or 40 degrees below zero. Sometimes you can have a ground blizzard and wind conditions that move close to 80, 90, 100 miles an hour, and when you want to talk about windchill, out there, it is real; it is extreme.

This 46th annual running of the Iditarod hasn't been that challenging in terms of the cold, in terms of what they have seen in the past, but there is always some bump. There is always something that causes the race to be a little bit different. This year, the mushers had a scheduled checkpoint on Eagle Island. This is a place where they take a mandatory 8-hour break. The game changer in the race this year was in the snow conditions. Because of the ceiling, planes could not drop food for the mushers, so they had to take this very critical checkpoint off of the board. The mushers plan all of this out in advance of the trip. They kind of know where they are going to be along the way. They plan their moves. So this was a pretty unanticipated event at the end and could have impacted it. Yet you had mushers who were pretty versatile, pretty adaptable. They took the news in stride and continued up the Yukon River toward other rest stops there.

Nicolas Petit, who had arrived in Anvik, was the frontrunner at the time. He was, like, "Ah, no big deal. My strategy is an evolving thing." Yet that evolving thing allows for, again, curve balls that get in the way. In the instance of Nicolas Petit, the frontrunner—a Girdwood musher from a place that the Presiding Officer and I frequent often and I call home—everyone was quite excited. Long story

short, he lost the trail and lost the lead.

You think to yourself: Wait a minute. How can you lose the trail? This is not a NASCAR race, where you just go around the same track here. This is 1,000 miles. If it is windy, if it is blowing, if there is ground cover that you can't see through, things happen—things truly happen. On top of the harsh climate conditions that the mushers face, there are occasionally chance encounters with some wildlife. You have moose, caribou, bears, and porcupines out there, and they are all potential rendezvous for mushers around the trail.

One of the interesting headlines to come out of the Iditarod this year was a headline that read: "Iditarod Musher Chases off Bison with Ax"—an ax, yes. Marcelle Fressineau and her 14-sled dogs were between Rohn and Nikolai, and they came face-to-face with a mother bison and her calf. What do you do? You don't want your dogs to be in danger, so the tough Alaskan woman takes her ax and charges the bison and says, "Go away. Go away." Long story short, they ran away, and she continued her journey to Nome. You have to admit that people like this are ready for adventure and are full of grit and determination to succeed.

Of course, it is not just the mushers. It is the K-9 athletes. It is these dogs that, truly, are the inspiration to watch along the journey. This year's Iditarod kicked off with 67 talented, resilient competitors from all over Alaska and the world—67 dog teams.

This year, Joar Ulsom was the first musher to arrive in Nome. He came in just after 3 a.m. on Wednesday morning. He is originally from Norway, and he has been dreaming of being an Iditarod racer since he was a kid. In 2011, he relocated to Willow, AK, which is kind of our dog mushing capital of the world, and he really has made this dream a reality. He is a seasoned racer. He first completed the Yukon Quest in 2012 and has completed other races since then. He completed—he won the race in 9 days 12 hours. Again, this is not a recordbreaking time. Snow slowed things down, but think about standing on the back of a sled for 9 days 12 hours, minimal sleep, constant attention to the dogs in front of you. It is just an extraordinary story.

The newspapers are telling the story of Joar crossing the finish line in Nome. Thousands of people had gathered under the burlap arch to congratulate him. It was about 4 degrees, 3 a.m., with thousands of people out in the street. My brother and sister-in-law came all the way from Brazil to be there on the other end. It was my sister-in-law's dream of a lifetime—bucket list—to be there at the end of the Iditarod.

Joar and his team are happy, and we are very pleased for him. I offer hearty congratulations to our 2018 Iditarod champion and his team of amazing dogs.

I wish all the competitors, many of whom are still out on the trail, success and safety as they compete in this truly "Last Great Race on Earth."

TRIBUTE TO CHUCK KLEESCHULTE

Mr. President, I want to recognize a longtime member of my staff, Chuck Kleeschulte, who recently retired from the Senate. If you are from Alaska and you have ever had any dealings with the Alaska delegation, you have met or have dealt with Chuck Kleeschulte. He is held in great respect in our State as a result of the work he did for so many people back home.

It is an understatement to say we miss him already. He hasn't been gone that long, but we miss him already.

Let me share a little bit of his biography for those who were not fortunate enough to know and work with Chuck. He is an Alaskan not by birth but by choice. He moved from Ohio to Alaska in 1976 to work as a reporter at the *Juneau Empire* in our capital. A few years later, he became press secretary for then-Governor Jay Hammond. He followed that with a stint at the Department of Environmental Conservation and then he returned to reporting for a few more years.

Chuck first came to the Senate in 1991. He was convinced by my father Frank Murkowski, who was a Senator at the time, to move to Washington, DC, to be his press secretary. So he did. He made the move, and now 27 years later, Chuck is still part of the family here. He served as my father's communications director, a legislative assistant in my personal office, and most recently as a senior adviser for the Energy and Natural Resources Committee.

Chuck, I think it is fair to say, is an institution within our institution. He has an encyclopedic knowledge of all things Alaska. If someone wanted to know what the vote was on a measure back in 1993 that related to the Trans-Alaska Pipeline or whatever, Chuck would be able to recall that without any notes, without any prodding, without any background. Chuck is extraordinary. He has a work ethic that is second to none.

We have a phrase that has been around for about 30 years now, and it is "Check with Chuck." Just check with Chuck because you don't need to do any fact-checking. He is it.

His legislative achievements are almost too many to name. Let me talk about some of the big-ticket Alaska items that Chuck was involved with. He was involved with responsible energy development in the 1002 area. He led this fight for us for decades as we sought to open up ANWR. He has been the lead on a lifesaving road for the good people of King Cove that we just, again, have been successful with. He has been working to build out a safer route on the Sterling Highway, a much needed timber supply in the Tongass National Forest. He wrote legislation to ensure the transfer of lands owed to Alaska, to promote the construction of

an Alaska gasline, and to expand the use of renewable resources, such as hydropower, marine hydrokinetic, and geothermal. Chuck was involved with all of it.

He has been involved in so many significant accomplishments for our State, but what is equally impressive is the work Chuck did very quietly and just every day for Alaskans all over the State. Whether it was a bridge that needed repair, a light pole that had toppled over in bad weather, land use fees that had been miscalculated by a Federal agency, a land exchange for a remote community, Chuck was always there. No matter how small the problem, no matter how complicated it may be, Chuck was there to work on it.

Chuck has only been retired now for a few weeks, and the people I talk to are all asking: How is Chuck doing? Where is Chuck? They all say they are going to miss him, and I say how much I already do.

It is a comfort to know that Chuck is not going too far. He is retiring from Washington, DC, and he is moving to a beautiful little farm in Floyd, VA. Apparently there is only one stoplight in Chuck's new town, but I think Chuck is going to keep busy. His better half Tori says she wants a cow. They want to grow a little bit of hay, and there is grass to mow. There is a half-acre pond that apparently is stocked with fish. There is a barn we all volunteered to help him paint this summer. We will figure out time to do the barn painting.

To the people of Floyd, congratulations on bringing Chuck into the fold. We know the barn, the cow, the hay, the pond, the single stoplight, and the community are all very lucky to have him. I certainly was.

He spent 27 years in Congress and near double that working on behalf of Alaska in some fashion or another. Chuck's guidance and work have not only benefited me but the State and people of Alaska and the rest of our country.

My favorite part, what I loved best about Chuck is, after all he has done and all he has accomplished, he is still one of the most humble guys you will ever meet. I told him that recently, and he said: "Oh, yeah, it's easy to be humble when you have a lot to be humble about."

Chuck was just that way. He is always modest, but the example he set as a true public servant is one to emulate. He worked hard every day—every day. He made our office a better place. He helped people, and in doing so, he left some truly enormous shoes to fill.

Should anybody doubt that Chuck left a lasting impression, all we have to do is look at the single space, 50-page exit memo he wrote to give the rest of my staff, giving them updates on everything he had been working on, the status, whom to contact, what to do next. Chuck left the guidebook. He is incredibly thorough, amazingly impressive, and always appreciated.

So I want to thank Chuck Kleeschulte. Thank you. Thank you for

everything you did for me, for Alaska, and for our Nation. You will always be a part of our Senate family and a beloved member of Team Murkowski. After 27 years, and on behalf of those who knew him, I wish Chuck the absolute best as he begins his very well-deserved retirement.

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

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

HEALTH INSURANCE

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I want to talk for a moment about something that is on the minds of anybody in this country who is making \$60,000, \$70,000, \$80,000, \$90,000 too much to have a subsidy to pay for your healthcare insurance and maybe are paying \$15,000, \$20,000, \$25,000 of that salary for your insurance this year and who has heard from a lot of people that on October 1, the insurance companies are going to announce that your premium is going up. That is whom I would like to talk with today.

Specifically, let me use the example of a woman named Marty in Tennessee. She came up to me before Christmas at the Chick-fil-A on Charlotte Road in Nashville, and she stopped me while I was getting my mac and cheese at Chick-fil-A, and she said: My name is Marty. I am a self-employed farmer. A few years ago, my health insurance was \$300 a month, today it is \$1,300 a month, and I cannot afford that.

Well, in Tennessee, prices for health insurance for people who work and don't get any subsidy to help them buy their insurance and don't get insurance on the job, they don't get it from Medicare or Medicaid, people who work, the self-employed farmer, the contractor, the plumber, the songwriter, somebody who might be making \$60,000, say—they are like Marty. They are paying \$20,000 for their health insurance, and they cannot afford that.

I told Marty: I think we have a Christmas present for you. I think Congress, when we pass the omnibus spending bill, is going to include in it a set of policies we have that is going to lower your rates when they are announced on October 1 of next year, which is 2018.

Well, unfortunately, we had a continuing resolution at the end of the year, and Marty didn't get her Christmas present. Then I thought she might get a Valentine's present, and we went by Valentine's Day and did another CR, a continuing resolution.

Now we have until the end of next week to fund the government for the year we are halfway through. I am on the floor today, and I can say to Marty and to every plumber, songwriter, self-employed person in this country, some-

one who might be between jobs, that if the Congress will act, we can lower their rates next year for up to as much as 40 percent—40 percent. That is according to Oliver Wyman, one of the leading healthcare consulting firms in this country, which announced on Monday that a set of policies which we call Alexander-Murray-Collins-Nelson, which President Trump supports, which Congressman WALDEN, who is the chairman of the House committee in this area, supports, which Senator MCCONNELL supports, which I support—we have broad support for this. This policy we have been working on for months, according to Oliver Wyman, over the next 3 years, assuming States take full advantage of all the options we are giving them, could lower rates by 40 percent.

What does that mean? That means that if you are paying \$20,000 for your health insurance—you are that \$60,000-a-year plumber—that is 40 percent of \$20,000, which, by my math, is \$8,000. So that would cut your insurance to \$12,000, and you get down toward something you might be able to afford. Can you imagine anything more frightening than approaching next year knowing that you might not be able to afford health insurance for your family? You are thinking: Well, look, I am doing everything I am supposed to. The government has not gotten me on any kind of subsidy to buy health insurance. I am out here working. I am paying my taxes. Maybe I got a little tax cut that the Republicans put through last year, but the thing that is really a problem for me is my health insurance. If I am making \$60,000, \$70,000, \$80,000 a year, I cannot afford \$15,000, \$20,000, or \$25,000 a year.

If you are a farmer in Iowa or a miner in Alaska or a songwriter in Nashville, you can't afford that, and you shouldn't have to, and you won't have to if Congress will act next week to accept the set of policies that I am about to briefly describe.

There are three things we propose to do. The most important is 3 years of reinsurance or the invisible risk pool. This is an idea that House Republicans have strongly supported and that Senator COLLINS and Senator NELSON have strongly supported here. It would allow more States to do what the State of Alaska has done. The Presiding Officer is from Alaska. Alaska took the very sickest people in Alaska and put them in one pool and called that the reinsurance pool and paid for their health insurance. When they did that, it so reduced the cost for everybody else that it lowered the rates for everybody else by 20 percent. What we are talking about is lowering the rate for everybody else by 40 percent if States take full advantage of what we are proposing next week. So reinsurance is the first thing—3 years of reinsurance at \$10 billion a year.

The second thing is 3 years of cost-sharing subsidies. You have to stop and think about it a minute, but the cost-

sharing subsidies pay for the reinsurance. Cost-sharing subsidies are payments that are made to insurance companies to pay for the copays and the deductibles for low-income people, and that allows the companies to reduce the premiums. When you reduce the premiums, you reduce the ObamaCare subsidies.

According to conversations we have had with the Congressional Budget Office, if we do 3 years of cost-sharing subsidies and 3 years of reinsurance at \$10 billion, the cost-sharing subsidies more than pay for the reinsurance, if you base it on reality, which is, if Congress passes a law that costs \$30 billion over 3 years for reinsurance and 3 years of cost-sharing subsidies, the cost-sharing subsidies pay for the reinsurance and leave \$2 billion over to reduce the Federal debt.

The third part is a set of proposals that would give States more flexibility. This streamlines the section 1332 waiver in the Affordable Care Act. It makes some changes that permit the agency we call CMS to approve waivers from States, like the State of Alaska or Nebraska or Tennessee, which may say: We would like to spend our ObamaCare subsidy money in a different way, and we would like to add some of this reinsurance money to it. By doing that, that is how you achieve the 40-percent savings for the Nebraska self-employed farmer or the Nashville songwriter in their insurance policies.

So that is the set of proposals, plus within there is a provision for what we call a catastrophic policy, which is a policy that has somewhat higher deductibles but lower premiums, which people may choose to buy.

All of that policy has broad bipartisan support. I think the reinsurance provision—in the Republican discussions we have had in the Senate, almost everybody seems to agree that the only way we can have an individual market, which is the market for people who buy insurance on their own—people who don't get it from Medicare, people who don't get it from Medicaid, people who don't get it on the job—let's say you are between jobs or you are self-employed. You are the songwriter. You are the plumber. Those are the people whom we are focused on here. There are about 11 million in the United States, but there could be a lot more because all of us know what it is like to think, well, I might lose my job, or, I might change jobs, and what do I do for insurance in the interim? I have the so-called COBRA available, but it is very expensive. If I suddenly find I am losing my job or if I am changing jobs and I am worrying about insurance—that is the person we are talking about.

Where did these ideas come from? Did we just write them on the back of an envelope and give them to Congress? No. We went through a very serious process here in the Senate. Senator MURRAY, the ranking Democrat on the Senate HELP Committee—I am the

chairman—and I held four hearings last fall after Republicans failed to repeal and replace the ObamaCare law. We invited all Senators to participate. We had more than half the Senate come to our hearings and to our meetings with the witnesses. Out of that came the proposals to streamline the 1332 waiver—that is flexibility for States—and the need to pay for the cost-sharing subsidies temporarily, because people began to understand that they don't cost money, but they save taxpayer money because they reduce the need for Federal taxpayer subsidies. So that is where that came from.

The single most important idea that was not a part of the original Alexander-Murray proposal was reinsurance. In the House, they call it the invisible risk pool. Senators COLLINS and NELSON have championed it here. Representative COSTELLO, Representative MEADOWS, and other people championed it over there. It was part of the Republican repeal-and-replace legislation in the House of Representatives. So the idea of 3 years of reinsurance really has come from both bodies and from both sides of the aisle. It is the most essential part of any long-term policy to create an individual market where people can buy insurance if they don't get it on the job or from the government.

This would give States half a billion dollars in the current year, 2018, to plan for their reinsurance pools. It would then create \$10 billion over 3 years that States could use to help pay for their reinsurance pools, and they would use their 1332 streamlined waiver in the second and third year. So they could have a combination of State money, reinsurance Federal money, and ObamaCare subsidy money and hopefully, in that process, create their own way of helping to pay for the needs of the very sickest people in the State and, by taking them out of the insurance pool, lower the rates for everybody else over that 4-year period, according to the Oliver Wyman consulting firm, by as much as 40 percent.

The Congressional Budget Office has also reviewed the set of proposals I have just described. My staff has been working closely with them because we want to know what it costs if we are going to put it in the omnibus bill, and the preliminary feedback from the Congressional Budget Office is more conservative than the Oliver Wyman estimate. The Congressional Budget Office says that it would reduce premiums by an average of 10 percent in 2019 and 20 percent in 2020 and 2021 if States take full advantage of the 1332 waiver they have.

As you can imagine, State Governors and State insurance commissioners are delighted with this package. First, they like to see us do something in a bipartisan way to stabilize the health insurance market so people aren't scared to death that they may not be able to buy a policy next year, but second, they think it is sound policy. It is sound policy.

Much of this started when the President called me last August and said: Between now and the time we make a final decision on what to do about the Affordable Care Act, or ObamaCare, I want to make sure that people aren't hurt. So he asked me if I would work with Senator MURRAY and see if we could come up with a bipartisan set of proposals that would stabilize the individual market. He called me several times about that, and we have worked together since then. That is when we came together with the original Alexander-Murray proposal.

Then we had a big disagreement here within the Senate, and we had our tax bill wherein we repealed the individual mandate in the Affordable Care Act. Republicans thought that was a good idea. It made people buy insurance they didn't want, and it was a tax on low-income people, so we got rid of it. Democrats didn't like that at all.

It is true that taking the individual mandate out, even though States could add it back if they want to, does increase the cost of insurance in the individual market. Despite that, this set of policies that I have described—State flexibility, the 3 years of cost-sharing subsidies, and the 3 years of reinsurance/invisible risk pools—those three policies, according to Oliver Wyman consulting, which is one of the leading health consulting firms in America, could lower rates to 40 percent lower than they otherwise would be. According to the Congressional Budget Office, a nonpartisan agency that looks at things for us, it will lower them 10 percent in 2019 and as much as 20 percent in the next 2 years after that. Even if it is only 20 and not 40, 20 percent of \$20,000 is \$4,000 for Marty, the self-employed farmer in Nashville who stopped me at Chick-fil-A and said her insurance had gone from \$300 to \$1,300, \$1,400 a month.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the report of the Oliver Wyman consulting company that says that the combination of policies I just described—reinsurance, cost-sharing subsidies, and the section 1332 waiver, which is the State flexibility—that those three policies will reduce rates by up to 40 percent.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

OLIVER WYMAN REPORT: A PROPOSAL TO LOWER ACA PREMIUMS BY MORE THAN 40% AND COVER 3.2 MILLION MORE

(By Tammy Tomczyk, FSA, FCA, MAAA, Partner, Oliver Wyman Actuarial Consulting, and Kurt Giesa, FSA, MAAA, Practice Leader, Oliver Wyman Actuarial Consulting)

In our December 9, 2017 article, we analyzed the effects of a proposal the US Senate was considering to fund cost-sharing reduction (CSR) payments and appropriate \$5 billion in 2019 and 2020 for states to establish reinsurance programs to stabilize their individual insurance markets. We discussed how pass-through savings could provide reinsurance coverage equal to roughly \$15 billion in protection for high-cost claimants, and how

this protection, combined with CSR funding, would bring more people into the individual market and lower premiums by over 20 percent.

More recent congressional attention is focusing on a proposal that includes an extension of CSRs and a reinsurance program in 2019, 2020, and 2021, funded with a \$10 billion appropriation in each year, with federal fallback option available to states in 2019. The federal fallback option would likely be based on—and use the federal infrastructure built to administer—the Transitional Reinsurance Program in place from 2014 through 2016.

Our healthcare microsimulation model, used to understand this package's likely effects on the market, assumed states would use federal pass-through savings under Section 1332 of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) to supplement and leverage the \$10 billion the considered legislation would authorize and appropriate each year. Pass-through savings result from the fact that the premium subsidies available under the ACA cover the difference between the second lowest cost silver plan available in a rating area and a fixed percentage of a household's income, varying only by federal poverty level (FPL). Lower premiums result directly in lower premium subsidies, and under a Section 1332 waiver, these savings from lower premiums may be used to provide additional reinsurance.

In our modeling, we are presuming that states will take advantage of these pass-through savings in 2019. In reality, states that have not already begun working on a waiver will be challenged to get a 1332 waiver filed and approved under the current regulatory regime in time to impact 2019 premiums. The current regulatory regime includes a requirement that a state enact enabling legislation, develop an application, hold public hearings during a 30-day public comment period, and submit the application to the US Health and Human Services (HHS). HHS then undertakes a two-step review process that can span up to 225 days—up to 45 days for a completeness determination followed by up to 180 days for review. But even those states unable to get a waiver in place for 2019 would still benefit from that year's federal fallback program.

Therefore, we estimate, under the assumptions described above, that an additional 3.2 million people will be covered in the non-group market, and the proposal would result in premiums that are at least 40 percent lower than they would have been without the proposal in place, across all metal levels. In those states that are not able to obtain a 1332 waiver and take advantage of pass-through savings for 2019, we estimate that premium would decline by more than 20 percent across all metal levels. Those estimates include an average 10 percent reduction due to the funding of CSRs, with the remaining reduction coming from the reinsurance program.

As a note, our modeling reflects elimination of the mandate penalty, but does not consider the proposed regulation's likely effects on association health plans or on short-term, limited duration coverage.

REPORT: INDIVIDUAL INSURANCE PREMIUMS NEXT YEAR 40% LOWER UNDER ALEXANDER-MURRAY, COLLINS-NELSON THAN IF CONGRESS DOESN'T ACT

WASHINGTON, March 12.—Health care experts at Oliver Wyman released an analysis today showing that the passage of a proposal based on the Alexander-Murray Bipartisan Health Care Stabilization Act and the Collins-Nelson Lower Premiums Through Reinsurance Act will lower premiums, compared to what people in the individual market will pay if Congress doesn't act, by more than 40

percent in the individual market and provide insurance coverage to an additional 3.2 million individuals.

Oliver Wyman based its analysis on a proposal that would fund CSRs—temporary payments to reduce out-of-pocket costs for low-income Americans in the individual market—and provide \$10 billion annually for invisible risk pool/reinsurance funding in 2019, 2020, and 2021. It also factored in increased flexibility for states that seek to use waivers under Section 1332 of the Affordable Care Act. The analysis applies to ACA-compliant plans in the individual market, both on and off the exchange.

"This analysis from the experts at Oliver Wyman further demonstrates that our bipartisan proposals will help drive down premiums in the individual market and make health insurance more affordable for millions of Americans," said Senators Lamar Alexander, the Chairman of the HELP Committee, and Susan Collins.

From the experts at Oliver Wyman:

"Therefore, we estimate . . . that an additional 3.2 million people will be covered in the non-group market, and the proposal would result in premiums that are at least 40 percent lower than they would have been without the proposal in place . . ."

The analysis found that the lower rates would benefit all plan levels on the exchanges.

The analysis was performed by consulting firm Oliver Wyman. On its website, Oliver Wyman describes itself as "a global leader in management consulting. With offices in 50+ cities across nearly 30 countries, Oliver Wyman combines deep industry knowledge with specialized expertise in strategy, operations, risk management, and organization transformation. The firm has more than 4,700 professionals around the world who help clients optimize their business, improve their operations and risk profile, and accelerate their organizational performance to seize the most attractive opportunities."

Mr. ALEXANDER. Finally, I would ask the question, What if we don't do this? I am generally a very optimistic person. I am results-oriented, and you don't get results if you don't work across party lines and if you don't think you are going to succeed. So I always think we will succeed. This has been more difficult to do than it should have been.

I would like to suggest to my colleagues and to the American people that we should focus on October 1 of this year because that is the date when insurance rates for next year, 2019, will be announced all across the country. Insurance companies are working with insurance commissioners in every State to try to figure out what is going to happen, what the rates will be. They will be announcing rates on October 1, which is about a month before the next election.

There a lot of people who are going to be looking at that because, in my State of Tennessee, rates were up 58 percent this year, and that is for the plumber who makes \$60,000 a year; the songwriter; Marty, the farmer; and the people I have been describing. There was a 58-percent increase. So they are going to be looking on October 1 to see whether they can even afford any insurance in 2019.

If we do what we are proposing here in the Alexander-Murray-Collins-Nel-

son set of policies, which has broad bipartisan support in the House and the Senate and the support of the President, if we do that next week, Marty, the self-employed farmer in Tennessee, will be able to see on October 1 that her rates will go down and that, if Oliver Wyman is correct, instead of her rates going up 58 percent the way they did this year, they will go down 40 percent over the next 2 or 3 years. That means she could afford insurance.

If we don't do it, rates will go up, and the individual market will probably collapse. It was near collapse a year ago. By collapsing, I mean there will be counties where people can't buy insurance at all. There will be 11 million people who are between jobs, who are self-employed, or who are working who literally cannot afford insurance, and they are not going to be very happy campers. They are going to blame every one of us, and they should. They are going to blame the President, they are going to blame Republicans, they are going to blame Democrats, and they are going to blame insurance companies because we have an opportunity next week to solve that problem in a bipartisan way, developed through a bipartisan process, incorporating ideas that virtually everyone who looks at them says make very good policy sense.

We have a couple of things to work through on ancillary issues, but those shouldn't cloud the fact that we can reduce rates by up to 40 percent for the working Americans who can't afford insurance—the insurance companies will announce that on October 1—or we can do nothing, and we can let the markets falter.

There will be some counties where you can't buy insurance at all, some counties where you can't afford insurance at all, and we will have people look at us and say: My goodness, why did we send them up there to do nothing about that?

I am optimistic. I think we can do it. I appreciate the hard work on both sides of the aisle. In many respects, it has been a very difficult negotiation. I appreciate the President's consistency over the past couple of months in supporting this and the Vice President's work. Senator MCCONNELL has been very supportive of this, which makes it very helpful in terms of getting it into the bipartisan agreement next week.

I look forward to being able to say to my songwriters, self-employed business men and women, plumbers, and Marty, the farmer, that if they are making \$60,000 or \$70,000 in Tennessee, we put in place something that will lower their rates by 40 percent over the next 3 years.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

DEFERRED ENFORCED DEPARTURE FOR LIBERIAN REFUGEES

Mr. REED. Madam President, I rise, as I have many times for nearly two decades, to shed light on the long struggle of Liberian refugees in the United States, and to make the case for this administration to extend Deferred Enforced Departure, or DED, for this population before they face potential separation from their jobs and families when their current DED designation expires on March 31.

I also call on my colleagues to take up and pass the Liberian Refugee Immigration Fairness Act, which I offered in some form for as long as I have served in this body, to end nearly 30 years of uncertainty by finally giving these Liberians the opportunity to apply for permanent residency and a pathway to citizenship.

I also would like to take a moment to express my gratitude to those advocates who have stood with me as I have worked for a solution for Liberians in America, including my Rhode Island colleague, Senator SHELDON WHITEHOUSE, as well as our colleagues from Minnesota, Senators KLOBUCHAR and SMITH.

The case of these Liberians is a tragic and historically unique situation. In 1989, a seven-year civil war broke out in Liberia that would claim the lives of over 200,000 people and displace more than half of the Liberian population. This conflict devastated Liberia—halting food production, collapsing the nation's economy, and destroying its infrastructure. By 1991, an estimated 14,000 Liberians fled to the United States seeking refuge from the conflict. In March of that year, the Attorney General granted them the opportunity to register for temporary protected status, or TPS.

Every subsequent administration has renewed TPS for Liberians each year until the end of the first civil war, but the prospects for a safe return ended when Liberia plunged into a second civil war from 1999 to 2003. This horrific conflict ended with the departure from power of former President Charles Taylor, who is currently serving a fifty-year prison sentence, issued by the Special Court for Sierra Leone, for war crimes.

In 2014, Liberia's still poverty-stricken and recovering infrastructure faced the challenge of responding to the Ebola virus outbreak in West Africa. Liberia had fewer than 200 licensed doctors to contend with the outbreak among the country's population of over 4 million people.

Throughout this succession of conflict and tragedy, Liberians who sought refuge in the United States have had the option to remain here lawfully under TPS or DED while conditions remained unstable in Liberia.

This is not amnesty. In order to participate, these Liberians are required to pass periodic background investigations, pay hundreds of dollars in fees,

and stay out of trouble with the law. Many of these Liberians who have been through this process for decades are perhaps among the most vetted and rigorously examined individuals in the United States today.

They have also received work authorizations, enabling them to work and start businesses, pay taxes, and raise families. Many have full-grown American citizen children who attend American schools and serve in our military. At the same time, they have not been afforded earned benefits available to American citizens, so they are responsible for paying their taxes, they are responsible to conduct themselves as law-abiding citizens, but they are not building up any type of Social Security benefits or any other benefits like other American workers are. In the years since 1989, they have become our neighbors, our friends, and an important community that contributes a great deal to the diversity and prosperity of States like Rhode Island.

Today, Liberia has only just completed its first democratic transfer of power in decades, and there are still serious concerns about the Nation's ability to maintain peace and deliver essential services to its population.

If the Trump administration fails to extend the DED deadline for Liberians, hundreds of Liberian American families could be separated and uprooted from their jobs and homes, and forced to return to a country that is unrecognizable to them. Moreover, at best, it is unclear how Liberia's recovery could be affected by a sudden and unexpected influx of newcomers from the United States.

This is why, each time Congress has taken up comprehensive immigration reform—and more recently discussed these issues in the context of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, or DACA, Program—I have worked to ensure that any adjustment of status provision includes relief for Liberians who have become Americans in every way except on paper. Congress continues to debate the best path forward for Dreamers, TPS recipients, and comprehensive immigration reform, but Liberians cannot wait another month or another year. They have just over 2 weeks before their time is up.

At the very least, the Trump administration should extend DED for this population for 3 additional years while Congress debates a path forward on comprehensive immigration reform.

In my view, with each year that has passed since the first of these Liberians arrived, the case has grown stronger that they should have the option to adjust their status and remain in the communities where they have made their homes and raised their families. We have long since reached the point where simple justice requires that Congress extend this option to these Liberians.

On several occasions, Congress has granted temporary residents the opportunity to apply for permanent resi-

dency when their stays in the United States were prolonged by dangerous conditions in their home countries. In 1988, Congress passed a law offering permanent residency to temporary residents from Poland, Uganda, Afghanistan, and Ethiopia. Following the events in Tiananmen Square in China, Congress permitted over 52,000 Chinese nationals to apply for permanent residency. The Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act, or NACARA, permitted the same for 259,000 nationals of Nicaragua, Cuba, El Salvador, and Guatemala. The Syrian Adjustment Act permitted 2,000 Syrian Jews to obtain permanent residency. The list goes on. The fact is that there is ample precedent for providing relief for this relatively small Liberian population. Like past Congresses, this Congress must acknowledge the simple fact that the United States is now home to these law-abiding and tax-paying Liberians. To ignore them or to say otherwise not only threatens to break up American families, but also to turn away a group whose story is quintessentially American. They fled violence and disease to come here. They worked hard and raised families here. They followed our laws and subjected themselves to rigorous screening and vetting. They deserve the opportunity to make their own decision on whether to stay here or return to Liberia.

I can say with confidence that Rhode Island will feel their absence if this Liberian community were forced to leave after contributing to our communities for so long, and our country would be poorer for their loss.

There are many examples I could discuss of how the Liberian community has enriched our State, but I will name two: Lance Corporal Abraham Tarwoe of the U.S. Marines and Providence Police Sergeant Maxwell Dorley. Both came to Rhode Island from Liberia to start their own chapters of the American dream. They both led exemplary lives and endeavored to give back to their newfound homes through public service in the form of military service and as a member of our local police force in Providence. Both of them served with distinction, and our State tragically lost both of them in the line of duty in 2012. They are emblematic of the extraordinary contributions that Liberians have made to my State, and no fulsome discussion of what Liberians have meant to us is complete without mentioning both of these gentlemen by name.

I strongly urge President Trump to do the right thing and extend DED to Liberians living legally in the United States. I also urge my colleagues to take up and pass the Liberian Refugee Immigration Fairness Act and put an end to uncertainty for this population after decades of displacement.

Madam President, 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.

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

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

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Madam President, I come to the floor today for a number of reasons, but first and most pressing is to call on and ask the administration to extend deferred enforced departure status for a group of Liberians. This is a unique situation. Senator JACK REED was on the floor in the last hour talking about it as well.

Both the State of Rhode Island and the State of Minnesota have a number of Liberians who didn't just come to this country—they didn't come to this country illegally—they came to this country decades ago. They came because of a civil war in their country of Liberia, and then after that war was basically resolved, they were allowed to stay. So they are all registered in this country, they are working legally in this country, and they are in a special status called deferred enforced departure.

Ever since George H.W. Bush, Presidents—Democrats and Republicans; George Bush, of course, President Clinton, and President Obama—every one has allowed them to stay.

As my colleagues can imagine, since this happened back in 1991, these are people who have been working in our country for decades now. I met one who is 65 years old. Some of them are now 70 years old. They have obeyed the law. They have paid their taxes. They tend to be working in a lot of—of course, consistently—working in our assisted living facilities in Minnesota. They are working in our hospitals. Some of them had healthcare experience in Liberia before they came to Minnesota. They are a thriving community that has integrated well into our State and into Rhode Island. We are a State where the unemployment rate is somewhere around 3 percent and even lower in some of the areas where this community is working. It would literally be a big jolt to our economy—and not to mention immoral—if they were suddenly deported and lost the legal status they have had for literally decades.

Unlike some of the other things we talk about with people who maybe just came here—and I worked so hard on the Dreamers, to get them a path to citizenship—this is a pretty unique situation. We hope the administration will be practical about this. That is why Senator REED and I are working on this issue. We hope to get it resolved quickly since their status is ending on March 31, which is just a few weeks from now.

Liberians are the only group of people and it is the only country with deferred enforced departure—or DED, as it is known—which is a temporary legal status that requires the President to reauthorize it every 18 months.

One idea is that the President could reauthorize it, and then they could

look into it more. As we know, there is a lot going on in our country. There are a lot of changes right now within the Office of the Secretary of State and other things. So one idea would be that they could simply allow the program to continue for 18 months and then come to a conclusion on what they think they should do about it.

As I mentioned, in 1991, President George H.W. Bush first issued temporary protected status to Liberians in response to the nation's civil war. Since 1991, Presidents on both sides of the aisle have extended legal protection to Liberians in the United States under either TPS or DED—deferred enforced departure—because of civil wars, the Ebola outbreak, and other instabilities in their country. All Liberians covered by DED have been living in the United States since 2002. This isn't, as I said, new people coming in under that status; these are people who have been living here with that status for decades. As I mentioned, some are now in their seventies, and all of them have lived here legally. They have paid their taxes and contributed to our communities and worked at our employers. If DED is not extended by March 31, they will lose their legal status and work authorization and face deportation.

Minnesota, as I mentioned, has one of the largest Liberian populations in the country. Many of these people are business owners. They are teachers. They are healthcare workers. According to one organization, nearly 40 percent of Liberians in Minnesota work in our nursing homes as nursing assistants and other support staff. Imagine if we took thousands of people away just like that on March 31, because they wouldn't have legal status to work at the nursing homes where they have worked for decades.

I have also called for action on the Liberian Refugee Immigration Fairness Act—a bill that Senator REED has introduced every Congress since 1999—and I have cosponsored this bill. The bill would actually provide permanent protected status, including a path to citizenship, for those Liberians who have obeyed the law and have been here in this temporary status for decades.

That is not what we are asking for today. We understand and we hope that negotiations are ongoing so that we can have a more comprehensive immigration bill. We are simply asking the administration to continue with the 18-month status that was started back in 1991 by a Republican President.

I met with a number of members of our Liberian community yesterday. They are experiencing extreme fear right now that their livelihoods will be lost and their families will be ripped apart. I am hopeful that we will be able to resolve this, at least for that temporary 18-month period.

SUPPORT OUR MILITARY SPOUSES ACT

Secondly, Madam President, on a different topic, I want to take a moment to discuss a bipartisan bill that I intro-

duced this week that would help reduce the burden of relocation for military families.

When servicemembers relocate to comply with military orders, they and their families make sacrifices to help protect our Nation. Right now, there is a problem with the way the law treats some military spouses who make frequent moves, and the law, ironically, makes it even harder on them rather than easier on them.

Current law allows Active-Duty servicemembers to maintain one State of legal residence for tax and voting purposes even when military orders require them to relocate. That makes moving a lot easier. Unfortunately, this convenience does not apply to a servicemember's spouse unless they were living together at the same residence before they got married. In other words, if you were not living with your servicemember before you got married, you have to establish residency every single time your family gets moving orders from the military. From filing taxes to registering to vote, a military family then has double the paperwork and stress each time they move.

This is a loophole that must be fixed. Why would we make it harder for the spouses of those who are making a sacrifice by having their loved one serve overseas and not make it easier for them to vote and to pay their taxes and to basically be the citizen they deserve to be? That is why, on Tuesday, Senators CORNYN, Kaine, Kennedy, Manchin, and I introduced the Support Our Military Spouses Act—legislation that would ensure that spouses have the same residency protections regardless of their living arrangements before marriage. From titling a car, to filing taxes, to registering to vote, everything is a little easier when the law ensures that you can stay a resident of one State and that it is the same State as your spouse's. That is just common sense, and it cuts out a lot of redtape for military families.

The bill has the support of the Military Spouses Network, the Military Officers Association of America, and the Council of State Governments. This bill passed the House in July of 2017 with bipartisan support, and I am going to work with my cosponsors to get it done in the Senate.

We ask a lot of our military members and their families. When we can make life easier for them, we should. This is one simple thing we can do.

HONEST ADS ACT

Finally, Madam President, I would like to mention the sanctions that were just announced against Russia for interfering in the 2016 election. It took 14 months, multiple indictments, and a poisoning in Britain, but the administration is finally imposing sanctions—the same sanctions that were passed by the Senate 98 to 2 and 419 to 3 in the House last year.

Sanctioning Russia for undermining our democracy is what we should do, but we must remember that it is not

enough to protect ourselves from future attacks. There is no longer any doubt that our elections will continue to be a target for foreign adversaries. Intelligence reports make it clear that Russia used covert cyber attacks, espionage, and harmful propaganda to attack our political system.

Trump administration officials—not Obama officials, Trump intelligence officials—continue to sound the alarm that Russia is continuing its efforts to attack our democracy. The CIA Director said that he has seen no signs that Russia has decreased its activity and that Russia is currently working to disrupt the upcoming 2018 elections. National Intelligence Director Coats, who was once a Senator here, said that Russia is bolder.

It would be a mistake to think the sanctions passed today are all we need to do to address these warnings. They will no doubt help because if you do nothing, then you just embolden them to do more. It is the policy of the United States to defend against and respond to cyber threats to our democratic system, and we need to start acting like it. We need to be as sophisticated as those who are trying to do us harm.

We know that Russia attempted to hack into 21 States' election systems. In Illinois, they actually got into the voter data system. That is why Senator LANKFORD and I have led a bill to take an amount of money which is just 3 percent of one aircraft carrier and invest it in our States, to let them, on a decentralized basis, make their own decisions about the kind of equipment they want and to be able to upgrade it. Forty of our States have not upgraded their equipment in 10 years. Ten of our States do not even have backup paper ballots. What would happen if they were hacked, as they got so close the last time? There would be no way to prove what actually happened. You would have to vote again.

That is why we have Democrats and Republicans supporting this effort. Representative MARK MEADOWS, the head of the Freedom Caucus, is leading the bill that Senator GRAHAM and I have—which is similar to the one I have with Senator LANKFORD—over in the House. Senator COONS from the Appropriations Committee has been a strong supporter of this effort, as have Senator KAMALA HARRIS, Senator GRAHAM, and a number of other people. This is a truly bipartisan effort because people understand that it is no longer going to be only traditional ways of warfare when we are attacked; it is going to be cyber. It is not going to be just election infrastructure. It is not going to be just government infrastructure. It is going to be our businesses, power companies—you name it. That is why we need to upgrade our cyber protection.

The last thing I would mention on this front, as we look to the next election and how we are going to protect our democracy, is the Honest Ads Act.

This is a bill I have with Senator MCCAIN, also cosponsored by Senator WARNER, the ranking member of the Senate Intelligence Committee. This is based on the fact that we know Russia spent millions of dollars buying ads. That was reflected in the indictment of 13 Russians and what they did and how they plotted to disrupt elections and to spend money on political ads. A number of these ads were even purchased in rubles.

What Senator MCCAIN and Senator WARNER and I are trying to do is simply apply the same rules already in place to protect Americans in our elections by making sure that we know who is paying for the ads and what those ads are. Who is paying for the ads—those are the simple disclaimers you see on the ads where they say, whoever the candidate is, I paid for this ad. Who discloses the ads—that is simply when any radio station or TV station—you can go into the station or see it online and see what the ads are. That is not true right now of some of the most sophisticated companies, if not the most sophisticated companies, in America, companies like Facebook and Twitter, which have made millions and billions of dollars, companies that are profiting off of political ads.

It is no different from when a newspaper or a TV station allows someone to buy an ad. They make money off it, so it is their duty to protect the citizens, to make sure that the ads don't contain falsehoods, that the ads are not criminal, that the ads are known to everyone. That is all we are trying to do, is to apply the same rules of the game to what you see when you see political ads on issues or candidate ads.

The FEC did something just yesterday—but it was very narrow—about candidate ads. So what you see on candidate ads and issue ads—that you also see those same disclaimers and, most importantly, the disclosure on ads that are on social media companies. And I use those words carefully—“media companies.” Newspaper print and radio—we love them—are media companies. Facebook and Twitter—we love them—are media companies. We are not talking about recipes and cat videos. We are not talking about free stuff that people put up. We are talking about paid political ads that need to be treated the same.

While we are pleased that these sanctions have been put in place, while it is good that the FEC is narrowly trying to do something within their jurisdiction about disclaimers on candidate ads, we must pass the Honest Ads Act, because if we think it was bad last election when \$1.4 billion was spent on election ads, try this next one out: Forecasts are that \$3 billion to \$4 billion is going to be spent on social media ads against candidates on issues, and there is no way to track it. It is just going to go out to your Facebook page. You are not going to know if it is true, you are not going to know who paid for it, and the ads will just vanish.

I think Americans deserve something better, and I ask my colleagues to support the Honest Ads Act.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, I particularly appreciate, in light of my comments in a moment, Senator KLOBUCHAR's service. She has been a pioneer as the first woman Senator from Minnesota. And I believe the Presiding Officer, Senator FISCHER, is the first female Senator from Nebraska.

TRIBUTE TO MARCY KAPTUR

Madam President, I rise today to honor my colleague and my longtime close friend, MARCY KAPTUR. MARCY KAPTUR serves down the hall on the other side of the building. She has dedicated her life to serving the people of Toledo and northern Ohio.

This Sunday, she will make history. She will officially become the longest serving woman in the history of the U.S. Congress in either House. On Sunday, she will have served in the House of Representatives for 35 years, 2 months, and 18 days, breaking a record that was set in 1960 by I believe a Massachusetts Congresswoman. For 3½ decades, she has been principled and she has been passionate about her family, her community, and our country, and she has advocated for Ohioans. She serves like nobody else.

She is the granddaughter of Polish immigrants. That is important to her. She comes from a working-class family. That is important to her. She is a practicing Roman Catholic. That is important to her. That describes much of who MARCY is—Polish immigrant, working-class family, Catholic faith.

Her father was a trucker and auto-worker who became a small businessman. Her mother worked at the Champion spark plug factory, where, of course, she helped to organize a union. I say “of course” because of MARCY's not just understanding of the importance of the labor movement but her feeling it in her bones, that a unionized workforce is good for those workers, good for the company, and good for the community, and we need more of that.

MARCY's story echoes that of so many of our generation. Her parents worked hard. With the help of a union card, they earned their way to a better life for MARCY and her brother. She became the first in her family to graduate from high school and then college, and then she ended up in the U.S. Congress. What a great country we live in.

MARCY has never forgotten those roots. If you want to know one thing about MARCY KAPTUR—who, as I said, works down the hall at the other end of the building—know that she has never forgotten her roots. That is what drives her. That is who she is. That is why she is such a terrific public servant. That is why she is going to break the record of 35 years, 2 months, and 15 days. She remembers her roots in Ohio's Polish and Ukrainian communities and how much they matter.

Unemployment reached 19 percent in Toledo in the early Reagan years when MARCY first ran for office. She said it was “the condition of working people that drove me to change my life and run for office.” She has lived up to that ideal, fighting for working families in Ohio for every one of the nearly 13,000 days she has served in Congress.

In my first year in the House, MARCY was a mentor to me. I worked with her to fight against the North American Free Trade Agreement. She showed me the way in understanding these trade agreements because she knew they would mean job losses in Ohio. She knew these trade agreements would push down wages. That is sort of the untold story—something I don't think the President quite understands when he talks about NAFTA even though he is right that NAFTA was bad for our country. What NAFTA has done, which MARCY explained to me and understood for 25 years, is NAFTA also pushed down wages and is one of the reasons working-class Americans, whether they are in Omaha or Cleveland, so often don't get a raise. Unfortunately, MARCY was right.

Since then, as we have fought bad trade deal after bad trade deal, MARCY has been a reliable ally and leader in our fight for a trade policy that puts workers in Toledo and everywhere else in this country first.

We have also worked together to protect another very important love of MARCY KAPTUR's, and that is our greatest natural resource, Lake Erie. We fought for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative. We joined with Senator PORTMAN on a bipartisan basis to stop the President's all but elimination of the—why would the President of the United States want to stop our cleanup of Lake Erie? That is why MARCY steps up. She works to protect the lake from invasive Asian carp; she works with farmers to prevent runoff into Lake Erie—all to protect the lake. It is what the lake means to us in terms of drinking water, jobs, commercialism, commercial development, and people just enjoying the beauty of the lake.

She has gone to bat time and again for the auto industry. When some called the auto industry dead, she fought back. Never bet against American workers. Never bet against the American auto industry. Never bet against MARCY KAPTUR. That scrappy, fighting spirit is one of the qualities I love most about Ohio, and you find it in abundance in MARCY KAPTUR.

No one fights harder for people in her district. Because of absurd redistricting, her district now goes from Toledo all across northern Ohio, only a few miles wide along the lake, all the way to the city of Cleveland. In only 5 years, the people of Cleveland have gained the same affection for MARCY as the people from Toledo have. You can see the love and respect they have.

I remember once going to a rally in Toledo for President Obama. People were excited to see him, of course. I

guess a few people may have noticed I was there too. But when MARCY walked in, someone screamed “Marcy,” and there was pandemonium. Everyone got to their feet as if a rock star had just taken the stage, because in Toledo, a rock star had taken the stage.

She fights for the people of Ohio. She fights for her district. She fights. She is known, more than anything, as a fighter for working families. It is so fitting that she reaches this milestone during Women’s History Month. When she first joined the House, there were fewer than two dozen women serving. She helped blaze a trail for others. She even told the stories of the women who paved the way for her in her book “Women of Congress: A Twentieth Century Odyssey.”

Having MARCY in Congress matters for so many reasons. It matters for the hundreds of thousands of Ohioans she serves. It matters for the perspective she brings as the daughter of working-class parents. As I said, she was first in her family not just to go to college; she was first in her family to graduate from high school, right in the industrialized heartland.

As in Nebraska, Madam President, it matters to the little girls in Toledo, who for 35 years—do you know how, when you are in school, there is often a map or a chart of the Presidents? There was a calendar in Brinkerhoff Grade School when I was a little kid in Mansfield, OH. Every year, there was a calendar with all the Presidents’ pictures on it. When I was in school, all the Presidents looked alike. Some had whiskers; some didn’t. But they all looked alike because they were all White guys. Right? That changed in 2008. I was hoping it would change in 2016. It didn’t. That is beside the point.

MARCY KAPTUR—because she is the Congresswoman for Toledo, little girls growing up in Toledo since 1982 have realized there is someone to look up to. In Scottsbluff and in Lincoln and in Kearny, NE, they will now look up to having a woman Senator from Nebraska. Ohio has never had a woman Senator or woman Governor, but they have had MARCY KAPTUR. That has mattered to little girls for 35 years, as they see a picture of their Representative in the local paper, the Toledo Blade. It is not just another man in a suit but someone who looks more like them, someone they can grow up to be.

I want to thank MARCY. She is not in the building now, but I want to thank MARCY for her service to Ohio. I hope we get to keep working with MARCY KAPTUR for another couple of decades. The voters would have to approve that, but I am hopeful that we will.

TRIBUTE TO RACHEL PETRI

Madam President, I also want to talk about somebody else who is sitting in this Chamber who will continue, as her career advances, to be a role model for the people of this country and the people of her community. A daughter of Eastern Ohio, Rachel Petri has done communications work for me for a number of years.

She is leaving our office to, of course, return to her home State of Ohio. She has been a joy to work with. She has been a pleasure to work with. She is so smart and so committed, with an incredible work ethic. I am honored that she has spent part of her life working with me in our office in Washington, DC, and I thank her for her service.

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.

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

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

HONORING NEBRASKA’S SOLDIERS WHO LOST THEIR LIVES IN COMBAT

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I rise today to continue my tribute to Nebraska’s heroes: the current generation of men and women who lost their lives defending our freedom in Iraq and Afghanistan. Each of these Nebraskans has a special story to tell.

SERGEANT LONNIE “CALVIN” ALLEN, JR.

Today, Mr. President, I will recall the life and service of Sergeant Lonnie “Calvin” Allen, Jr., a native of Bellevue, NE.

Calvin grew up in a military family. His father, Lonnie Allen, Sr., was a senior master sergeant in the Air Force. When Lonnie Sr. was assigned to Offutt Air Force Base in Bellevue, both he and his wife Sallie thought they would be there only for a short time. However, they enjoyed “the good life,” and soon after the birth of their two sons, Nuru and Calvin, they decided to stay.

As a young child, Calvin spent much of his time in the kitchen. His mother still talks about how Calvin learned to cook at the age of 5. Sallie has vivid memories of Calvin in the kitchen in the early mornings or on the weekends, experimenting with new recipes or dishes. There were times when she would still be in bed and Calvin would bring her food or a new dish to try. She said that he was always open to trying new things, whether it was in the kitchen or elsewhere. This also pertained to sports, where Calvin played basketball and football, ran track, and wrestled.

Calvin also had a caring attitude, which extended to church on Sundays. Calvin was widely known amongst the congregation at Mount Carmel Baptist Church in Bellevue. He often volunteered to be an usher and displayed his musical talent in the choir. Calvin had a personal and very open relationship with God, and he happily shared it with everyone he met.

Throughout his high school years at Bellevue East, Calvin spent much of his time with friends and family. Sallie recalled many video game parties and sleepovers at their house, which would end with many of Calvin’s friends sprawled out on the Allen living room floor.

Calvin was a member of a close-knit family who spent time playing games together. Whether it was card games or board games, the competitive spirit would always come out in the Allen boys. They loved to compete.

After graduating from Bellevue East in 1998, Calvin enrolled at Northeastern Junior College in Sterling, CO, to study criminal justice. He long envisioned a career in law enforcement and thought this would be a good starting point for him to launch his career.

After completing 2 years at Northeastern, Calvin enrolled at Colorado State to finish his criminal justice degree. Soon after enrolling at Colorado State, however, he returned home to Bellevue. Calvin’s vehicle had been involved in a wreck, which left him without any means of transportation. Due to this, he enlisted in the Army as a way to pay for a new vehicle, while also pursuing his law enforcement career while serving his country. Sallie still laughs about the fact that Calvin returned to Nebraska due to a wrecked car. Although many expected he would follow in his dad’s footsteps by enlisting in the Air Force, Sallie knew better. Calvin wanted to pave his own road in the Army.

Following his enlistment, Calvin soon shipped off to Fort Benning to complete his One Station Unit Training for the infantry. Shortly after graduation, he was assigned to a station in Germany. It was in Germany where Calvin met his wife, Brigit, a German native. After dating for some time, Calvin was assigned to Fort Drum in New York as part of the 2nd Battalion, 22nd Infantry, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division. Brigit came with him to New York, where they wed in 2004.

Shortly after their marriage, Calvin served in Iraq for the first time, and Brigit moved to Bellevue to be closer to Calvin’s family while he was deployed. After a brief stint at home, he deployed to Iraq for a second time. In August of 2005, Calvin was stationed near Baghdad.

During Sergeant Allen’s second deployment, patrols became increasingly dangerous. At the time, the Baghdad area experienced a large increase in suicide bombings and sectarian fighting. On May 18, 2006, while on patrol in Baghdad, Sergeant Allen’s Humvee was struck by an improvised explosive device, killing him and three other servicemembers.

Sergeant Allen’s memorial service was held at the Capehart Chapel in Bellevue. Over 500 people attended the standing-room-only ceremony to pay their respects, including over 200 Patriot Riders, who lined up with American flags. Calvin was laid to rest on May 30, 2006, in Arlington National Cemetery—the day after Memorial Day.

Fellow friend and Air Force Capt. Bill Eckley talked about how Calvin was a man of honor. Bellevue also honored him by naming a street after him,

and his high school established the Sgt. Lonnie Calvin Allen, Jr. Scholarship.

Sgt. Lonnie “Calvin” Allen, Jr., received the Bronze Star and Purple Heart posthumously.

I join Nebraskans and Americans across our country in saluting his willingness and his family’s sacrifice to keep us free. I am honored to tell his story.

I thank the Presiding Officer.

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

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

TRIBUTE TO REX TILLERSON

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, 2 days ago, the President of the United States announced his decision to replace Secretary of State Rex Tillerson with CIA Director Mike Pompeo. I respect and admire both of these men immensely.

I just want to take a moment to talk about Secretary Tillerson’s public service. I know his entering government after his long and illustrious career in the private sector was quite a transition, but he provided able leadership to the Department of State during a period of transition from one Presidency to the next and a period of diplomatic turbulence. He worked hard to strengthen and, in some cases, repair our global alliances.

I have known Secretary Tillerson for a long time. He is a man of character who has led the Boy Scouts, which continues to be one of his abiding passions—developing young men as persons of character, and I respect that. At the same time, he advanced his own career as the head of one of the largest businesses in the world at the pinnacle of success, as we count success. I wish him the best, and I hope his statesmanship, professionalism, and deep and abiding friendships spanning the globe are remembered and maintained after he is gone from public life.

NOMINATION OF MIKE POMPEO

Mr. President, I also want to say a few good words about my friend Mike Pompeo. After graduating first in his class at West Point and then graduating from Harvard Law School, he had a successful career in law and business before transitioning into public service. As a Member of the House of Representatives, he represented Kansas’s Fourth Congressional District and served on the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. Then he was named by President Trump, as we know, to lead the Central Intelligence Agency.

Director Pompeo is a terrific guy, smart and well respected by all. He has a keen sense of the delicate nature of global diplomacy and the crucial role America and American intelligence agencies have to play. I know he has a

great rapport with the President, and I think he will make an excellent Secretary of State.

NOMINATION OF GINA HASPEL

Mr. President, finally, I want to state my utmost confidence in Gina Haspel, Director Pompeo’s Deputy, who has been nominated to take over after he leaves as Director of the CIA. As a career intelligence professional, she is tough, she is direct, but she is collegial, too, and much beloved by the people who work out at the Central Intelligence Agency.

As my colleague, the senior Senator from California, has previously stated, Ms. Haspel has great experience acting as Deputy Director, and she has the confidence of the Central Intelligence Agency, which is no small feat.

I support Ms. Haspel’s nomination and look forward to working hard to ensure her confirmation.

Of course, there will be groups who will waste no time trying to tarnish her reputation over efforts she made doing her part to keep our Nation safe after the terrible tragedy of 9/11, but I think it is more telling that those who know her best commend her in the strongest of terms. Take, for example, President Obama’s former Director of National Intelligence, James Clapper, who has called her tremendous, and President Obama’s CIA Director Leon Panetta has expressed his support and said he is glad the nominee is Ms. Haspel because she knows the CIA inside out.

So in the days ahead, we will be discussing Ms. Haspel, but let’s not just buy into the phony narratives that other people will give about her public service. The views of those who doubt her qualifications and who question her experience will continue to attack and denigrate Ms. Haspel, no doubt, in the open debate. Ultimately, their arguments, if believed and accepted, would make the country less safe and less secure.

We have to remember that right after the terrible events of 9/11, we didn’t have the luxury of hindsight. Our leaders were worried about follow-on attacks following the terrible tragedy in New York and the plane crashing into the Pentagon. Public fears regarding another attack were at an alltime high, and tough calls had to be made. That is what leadership is all about.

So I look forward to continuing to make the case for why Ms. Haspel is the person the country needs to lead the Central Intelligence Agency.

FIX NICS BILL

Mr. President, I admit to sounding like a broken record. I am here again to talk about the Fix NICS bill, a bill I introduced with the junior Senator from Connecticut. Just as a refresher, Fix NICS is about fixing the broken background check system that is used when somebody purchases a firearm, but in the case of my constituents in Sutherland Springs, TX, because of the failures of the Federal Government—notably, in this case, the U.S. Air

Force—to upload felony convictions and convictions for domestic violence into the background check system, no derogatory information was reported, and ultimately the gunman in Sutherland Springs took the life of 26 innocent people and shot 20 more.

The reason I keep talking about this legislation is, it is just too important to let up on. We cannot, and we never should, just move on after another tragedy like that which occurred in Parkland, FL, and Sutherland Springs, TX, or what happened in Las Vegas, NV, where 58 people were killed and 851 others injured by a gunman using a bump stock, which essentially turned a semiautomatic weapon into an automatic weapon. We can’t just move on when lives hang in the balance. We have to do our duty and do our part to save lives. We have to fix our criminal background check system so dangerous felons do not lie their way into obtaining firearms to use to slaughter innocent people.

To do that, we have to get this bill to the President as soon as possible. The President will sign this legislation once it passes the House and the Senate. I am grateful that today 72 Members of the U.S. Senate have signed on as cosponsors to the bill.

It is not just the lawmakers here in Washington who support it; the country is asking for it too. I have a Thursday morning coffee for my constituents from Texas and a number of them—students—came to talk to me about their concerns about gun violence and particularly the feeling that not only parents have, and worry about for their children, but that students have themselves about whether they are going to continue to be safe in their schools.

Yesterday, a broad coalition of victims’ rights advocates, law enforcement officers, and gun violence prevention groups and prosecutors sent me a letter, along with to the majority and minority leaders, asking them for a clean vote on the Fix NICS legislation before the upcoming Easter recess. They said it would improve key elements of the background check system, particularly domestic violence, criminal history, and protective order records.

Let me just pause there. One of the most frequent victims of shootings are domestic violence victims—family disputes, custody disputes, divorces, and the like. One of the purposes of the background check system is to make sure nobody who has been convicted of a domestic violence assault can legally purchase or possess a firearm.

These same groups call this bill bipartisan, bicameral, commonsense, and noncontroversial. Again, they made a point to note in their letter that the vote should be clean—in other words, not conditioned on other controversial measures. Well, they are absolutely right, and I would ask the minority leader to listen to the 80 percent of his conference that backed this bill and believe in its promise to help stem the tide of violence and help save lives.

I would ask those who are objecting to us considering this legislation on a clean up-or-down vote to reconsider. Many of them say: Well, there are other things we want to vote on. Well, I would be happy to have that happen, but none of these ideas, at this point, have achieved the sort of consensus the Fix NICS bill has. They are waiting for impossible outcomes, insisting on votes on other measures, when we know those votes will fail, but worst of all, conditioning their willingness to vote on Fix NICS for those other votes, which we know will not succeed and will fail.

So I implore those standing in the way of a rollover vote on this consensus piece of legislation to lift their objections and join us. Their current strategy will guarantee failure, and failure on this issue, more than others, we absolutely cannot afford.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF ROBERT F. KENNEDY'S
CAMPAIGN FOR PRESIDENT

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, I am here to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Robert F. Kennedy's monumental campaign for President. Kennedy's brief, tragic run at the Presidency has had an enduring impact on so many generations of Americans. The reason, I think, is because Robert Kennedy had the courage to challenge a divided nation to face up to its failings, to challenge a divided people to acknowledge their own contributions to our Nation's ills, to challenge us to step back from the stale, cheap politics of the moment, to challenge us to do better by each other.

History may not repeat, but it often rhymes. Conditions are different now, but a lot of the anxiety that swept through the country in 1968 echoes the anxiety of today, especially the economic anxiety felt by millions of Americans who are working harder than ever but feel opportunity slipping away from themselves and from their children.

Too often, our political and business leaders refuse to see this. Instead they hide behind macroeconomic statistics, using them as a shield to dismiss the concerns of the American people as faulty, wrongheaded, or even as nonexistent.

Robert Kennedy understood that America's national economy is not the same as the economic well-being of its people. In 1968, in a speech at the University of Kansas, he spoke eloquently about the differences between them, and here is what he said:

[Our] Gross National Product counts air pollution and cigarette advertising, and ambulances to clear our highways of carnage. It counts special locks for our doors and the jails for the people who break them. It counts the destruction of the redwood and the loss of our natural wonder in chaotic sprawl. It counts napalm and counts nuclear warheads and armored cars for the police to fight the riots in our cities. It counts Whitman's rifle and Speck's knife, and the tele-

vision programs which glorify violence in order to sell toys to our children.

Yet the gross national product does not allow for the health of our children, the quality of their education or the joy of their play. It does not include the beauty of our poetry or the strength of our marriages, the intelligence of our public debate or the integrity of our public officials. It measures neither our wit nor our courage, neither our wisdom nor our learning, neither our compassion nor our devotion to our country.

It measures everything, in short, except that which makes life worthwhile. And it can tell us everything about America except why we are proud that we are Americans.

Consider three stats: corporate profits, the stock market, and unemployment.

Today, corporate profits are up—corporate profits that count gun sales for manufacturers whose weapons are used to massacre children in our schools and our streets. Corporate profits that count revenues from drug companies when they quadruple prices for the sick and the desperate. Corporate profits that count revenues of banks like Wells Fargo as they rip off millions of American consumers.

The stock market is up as giant companies pocket trillions in taxpayer money stolen from middle-class families. The market is up as CEOs shut down plants and factories in the United States and move them overseas. The market is up as business leaders, flush with cash, turn their backs on workers while they plow millions and even billions into stock buybacks to goose investors' returns and CEOs' bonuses.

Unemployment is down, but wages have barely budged in a generation. Unemployment is down, but for millions of people, the exploding costs for housing, healthcare, and childcare mean it now takes two jobs to do what one job covered a generation ago. Unemployment is down, but the numbers fail to represent the millions living in rural and urban American communities alike that have given up on the search for a job.

These statistics on corporate profits, the stock market, and unemployment tell us everything about the American economy, but they tell us very little about the lived experience of today's Americans. They do not speak to the citizen who fears police violence or the police officer who fears gang violence or the immigrant who cannot speak out about sexual assault at the hands of her boss or the toxic rhetoric flowing through our politics seeking to turn neighbor against neighbor. They do not account for our devotion to our communities, to our churches, and to our children. They tell us virtually nothing about our trials, our challenges, our hopes, or our principles.

Robert Kennedy understood this. He knew we cannot simply run an economy for those at the top and assume it will solve America's problems. In the intervening 50 years since his speech, America ran that experiment anyway and watched it fail miserably.

It is time to try something different. It is time to challenge each of us to do

better by each other, to see the dignity in one another, and to put our values first. I believe we can make Robert Kennedy's legacy a reality, and I am proud to fight for it.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BLUNT. 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. BLUNT. Mr. President, in the next few days, we will begin to debate this important bill on sex trafficking. This is something that, for whatever reason, the country turned its back on for too long. As the ways to communicate and the ways to offer so-called adult services grew, the government and law enforcement didn't have the new tools they needed to fight back.

This is a bill that Senator PORTMAN and others have worked so hard on, on this side of the building. We are actually taking up the House bill. The principal sponsor of the House bill is Missouri Congresswoman ANN WAGNER, with whom I have worked closely and who has been a good friend of mine—she and her family—for a long time.

When the House passed this bill overwhelmingly, ANN WAGNER said that they "sent a clear message to trafficking victims: you are not alone, and justice is no longer out of reach." It is hard to imagine a more lonely place, I would think, than someone who is being trafficked, some young woman, young child, boy or girl, who has fallen into the hands of traffickers and who, for drugs or whatever reason, has been sold into this or become dependent in a way that put them into this.

Congresswoman WAGNER went on to say about this bill that "FOSTA will produce more prosecutions of bad actor websites and more convictions and put more predators behind bars." She said: "It will give victims a pathway to justice and provide a meaningful criminal deterrent, so that fewer businesses will ever enter the sex trade and fewer victims will ever be sold."

The whole idea that people are being sold to be used in whatever terrible way someone else wants to use them is so offensive. The idea that we have websites that people can go to that have some description of some person who is helplessly in this system and how they would be used—that is something Congress should stand up on. By voting for Congresswoman WAGNER's bill, the House has already done that.

On our side of the building, Senator PORTMAN and others have worked so hard to draw attention to the fact that we need to find time to get this bill on the floor. Now we have a bill that has already passed the House, and all we have to do is pass that bill and send it right to the President, or we can make

some changes that Senator PORTMAN and others may want to suggest, and then we can send the bill back to the House, where hopefully it can be dealt with in the same overwhelming way they passed it the first time. Then we can get this bill on the President's desk and do exactly what Congresswoman WAGNER said this bill will do. It is time for us to do everything we can to end this.

We would be foolish to think that one piece of legislation will end this problem. By working with law enforcement, looking at trafficking, looking at locations like the intersections of major interstate highways, where it is easy to bring people, to pass people along to somebody else, to get them to where not only are they disoriented, but your actual contact with that person doesn't last very long before you give them to somebody else or sell them to somebody else who could use them in a terrible way—this needs to stop. I am confident the Senate will pass this next week, and I will just say that it is about time.

FUNDING THE GOVERNMENT

Mr. President, also next week we are going to move forward on an appropriating process that has gotten way out of control. I am glad the leaders have decided to appoint a special committee to look at this. The Presiding Officer and I are on that committee. We will be looking at the budgeting process and looking at what has happened. Instead of bringing these bills to the floor one at a time and letting every Member of the Senate have an opportunity to amend any bill in any way they want to as long as it deals with spending and as long as you don't add new money—every amendment you want to come up with where you want to take some money here and spend it here instead and have a debate about why that should happen—that is what the Congress did for a couple of hundred years, and it is time we did it again. This idea that all the bills come together in one big, what we call an omnibus—“ominous” might be a better word—an omnibus spending bill that includes everything, plus all the legislation that it can possibly carry, is not the way this process should work. It is the way this process is going to have to work this year because we missed all of those opportunities that are now behind us.

As soon as we get this done, we need to start on this year's process. We know what the top-line spending number is going to be. There is every reason to believe that this year's process could be a big step in the right direction, but some guidelines from that special House and Senate committee will do even more.

I would like to say, as the chairman of one of those appropriating committees—the Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Subcommittee—that one bill of the 11 left after the Defense bill is decided on—that one bill has about a third of all of

the money to be appropriated of the discretionary money. Senator MURRAY, my counterpart on the other side, and I have worked hard on this committee for 3 years now. In the House, Chairman COLE and Congresswoman DELAURO, the chair and the ranking member on that side, have worked hard as well.

These are big decisions to be made. These programs matter, but some of them matter more than others, and part of our job should be and needs to be setting priorities, doing things that increase the commitment to the programs that are working and eliminate the programs or change the programs that don't work. Hopefully, we will continue to do more of that this year and even more of that next year.

Some of the programs touch the lives of so many Americans, such as apprenticeship programs. Medical research clearly touches the life of virtually every American and every American family. What we could do to develop a flu vaccine that actually hits the mark every year instead of misses the mark often, things we can do in special education—these are all parts of this one part of the bill that Senator MURRAY and I and Congressman COLE and Congresswoman DELAURO have been working on.

Frankly, everybody should have had a chance to work on this. I think we know a lot about these topics. I think that our debate is a good debate, but it is not nearly as good of a debate as if every single Senator got to be a part of working on this, not just the three dozen or fewer Senators who are on the Appropriations Committee.

There are a wide variety of programs here that need to be funded. I want to spend just a few minutes talking about some of the priorities that we are looking at that need to be part of this bill and create a sense that this is really a process that matters.

First, we are on track to increase the third straight year of significant increases for the National Institutes of Health and health research. What do they do? In the last decade, we failed most of the time to make any increase at all. In fact, 2 years ago, when I started chairing this committee and Congressman COLE started chairing the committee on the other side of the building, it had been 12 years since there had been a one-penny increase in health research. During that 12 years, we figured out so much more about the human genome. We figured out so many more ways to figure out how I am different from you and how you are different from me and how that makes a difference and how whatever is attacking my system we can fight back.

There was not one penny of an increase in 12 years. In fact, the research people said that we were 22 percent below, in research buying power 3 years ago, where we had been 12 years earlier. Young researchers who had never gotten a research grant before weren't likely to get one when they had less ef-

fective money to spend than they have had for over a decade. So hopefully that 22 percent—our goal would be to get most of that 22 percent back in 3 years. We have also already restored 13 percent of it. I hope we have a big number next week that gets us back to where we are—at least back to where we were in 2005 or so.

We made a commitment at the end of the last century to double, in a short period of time, the National Institutes of Health funding, and then somehow we thought we were done. We would be done anytime there is no more research to be done. We will be done as soon as we have developed a cure for cancer and found out what to do about Alzheimer's and determined what we can do to lessen heart attack risks and found the answer to every orphan disease, diseases that only a few people have. Let me tell my colleagues, we are a long way from doing that. In the last 3 years, we have tripled the amount of dollars going to Alzheimer's research. Without a cure for Alzheimer's or a way to slow down the onset of Alzheimer's, the projection is that by 2050, we will be spending twice as many tax dollars on Alzheimer's-related care and dementia-related care as we are spending now to defend the country. If I had said we would spend \$1.1 trillion, I don't know about everybody who is listening, but in my case, it is pretty hard to get a handle on that. What does that really mean? How much bigger is that than \$1.1 billion? Well, \$1.1 trillion is twice what we spend to defend the country. Every military base everywhere in the world, every ship, every plane, every paycheck for every soldier, sailor, airman, marine; the National Guard, the Coast Guard; training dollars—that is about \$500-and-some billion, approaching \$600 billion. We would be spending twice that in today's dollars, in tax dollars—not what families would spend to try to deal with the tragedy of Alzheimer's but twice that in just tax dollars if we don't find something to do. A cure would be great. Just figuring out how we could determine early, in an effective way, that you were likely to get Alzheimer's and try to begin to delay the onset of Alzheimer's so it either doesn't affect you at all because some other health concern does or you get it a few years later. If we could delay the onset of Alzheimer's by 5 years on the average, that \$1.1 trillion in today's dollars—in 2015—would be reduced by almost half, by 46 percent. So knowing how to detect this—there have been some great studies going on that have been funded in better ways over recent years. This has continued.

I think what we are looking at in the Brain Initiative—the Cancer Moonshot, as Vice President Biden referred to it—diabetes—again, these diseases that maybe not very many people get are particularly the diseases that the National Institutes of Health needs to be doing research on because there is not much of an economic driver for private

sector research on a disease that almost nobody has. So a lot of the money that we put into NIH research we specifically try to put in there without any specific category, where we are saying: You take this money, and you do what you think needs to be done, and we are going to have oversight to talk about what you did. A bunch of Members of the Senate and the House aren't going to try to become the research deciders for the United States of America—and, by the way, for the world—when you do that.

In this bill, we are also looking at the crucial fight on the opioid epidemic. The President says it is a crisis, and he is right. It is the No. 1 cause of accidental death in the country today. It has exceeded car accidents as a cause of death in the country and in Missouri and in many other States.

The last two funding bills have put almost an additional \$1 billion into opioids from where we were just 3 years ago, but the Presiding Officer will remember that in the last continuing resolution, some specific money—about \$3 billion more—was given to this cause, and it is the job of our committee and then the Congress to decide how to spend that \$3 billion.

We need more resources. There is no reason to think that the opioid addiction epidemic, leading to heroin and other drugs, is slowing down, so we need to do things that improve treatment and prevention efforts. Prevention, obviously, is better than treatment, but if prevention fails, we need better treatment systems than we have now.

We need to look for alternative pain medications that aren't addictive. I will say that in the 1970s and 1980s, I am told, in medical schools, they thought opioids weren't addictive. So we need to be sure that when we have an alternative that seems to be non-addictive, that it really isn't addictive.

We need to think of the workforce needs and what happens when people become addicted to pain medicine and their pain doesn't go away, probably because their addiction doesn't go away. Then there is behavioral health that impacts so many families and so many communities.

If you are going to recover from opioid addiction, you have to have a place to go. Too many programs and policies say: We will work with you for 14 days. A lot of them say: We will work with you for 28 days—4 weeks. Not many people get this behind them in 28 days. So we are doing that.

In this bill, we are also looking at ways to support students and parents and teachers. Obviously, a safe environment—what can we do to provide more flexibility to schools to spend the money they currently have from the Federal Government to create a safer environment, and what can we do to increase the money available for that?

We need to be doing things that prepare people not just for college but for careers. If you can get a certificate

that puts you to work in a job you love quicker than you can get a college degree that maybe doesn't do those two things—we ought to be thinking about whether our post-high school dollars are equally available to both college and other kinds of training.

We need to see that people have access to higher education. We are doing that by increasing funding for the Pell grant—this is not a loan; it doesn't have to be paid back—given specifically based on economic need and performance in school. You have to stay in school; you have to get passing grades. But in many colleges in my State of Missouri—in community college and in several of our 4-year schools—if you qualify for the full Pell grant, that is more than enough to pay tuition, books, and fees.

If you are putting yourself through school or if you are returning to school as an adult, if you are the first person in your family to graduate from college, year-round Pell means that if you have something working, you need to stick with it as long as you can, as quickly as you can.

Summer break is always well-intended. For 10 years Pell didn't pay for school in the summer; it does now, starting last year. This will be the first year that students and colleges and universities can really prepare for summer Pell. But if you don't break the rhythm you are in where things are working for you, you are much more likely to graduate from college than you would otherwise.

We need to be sure we prioritize funding for elementary and secondary education grant programs so that they are fair across the country, so that we are not only supporting STEM education, but we are also supporting IDEA for students with learning disabilities, an obligation the Federal Government has taken on itself.

We are going to have a chance next week to deal with this important, long-awaited bill on trafficking. I think there will probably be one vote that covers more things than it should on funding the government for the year we are already in. But, as I have talked about today, there are many reasons for Americans and American families to be focused on the job we do. Frankly, we need to spend our time figuring out how, in the future, the American people can watch the Congress more closely and watch the Congress openly debate the priorities of the government, which the government sets nowhere else quite the way it does when it decides how to spend the money we have been entrusted with.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

ECONOMIC GROWTH, REGULATORY RELIEF, AND CONSUMER PROTECTION BILL

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I rise in support of the Economic Growth, Regulatory Relief, and Consumer Protection Act, which passed the Senate yesterday. This bipartisan bill protects and boosts the U.S. economy. I commend Chairman CRAPO, members of the Banking Committee, and my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for the hard work in getting this particular bill proposal across the finish line.

Making the rules simpler and fairer for small and midsize financial institutions is a commonsense idea that has garnered broad bipartisan support. That is because, done right, it helps hardworking Americans who aspire to invent things, start businesses, and manufacture goods and services—exactly the kind of entrepreneurship and growth America needs more of.

There are plenty of people with different viewpoints on how to improve the financial system. Some, however, say that almost any modification to the 849-page Dodd-Frank Act equates to a bonfire financial regulation, a gift to Wall Street, and so on. I think we need to cut through such patronizing, derisive mudslinging, and instead focus on commonsense solutions for the American people.

Let me tell you a plain truth: The bill the Senate passed yesterday is the result of sensible debate, reasonable compromise, and hard policy choices. Without compromising the safety and soundness of our financial system, it provides regulatory relief to small and midsize banks, credit unions, and financial institutions—the kind most familiar on Main Street in my home State of Utah.

Our constituents deserve regulatory relief. Between 2010 and 2016, compliance with Dodd-Frank cost \$36 billion and required 73 million paperwork hours. Dodd-Frank alone enacted more than five times as many restrictions as any other law passed by the Obama administration and more than 22,000 pages of regulations.

With their vast resources, large banks could stomach these regulations mainly through automation, but smaller banks could not. Saddled with extra compliance requirements and no material benefit to resilience, many buckled under the weight of these burdensome regulations.

Consider that there are 1,736 fewer community banks today than when Dodd-Frank was signed into law. Since 2010, the number of FDIC-insured commercial banks in Utah dropped from 53 to 42. In a similar timespan, the number of NCUA-insured credit unions in my home State fell from 94 to 66. Over the past decade, the percentage of small business and commercial loans dropped more than 15 percent.

Indeed, 8 years since the passage of Dodd-Frank, it is high time for Congress to reflect and make adjustments, as necessary, to improve our financial

regulatory system. Let's focus on resilience and efficiency. This bill does just that.

I would like to briefly highlight three reforms in the bill that benefit our national and local economies. First, the bill provides relief and flexibility to small financial institutions. More small bank holding companies will be able to raise capital, which will help bank lending opportunities for families, businesses, and startups. This policy was based on a bipartisan bill, the Community Bank Relief Act, that I introduced along with Senators King, Nelson, and Perdue. It is common sense to know that Utah's community banks are different from Wall Street banks, but too often regulations treat them the same.

Second, the bill increases the bank asset threshold for enhanced standards from \$50 billion to \$250 billion. I have long supported raising or recalibrating the asset threshold. It makes little sense that regional banks undergo stress tests and capital reviews similar to some of the largest, most complex global financial institutions. Similar to the unrealistic expectations put on community banks, this one-size-fits-all approach negatively affected regional banks.

Third, the bill eases the regulatory burden on 5,000 community banks that make up about 98 percent of financial institutions. For small banks and credit unions, this legislation provides relief from some of the requirements from the qualified mortgage rule, allowing them to devote more resources to serving their members rather than spending hours complying with regulatory overreach.

In today's era of extreme partisanship, this bill is a breath of fresh air. What the Senate has been able to accomplish this week is based on practical, consensus-led policy choices. While there remain other reforms that could relieve stress of burdensome regulations, this bill is a much needed start, which is why I wholeheartedly support this legislation.

Members on both sides of the aisle agree that the broad scope of Dodd-Frank created some harmful, unintended consequences. Let's make the rules simpler and fairer, as appropriate but not at the expense of safety. This bipartisan bill does just that, and the American people would be better off because of it.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, I want to associate myself with the remarks of the distinguished chairman of the Finance Committee, a committee I feel very privileged to serve on with our distinguished chairman. He has a message that I think should be required reading for everybody on this side, and more especially on the other side, and I really appreciate his remarks and his leadership.

Mr. HATCH. I thank my colleague.

CONFIRMATION OF GREGG DOUD

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, I want to speak today on the confirmation of Mr. Gregg Doud, the President's nominee for the Chief Agricultural Negotiator at the Office of the United States Trade Representative. In the Senate, we often say, or I hope we often say, that we are only as good as our staff. I have been blessed with the very best. Gregg is one example of why that is true.

Gregg served as senior professional staff on the Senate Agriculture Committee for me during my time as ranking member, 2011 through 2013. We like to say in Kansas that congressional staff are bucket toters. During those few years, we toted a lot of buckets together.

From the early days of the supercommittee and sequestration, multiple iterations of farm bills, animal disease scares, and the oversight of the MF Global mess, or situation, Gregg handled everything that was thrown at him—and all while wearing his cowboy boots with the pointed toes. Capitol Hill certainly isn't where Gregg started cutting his teeth in agriculture.

He hails from Mankato, KS, where he was raised on a dryland wheat, grain sorghum, soybean, swine, and cow-calf operation. Talk about diversified agriculture. He attended my alma mater, Kansas State University, home of the ever-fighting and always optimistic Wildcats. Good luck to them tonight.

Just last September, Gregg was back in Manhattan, KS, where he was honored as the 2017 Kansas State University Department of Agriculture Economics Distinguished Alumni Award.

From K-State, Gregg went on to work for the U.S. Wheat Associates, which is tasked with developing markets for U.S. wheat all around the world. Eventually, he became the chief economist for the National Cattlemen's Beef Association.

One of the very first trials that Gregg faced at NCBA was "the cow that stole Christmas," when just before Christmas, in 2003, a case of mad cow disease was confirmed in the United States, resulting in a devastating blow to U.S. beef exports.

Gregg worked on behalf of the beef industry with the U.S. Trade Representative, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the State Department to rebuild the reputation and reliability of U.S. beef exports. Kansas currently ranks as the third highest U.S. State exporter of beef to the global market.

U.S. trade policy has been a very hot topic in the last year, and it is one that Gregg certainly experienced and is well-versed. He served as a "cleared advisor" and later chairman of the USDA/USTR Animal and Animal Products Agriculture Trade Advisory Committee. It is a lot of words but a very important committee. It was during the negotiations of a variety of trade agreements, including Australia, Bahrain, Colombia, CAFTA, South Korea,

Morocco, Panama, and Peru. Obviously, he has been everywhere.

Gregg's background and experience give him a leg up in the challenge of serving as the Chief Agriculture Negotiator at USTR. He understands what trade means to the agriculture industry, and he has the experience to help maintain U.S. agriculture's role as a reliable supplier around the world. It is certainly a big challenge today.

At a time when the agriculture economy is in a rough patch—fourth year of prices below the cost of production pretty much across the board, all across the country—and commodity prices still falling, farmers and ranchers now depend on trade more than ever. We need continued focus on exporting not just what we make but also what we grow. Let me repeat that. We need to export not just what we make—there is a lot of focus on that with regard to trade policy now coming out of the White House and this administration—but also what we grow.

Kansas farmers and ranchers work hard. On a regular basis, they have to make sacrifices to overcome the weather, overcome obstacles, and make commonsense decisions that have significant consequences. That is why I know Gregg will be successful in the job of Chief Agricultural Negotiator. He is a Kansas cowboy who knows how to roll up his sleeves and certainly get things done.

Gregg understands why strong trading relationships are absolutely critical to agriculture. I am glad he is at the USTR, where he can get to work with Ambassador Bob Lighthizer and lead the charge in advancing the U.S. trade agenda. Along with partners at the Department of Agriculture—like our champion there, Secretary Sonny Perdue—and the Undersecretary for Trade and Foreign Agriculture Affairs, Ted McKinney, Gregg will ensure that agriculture has a seat at the table and that our farmers and ranchers are being heard.

The U.S. agriculture industry has worked long and hard to increase our competitiveness and markets around the world, but their work is never finished, and they cannot do it alone. I know that with Gregg riding point, the voices of the hard-working farmer and rancher will be well represented all around the world.

Congratulations to you, Gregg, on your confirmation as the Chief Agricultural Negotiator at the USTR. I look forward to continuing to work with you on behalf of U.S. ag.

One more admonition, one more piece of advice. When you are riding point, just make sure you look over your shoulder once in a while to see if the herd is still there, and if it isn't, don't worry about it, we have your back.

I yield my time.

After careful inspection, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

TRIBUTE TO MARK PETERSON

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I want to join with Members of Congress and congressional staff in celebrating Mark Peterson's 30 years of service and retirement from the town of Normal. Mark has honorably served the people of Normal, IL, since 1988 and as its city manager since 1998.

He has served on the governing boards for a variety of public and community organizations, including the MetCom Emergency Communications Center, the Bloomington-Normal Economic Development Council, the Central Illinois Regional Broadband Network, the McLean County Regional Planning Commission Executive Committee, the Community Development Corporation, the BN Advantage Leadership Council, and Connect Transit.

Mark was instrumental in the planning and successful redevelopment of Uptown Normal, including the Children's Discovery Museum, as well as Uptown Station and its new rail platform, waiting area, bus bays, and related development at the Marriott Hotel and Conference Center and the Hyatt Place Bloomington-Normal Hotel.

Under the administration of Mark Peterson, the Shoppes at College Hills grew into a thriving modern retail center. The Constitution Trail also grew to nearly 50 miles of recreational trail through the cities of Normal and Bloomington, providing the community with an outstanding linear park.

Mark oversaw a period of tremendous growth in the town of Normal, while maintaining an AAA bond rating and serving as independent confirmation of the town's fiscal health and stability. He also cultivated fruitful partnerships with members of the Illinois congressional delegation, but most importantly, Mark has been a loyal leader and community servant for the residents of Normal and will continue to be an admired citizen of the community.

Mark's commitment to the town of Normal can be seen in every corner of the city, and that work will not be forgotten.

TRIBUTE TO MARK BOOTH

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, today I wish to honor and recognize the out-

standing service of Mark Booth on his retirement after 31 years of public service at the Congressional Budget Office. Mark's expertise as a forecaster and modeler has made him an invaluable contributor to CBO's analysis of the budget outlook. Since 2003, Mark has been chief of the revenue estimating unit of CBO's tax analysis division, overseeing its forecasts of tax revenues and cost estimates of legislative proposals.

Mark came to CBO in 1986 from the private sector, where he began his career as a forecaster and analyst. He took over responsibility for CBO's corporate income tax projections and quickly demonstrated his analytic skills. As a result, Mark's portfolio continuously expanded, as he soon also became the lead analyst for CBO's projections of individual income taxes and Federal Reserve System's earnings. In addition, Mark joined the tax analysis division's cost-estimating team, overseeing assistant analysts to produce timely estimates of legislative proposals. Over those years, Mark won the CBO Director's Award for Exceptional Service, the agency's highest recognition for work by a CBO staffer, twice.

In recognition of Mark's abilities and breadth of experience, he was promoted to the position of unit chief for revenue estimating in 2003, and he has overseen the division's projections and cost estimates ever since. As head of the revenue estimating unit, Mark has led his staff in providing high-quality and timely projections of revenues and analysis of budget issues. Mark has made valuable contributions to numerous reports, testimonies, and cost estimates in just about every subject area covered by CBO, including the economy, energy, transportation, and healthcare. He also has served a crucial role in trying to make CBO's analysis more transparent, preparing several background papers that describe CBO's methods of forecasting revenues and evaluate the agency's projections record.

I know my colleagues join me in extending our thanks and appreciation to Mark for his service to our Nation. We wish him well in his retirement from CBO and hope he will continue in future years to lend his expertise to the analysis of important tax policy issues.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO KELLI LOHR

• Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, this week I have the honor of recognizing Kelli Lohr, the new owner of the Prairie Peddler in Shelby. The Prairie Peddler has been a community business for over two decades. Families throughout the years have come to indulge in scones, cookies and coffee, and shop for household decor and gifts.

When Kelli saw that the notable community establishment may close without a new owner, she stepped up with-

out any prior experience as a businessowner and took a chance. Working together with the former owner to make a smooth transition, Kelli was able to ensure that the community's favorite staples would still be available as she stocked the shelves with new and exciting items as well. Her work has paid off. The family business is growing as folks have more money in their paychecks following the recent tax cuts and the community is eager to support the new management.

Thank you, Kelli, and the rest of the Lohr family. Your dedication to maintaining a community business is appreciated by the people of Toole County and the surrounding area. It is businesses like yours that make Montana the "Last Best Place."•

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:58 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 506. An act to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide an additional tool to prevent certain frauds against veterans, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1116. An act 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.

H.R. 3249. An act to authorize the Project Safe Neighborhoods Grant Program, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3996. An act to amend title 28, United States Code, to permit other courts to transfer certain cases to United States Tax Court.

H.R. 4909. An act to reauthorize the grant program for school security in the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

At 12:34 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bill:

H.R. 1177. An act to direct the Secretary of Agriculture to release on behalf of the United States the condition that certain lands conveyed to the City of Old Town, Maine, be used for a municipal airport, and for other purposes.

The enrolled bill was subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

MEASURES REFERRED

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

H.R. 506. An act to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide an additional tool to prevent certain frauds against veterans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

H.R. 1116. An act 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; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

H.R. 3249. An act to authorize the Project Safe Neighborhoods Grant Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

H.R. 3996. An act to amend title 28, United States Code, to permit other courts to transfer certain cases to United States Tax Court; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

H.R. 4909. An act to reauthorize the grant program for school security in the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

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-4579. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the report on activities of the National Guard Counterdrug Schools for fiscal year 2017; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4580. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Trinexapac-ethyl; Pesticide Tolerances" (FRL No. 9973-20) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 14, 2018; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4581. A joint communication from the Secretary of Energy and the Secretary of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the certification of the sum of moneys deposited in the Treasury in relation to environmental cleanup and infrastructure costs; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-4582. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; Vermont; Non-attainment New Source Review and Prevention of Significant Deterioration Permit Program Revisions; Infrastructure Requirements for National Ambient Air Quality Standards" (FRL No. 9975-16-Region 1) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 14, 2018; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4583. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of State Air Quality Plans for Designated Facilities and Pollutants; City of Philadelphia; Control of Emissions from Existing Hospital/Medical/Infectious Waste Incinerator Units" (FRL No. 9975-33-Region 3) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 14, 2018; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4584. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of State Air Quality Plans for Designated Facilities and Pollutants; City of Philadelphia; Control of Emissions from Existing Sewage Sludge Incineration Units" (FRL No. 9975-38-Region 3) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 14, 2018; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4585. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule en-

titled "Approval of Implementation Plans; State of Iowa; Elements of the Infrastructure SIP Requirements for the 2010 Nitrogen Dioxide National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS); Final Rule" (FRL No. 9975-69-Region 7) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 14, 2018; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4586. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval of Implementation Plans; State of Iowa; Elements of the Infrastructure SIP Requirements for the 2012 Particulate Matter (PM_{2.5}) National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS); Final Rule" (FRL No. 9975-68-Region 7) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 14, 2018; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4587. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Revisions to Method 301: Field Validation of Pollutant Measurement Methods from Various Waste Media" (FRL No. 9975-62-DAR) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 14, 2018; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4588. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Millennium Challenge Corporation's Annual Report for fiscal year 2017; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4589. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 22-270, "Office of Employee Appeals Hearing Examiner Classification Amendment Act of 2018"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4590. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 22-271, "Public Employee Relations Board Term Limit Amendment Act of 2018"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4591. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 22-272, "Extension of Time to Dispose of 8th & O Streets, N.W., Temporary Amendment Act of 2018"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4592. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 22-257, "Relieve High Unemployment Tax Incentives Act of 2018"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4593. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 22-258, "City Innovation Fund Re-Establishment Amendment Act of 2018"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4594. 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 "Electronic Submission of Certain Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance, Family Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance, and Veterans' Group Life Insurance Forms" (RIN2900-AP98) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 14, 2018; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

EC-4595. A communication from the Deputy Chief, Wireless Telecommunications Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Connect America Fund Phase II Auction Scheduled for July 24, 2018; Notice and Filing Requirements and Other Procedures for Auction 903" ((AU Docket No. 17-182 and WC Docket No. 10-90) (FCC 18-06)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 14, 2018; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4596. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel for Regulatory Affairs, Consumer Product Safety Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "All-Terrain Vehicles" ((16 CFR Part 1420) (Docket No. CPSC-2017-0032)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 14, 2018; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4597. A communication from the Acting Chairman of the Office of Proceedings, Surface Transportation Board, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Ex Parte Communications in Informal Rulemaking Proceedings" ((RIN2140-AB39) (Docket No. EP 739) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 14, 2018; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4598. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, Office of Protected Resources, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Taking and Importing Marine Mammals; Taking Marine Mammals Incidental to Testing and Training Activities Conducted in the Eglin Gulf Test and Training Range in the Gulf of Mexico" (RIN0648-BH21) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 14, 2018; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEE

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. GRASSLEY for the Committee on the Judiciary.

Joel M. Carson III, of New Mexico, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Tenth Circuit.

Colm F. Connolly, of Delaware, to be United States District Judge for the District of Delaware.

William F. Jung, of Florida, to be United States District Judge for the Middle District of Florida.

Maryellen Noreika, of Delaware, to be United States District Judge for the District of Delaware.

Ryan T. Holte, of Ohio, to be a Judge of the United States Court of Federal Claims for a term of fifteen years.

Jonathan F. Mitchell, of Washington, to be Chairman of the Administrative Conference of the United States for the term of five years.

William M. McSwain, of Pennsylvania, to be United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania for the term of four years.

Matthew D. Harris, of Utah, to be United States Marshal for the District of Utah for the term of four years.

Johnny Lee Kuhlman, of Oklahoma, to be United States Marshal for the Western District of Oklahoma for the term of four years.

Joseph D. McClain, of Indiana, to be United States Marshal for the Southern District of Indiana for the term of four years.

David A. Weaver, of Colorado, to be United States Marshal for the District of Colorado for the term of four years.

(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 Mr. KENNEDY (for himself and Ms. CORTEZ MASTO):

S. 2556. A bill to direct the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration to promulgate regulations to prohibit the storage of live animals in overhead compartments of airplanes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mrs. ERNST (for herself, Mr. BROWN, Mr. GRASSLEY, and Mr. CASEY):

S. 2557. A bill to amend the Food Security Act of 1985 to improve conservation programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. COCHRAN (for himself and Mr. WICKER):

S. 2558. A bill to direct the Secretary of Agriculture to transfer to Scenic Rivers Development Alliance certain National Forest System land in the State of Mississippi; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. CORKER, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. HATCH, Ms. HARRIS, and Mr. LEAHY):

S. 2559. A bill to amend title 17, United States Code, to implement the Marrakesh Treaty, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. RISCH:

S. 2560. A bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to establish a program to facilitate the transfer to non-Federal ownership of appropriate reclamation projects or facilities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself and Mrs. CAPITO):

S. 2561. A bill to authorize the Attorney General to suspend a controlled substances registration if there is a likelihood of a threat of diversion of a controlled substance, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself and Ms. COLLINS):

S. 2562. A bill to posthumously award a Congressional Gold Medal to Alice Paul in recognition of her role in the women's suffrage movement and in advancing equal rights for women; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. FLAKE (for himself, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. GARDNER, and Mr. BARASSO):

S. 2563. A bill to improve the water supply and drought resilience of the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. TILLIS (for himself, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. GRASSLEY):

S. 2564. A bill to amend title 11, United States Code, to promote the investigation of fraudulent claims against certain trusts, to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide penalties against fraudulent claims against certain trusts, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. DUCKWORTH (for herself, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. HASSAN, Ms. SMITH, and Mr. NELSON):

S. 2565. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide child care assistance to veterans receiving certain training or vocational rehabilitation, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. MERKLEY (for himself and Ms. BALDWIN):

S. 2566. A bill to require that any trade agreement eligible for expedited consideration by Congress include enforceable standards requiring paying adequate wages and maintaining sustainable production methods, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 177

At the request of Mr. LEE, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 177, a bill to provide for congressional review of the imposition of duties and other trade measures by the executive branch, and for other purposes.

S. 292

At the request of Mr. REED, the name of the Senator from Alabama (Mr. JONES) was added as a cosponsor of S. 292, a bill to maximize discovery, and accelerate development and availability, of promising childhood cancer treatments, and for other purposes.

S. 422

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 422, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to clarify presumptions relating to the exposure of certain veterans who served in the vicinity of the Republic of Vietnam, and for other purposes.

S. 428

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 428, a bill to amend titles XIX and XXI of the Social Security Act to authorize States to provide coordinated care to children with complex medical conditions through enhanced pediatric health homes, and for other purposes.

S. 479

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 479, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to waive co-insurance under Medicare for colorectal cancer screening tests, regardless of whether therapeutic intervention is required during the screening.

S. 636

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 636, a bill to allow Americans to earn paid sick time so that they can address their own health needs and the health needs of their families.

S. 936

At the request of Mr. WHITEHOUSE, the name of the Senator from Vermont

(Mr. LEAHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 936, a bill to designate certain National Forest System land and certain public land under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of the Interior in the States of Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington, and Wyoming as wilderness, wild and scenic rivers, wildland recovery areas, and biological connecting corridors, and for other purposes.

S. 943

At the request of Ms. HEITKAMP, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 943, a bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct an accurate comprehensive student count for the purposes of calculating formula allocations for programs under the Johnson-O'Malley Act, and for other purposes.

S. 1091

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1091, a bill to establish a Federal Task Force to Support Grandparents Raising Grandchildren.

S. 1106

At the request of Mr. MERKLEY, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. HASSAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1106, a bill to designate the same individual serving as the Chief Nurse Officer of the Public Health Service as the National Nurse for Public Health.

S. 1113

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1113, a bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to ensure the safety of cosmetics.

S. 2076

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2076, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to authorize the expansion of activities related to Alzheimer's disease, cognitive decline, and brain health under the Alzheimer's Disease and Healthy Aging Program, and for other purposes.

S. 2135

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2135, a bill to enforce current law regarding the National Instant Criminal Background Check System.

S. 2269

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the names of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN) and the Senator from Indiana (Mr. YOUNG) were added as cosponsors of S. 2269, a bill to reauthorize the Global Food Security Act of 2016 for 5 additional years.

S. 2398

At the request of Mr. HOEVEN, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2398, a bill to amend title 31, United States Code, to provide that

activities relating to the training and readiness of the reserve components of the Armed Forces during a lapse in appropriations shall constitute voluntary services that may be accepted by the United States.

S. 2500

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2500, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the women in the United States who joined the workforce during World War II, providing the vehicles, weaponry, and ammunition to win the war, that were referred to as “Rosie the Riveter”, in recognition of their contributions to the United States and the inspiration they have provided to ensuing generations.

S. 2507

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) was added as a cosponsor 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. CON. RES. 7

At the request of Mr. ROBERTS, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. Con. Res. 7, a concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that tax-exempt fraternal benefit societies have historically provided and continue to provide critical benefits to the people and communities of the United States.

S. RES. 434

At the request of Mr. COONS, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 434, a resolution recognizing the contributions of AmeriCorps members and alumni to the lives of the people of the United States.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. CORKER, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. HATCH, Ms. HARRIS, and Mr. LEAHY):

S. 2559. A bill to amend title 17, United States Code, to implement the Marrakesh Treaty, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce legislation that would implement the Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who are Blind, Visually Impaired, or Otherwise Print Disabled (“Marrakesh Treaty”). I’m pleased that Senators FEINSTEIN, CORKER, MENENDEZ, HATCH, HARRIS and LEAHY are joining me as original cosponsors.

The Marrakesh Treaty was signed by the United States in October 2013. It seeks to help address the global “book famine” and facilitate access to printed works for visually impaired individ-

uals by providing, with appropriate safeguards, that copyright protection should not impede the creation and distribution of accessible format copies, including the exchange of such copies internationally.

The Marrakesh Treaty Implementation Act represents a consensus approach developed by the Senate Judiciary and Foreign Relations Committees with stakeholders within the publishers, libraries and print disabilities communities, in consultation with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office and the U.S. Copyright Office as well as other interested industry and public interest stakeholders. I particularly want to commend the National Federation of the Blind, the Association of American Publishers and the Library Copyright Alliance for working with us in reaching an agreement on legislative text and proposed legislative history. We would not be here today without their efforts.

I look forward to working with my colleagues on the Foreign Relations Committee, Chairman CORKER and Ranking Member MENENDEZ, on ratification of the Marrakesh Treaty in the Senate, and with Judiciary Committee Ranking Member FEINSTEIN on passing the Marrakesh Treaty Implementation Act.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself and Mrs. CAPITO):

S. 2561. A bill to authorize the Attorney General to suspend a controlled substances registration if there is a likelihood of a threat of diversion of a controlled substance, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Ms. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise today with my colleague, Senator CAPITO, to introduce the Stopping Suspicious Orders of Opioids Act.

In 2016, the opioid epidemic caused more than 42,000 deaths in the United States.

In 2017, this epidemic was declared a public health emergency.

Now, more than 400 State, local, and Tribal governments have filed suits (some consolidated, some individual) against opioid manufacturers and distributors for their alleged roles in fueling and perpetuating this devastating crisis. The U.S. Justice Department, or DOJ, has filed a statement of interest in these lawsuits, which are currently pending.

As our Nation struggles to effectively address the opioid epidemic, one thing is clear: there is no silver bullet.

Yet, it is also clear that law enforcement can play a critical role in preventing and reducing overdose deaths.

That is why we must ensure that law enforcement has and uses the necessary tools to hold opioid manufacturers, distributors and others accountable when they fail to properly disclose to the Drug Enforcement Administration, or the DEA, opioid orders that are suspicious because of their size, frequency, or patterns. This simple disclo-

sure could prevent millions of prescription opioid pills from ending up on the black market.

Unfortunately, current law has inadvertently created a standard that is too high for DOJ to meet in order to take immediate action against those who fail to make these disclosures to the DEA or who fail to adequately protect against diversion.

For instance, the DEA has told my staff that under current law, in order to immediately stop a drug manufacturer or distributor from distributing opioids, a pharmacy from dispensing opioids, or a practitioner from prescribing opioids, it must prove that the distribution, dispensation, or prescription of the drugs directly resulted in an immediate and substantial likelihood that death, serious bodily harm, or abuse of a controlled substance occurred.

For this reason, the bill Senator CAPITO and I are introducing today would change the standard in current law to make it easier to immediately stop potentially dangerous shipments of prescription opioids. It would allow DOJ to take action when it can demonstrate that an opioid manufacturer or distributor’s lack of control over a prescription opioid would likely result in the drugs winding up in the hands of someone other than the intended recipient or on the black market.

This change will compel opioid manufacturers and distributors to be more vigilant in their efforts to report and stop the delivery of suspicious orders of opioids as well as to protect against diversion. In the absence of such vigilance, our bill would allow DOJ to immediately stop the delivery of opioids.

Our bill further ensures that bad actors are held accountable by establishing backstops and consequences for when opioid manufacturers, distributors, dispensers, and prescribers fail to take corrective action.

Under current law, if there is no immediate threat to the public health or safety, opioid manufacturers, distributors, dispensers and prescribers can submit a corrective action plan to DOJ before their registrations can be revoked or suspended. DOJ does not have to accept this plan, but if it does, current law does not outline a timeframe by which the plan must be fully implemented or consequences for failure to do so.

Given the magnitude of the opioid epidemic, this is unacceptable.

That is why our bill would require those who manufacture, distribute, dispense or prescribe opioids to fully implement any plan that is accepted by DOJ within 30 days. Failure to do so will result in the immediate suspension of a registration until the reinstated proceedings to deny, revoke, or suspend the registration permanently have concluded.

Mr. President, I have been struck by the seemingly countless examples of opioid manufacturers and distributors that have done little to safeguard

against diversion that have been raised in hearings, roundtables, and in the news over the last several years.

The example most often cited is that of Kermit, West Virginia, where, over a two year period nine million opioids were delivered to a single pharmacy. Between 2007 and 2012, 780 million oxycodone and hydrocodone pills were delivered to pharmacies throughout that state. This resulted in 1,728 fatal overdoses that were largely preventable.

We cannot allow this to happen again.

The bill Senator CAPITO and I are introducing today will strengthen current law by providing law enforcement with the additional tools it needs to better and more proactively combat the opioid epidemic and hold bad actors accountable.

I hope my colleagues will join us in supporting this important legislation.

Thank you, Mr. President. I yield the floor.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 2210. Mr. McCONNELL (for Mr. JOHNSON (for himself and Mrs. McCASKILL)) proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 3210, to require the Director of the National Background Investigations Bureau to submit a report on the backlog of personnel security clearance investigations, and for other purposes.

SA 2211. Mr. McCONNELL (for Mr. GRASSLEY) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 1869, to reauthorize and rename the position of Whistleblower Ombudsman to be the Whistleblower Protection Coordinator.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 2210. Mr. McCONNELL (for Mr. JOHNSON (for himself and Mrs. McCASKILL)) proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 3210, to require the Director of the National Background Investigations Bureau to submit a report on the backlog of personnel security clearance investigations, and for other purposes; as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Securely Expediting Clearances Through Reporting Transparency Act of 2018” or the “SECRET Act of 2018”.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act—

(1) the term “Bureau” means the National Background Investigations Bureau of the Office;

(2) the term “Director” means the Director of National Intelligence acting as the Security Executive Agent; and

(3) the term “Office” means the Office of Personnel Management acting as the Suitability and Credentialing Executive Agent.

SEC. 3. REPORT ON BACKLOG OF PERSONNEL SECURITY CLEARANCE INVESTIGATIONS.

Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, and quarterly thereafter for 5 years, the Director of the Bureau, in coordination with the Director, shall submit to Congress a report on the backlog of per-

sonnel security clearance investigations at the Bureau for the most recent full calendar quarter, which shall include—

(1) the size of the backlog of personnel security clearance investigations of the Bureau, including, for each sensitivity level—

(A) the number of interim clearances granted;

(B) the number of initial investigations for Federal employees;

(C) the number of periodic reinvestigations for Federal employees;

(D) the number of initial investigations for employees of Federal contractors;

(E) the number of periodic reinvestigations for employees of Federal contractors;

(F) the number of initial investigations for employees of, and employees of contractors of, the Department of Defense;

(G) the number of periodic reinvestigations for employees of and employees of contractors of the Department of Defense;

(H) the number of employees of the Bureau conducting background investigations for the Bureau; and

(I) the number of employees of contractors of the Bureau conducting background investigations for the Bureau;

(2) the average length of time, for each sensitivity level, for the Bureau to carry out an initial investigation and a periodic reinvestigation;

(3) a discussion of the factors contributing to the average length of time to carry out an initial investigation and a periodic reinvestigation;

(4) a backlog mitigation plan, which shall include—

(A) the identification of the cause of, and recommendations to remedy, the backlog at the Bureau;

(B) the steps the Director of the Bureau shall take to reduce the backlog;

(C) process reforms to improve efficiencies in, and the quality of, background investigations by the Bureau; and

(D) a projection of when the backlog at the Bureau will be sufficiently reduced to meet required timeliness standards; and

(5) a description of improvements in the information and data security of the Bureau.

SEC. 4. REPORT ON SECURITY CLEARANCE INVESTIGATIONS OF PERSONNEL OF THE EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT.

Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director of the Office of Administration of the Executive Office of the President, in coordination with the Director and the Director of the Office, shall submit to Congress a report that explains the process for conducting and adjudicating security clearance investigations for personnel of the Executive Office of the President, including personnel of the White House Office.

SEC. 5. REPORT ON COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH BIFURCATED BACKGROUND INVESTIGATION SYSTEMS.

Not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director of the Office, in consultation with the other members of the Suitability and Security Clearance Performance Accountability Council established under Executive Order 13467 (73 Fed. Reg. 38103) and the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence, shall submit to Congress a report on the cost of maintaining comprehensive background investigations capability within the Office under the control or direction of the Bureau and a background investigations capability for Department of Defense personnel under the control or direction of the Department of Defense for implementation of the plan referenced in section 925 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2018 (Public Law 115-91), as compared to the cost of sustaining

a single Government-wide background investigations enterprise.

SEC. 6. REPORTS ON CONTINUOUS EVALUATION, RECIPROCITY, AND TIMELINESS MEASURES.

Not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director shall submit to Congress reports that provide—

(1) the status of implementing continuous evaluation Government-wide, including—

(A) the number of agencies with continuous evaluation programs and how many of those programs are currently conducting automated records checks of the required data sources as identified by the Director; and

(B) a discussion of the barriers for agencies to implement continuous evaluation programs, including any requirement under a statute, regulation, Executive Order, or other administrative requirement;

(2) a detailed explanation of efforts by agencies to meet requirements for reciprocal recognition to access classified information, including—

(A) the range of the length of time for agencies to grant reciprocal recognition to access classified information;

(B) additional requirements for reinvestigations or readjudications, by agency; and

(C) any other barriers to the timely granting of reciprocity, by agency, including any requirement under a statute, regulation, Executive Order, or other administrative requirement; and

(3) a review of whether the schedule for processing security clearances under section 3001 of the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004 (50 U.S.C. 3341) should be modified.

SEC. 7. REVIEW AND UPDATE OF POSITION DESIGNATION GUIDANCE.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

(1) the term “agency” has the meaning given the term in Executive Order 13467 (73 Fed. Reg. 38103), or any successor thereto;

(2) the term “appropriate congressional committees” means—

(A) the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and the Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives;

(3) the term “background investigation” means any investigation required for the purpose of determining the—

(A) eligibility of a covered individual for logical and physical access to Federally controlled facilities or information systems;

(B) suitability or fitness of a covered individual for Federal employment;

(C) eligibility of a covered individual for access to classified information or to hold a national security sensitive position; or

(D) fitness of a covered individual to perform work for or on behalf of the United States Government as a contractor employee; and

(4) the term “covered individual”—

(A) means a person who performs work for or on behalf of the executive branch or seeks to perform work for or on behalf of the executive branch;

(B) is not limited to Federal employees;

(C) includes all persons, not excluded under subparagraph (D), who require eligibility for access to classified information or eligibility to hold a sensitive position, including, but not limited to, contractors, subcontractors, licensees, certificate holders, grantees, experts, consultants, and government employees; and

(D) does not include—

(i) the President;

(ii) employees of the President under section 105 or 107 of title 3, United States Code (except to the extent otherwise directed by the President);

(iii) the Vice President; or

(iv) employees of the Vice President under section 106 of title 3, United States Code, or an annual legislative branch appropriations Act (except to the extent otherwise directed by the Vice President).

(b) REVIEW AND UPDATING.—

(1) INITIAL REVIEW AND UPDATE OF GUIDANCE.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director and the Director of the Office shall review and make recommendations to Congress and the President as appropriate to issue guidance to assist agencies in determining—

(A) position sensitivity designation; and

(B) the appropriate background investigation to initiate for each position designation.

(2) REVIEWS AND REVISIONS OF POSITION DESIGNATIONS.—Not less frequently than every 4 years, the President, acting through relevant agencies (as determined by the President) and in accordance with the guidance described in paragraph (1), shall review and, if necessary, revise the position designation of positions within agencies.

(c) REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 30 days after completing a review under subsection (b)(2), the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report on—

(1) any issues identified in the review; and

(2) the number of position designations revised as a result of the review.

(d) NO CHANGE IN AUTHORITY.—Nothing in this section limits or expands the authority of any agency to designate a position as sensitive or as requiring its occupant to have access to classified information.

SA 2211. Mr. McCONNELL (for Mr. GRASSLEY) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 1869, to reauthorize and rename the position of Whistleblower Ombudsman to be the Whistleblower Protection Coordinator; as follows:

On page 6, strike lines 1 through 3 and insert the following:

(d) REPEAL OF SUNSET.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (c) of section 117 of the Whistleblower Protection Enhancement Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–199; 126 Stat. 1475) is repealed.

(2) RETROACTIVE EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by paragraph (1) shall take effect on November 26, 2017.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I have 7 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 Thursday, March 15, 2018, at 9:30 a.m. to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on

Thursday, March 15, 2018, at 10 a.m. to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

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, "Review of the FY 2019 State Department Budget."

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 Thursday, March 15, 2018, at 10 a.m. to conduct a hearing entitled "Perspective on the 340B Drug Pricing Program."

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

The Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, March 15, 2018, at 9:30 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

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.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The Select Committee on Intelligence is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 14, 2018, at 10 a.m. to conduct a hearing on nomination of Lieutenant General Paul M. Nakasone, to be Director of the National Security Agency, Department of Defense.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Kennis Brady, a member of my staff, be granted floor privileges for the remainder of the day.

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

SECURELY EXPEDITING CLEARANCES THROUGH REPORTING TRANSPARENCY ACT OF 2017

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 264, H.R. 3210.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 3210) to require the Director of the National Background Investigations Bureau to submit a report on the backlog of personnel security clearance investigations, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Securely Expediting Clearances Through Reporting Transparency Act of 2017" or the "SECRET Act of 2017".

SEC. 2. REPORT ON BACKLOG OF PERSONNEL SECURITY CLEARANCE INVESTIGATIONS.

Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, and quarterly thereafter for 5 years, the Director of the National Background Investigations Bureau of the Office of Personnel Management shall submit to Congress a report on the backlog of security clearance investigations that includes, for the most recent full calendar quarter—

(1) the size of the personnel security clearance investigation process backlog, including, for each sensitivity level—

(A) the number of interim clearances granted;

(B) the number of initial investigations for Federal employees;

(C) the number of periodic reinvestigations for Federal employees;

(D) the number of initial investigations for employees of Federal contractors;

(E) the number of periodic reinvestigations for employees of Federal contractors;

(F) the number of initial investigations for employees of, and employees of contractors of, the Department of Defense;

(G) the number of periodic reinvestigations for employees of and employees of contractors of the Department of Defense;

(H) the number of Federal employees conducting background investigations; and

(I) the number of employees of Federal contractors conducting background investigations;

(2) the average length of time, for each sensitivity level, to carry out an initial investigation and a periodic reinvestigation;

(3) a discussion of the factors contributing to the average length of time to carry out an initial investigation and a periodic reinvestigation;

(4) a backlog mitigation plan, which shall include—

(A) the identification of the cause of, and recommendations to remedy, the backlog;

(B) the steps the Director shall take to reduce the backlog;

(C) process reforms to improve efficiencies in, and the quality of, background investigations; and

(D) a projection of when the backlog will be sufficiently reduced to meet required timeliness standards; and

(5) a description of improvements in information and data security.

SEC. 3. REPORT ON SECURITY CLEARANCE INVESTIGATIONS OF PERSONNEL OF THE EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT.

Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director of the Office of Administration of the Executive Office of the President shall submit to Congress a report that explains the process for conducting and adjudicating security clearance investigations for personnel of the Executive Office of the President, including White House personnel.

SEC. 4. REPORT ON DUPLICATIVE COSTS.

Not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, in consultation with the other members of the Suitability and Security Clearance Performance Accountability Council established under Executive Order 13467 (73 Fed. Reg. 38103), shall submit to Congress a report on the cost of duplicating resources under the control or direction of the National Background Investigations Bureau for implementation of the plan referenced in section 951(a)(1) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 (10 U.S.C. 1564 note).

SEC. 5. REPORT ON CONTINUOUS EVALUATION AND RECIPROCITY.

Not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director of National Intelligence and the Director of the Office of Personnel Management shall submit to Congress a report that provides—

(1) the status of implementing continuous evaluation Governmentwide, including—

(A) the number of agencies with continuous evaluation programs and how many of those programs are currently meeting the investigative standards;

(B) a risk assessment of replacing current re-investigation requirements with continuous evaluation programs by 2020;

(C) a discussion of the barriers for agencies to implement continuous evaluation programs, including any requirement under a statute, regulation, Executive Order, or other administrative requirement; and

(D) plans, including timelines, for implementing continuous evaluation Governmentwide and phasing out periodic reinvestigations;

(2) a detailed explanation of efforts by agencies to meet requirements for reciprocal recognition to access classified information, including—

(A) the range of the length of time for agencies to grant reciprocal recognition to access classified information;

(B) additional requirements for reinvestigations or readjudications, by agency; and

(C) any other barriers to the timely granting of reciprocity, by agency, including any requirement under a statute, regulation, Executive Order, or other administrative requirement;

(3) recommendations, including timelines, to improve the background investigation process to—

(A) simplify the Questionnaire for National Security Positions (Standard Form 86) and increase customer support for applicants completing such questionnaire;

(B) use remote and virtual techniques and centralized locations during field investigation work;

(C) use secure and reliable digitization of information obtained during the clearance process; and

(D) build the capacity of the background investigation labor sector; and

(4) a review of whether the schedule for processing security clearances under section 3001 of the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004 (50 U.S.C. 3341) should be modified.

SEC. 6. REVIEW AND UPDATE OF POSITION DESIGNATION GUIDANCE.

(a) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section—

(1) the term “agency” has the meaning given the term in Executive Order 13467 (73 Fed. Reg. 38103), or any successor thereto;

(2) the term “appropriate congressional committees” means—

(A) the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and the Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives;

(3) the term “background investigation” means any investigation required for the purpose of determining the—

(A) eligibility of a covered individual for logical and physical access to Federally controlled facilities or information systems;

(B) suitability or fitness of a covered individual for Federal employment;

(C) eligibility of a covered individual for access to classified information or to hold a national security sensitive position; or

(D) fitness of a covered individual to perform work for or on behalf of the United States Government as a contractor employee; and

(4) the term “covered individual” means an individual who—

(A) performs work for or on behalf of an agency; or

(B) seeks to perform work for or on behalf of an agency.

(b) **REVIEW AND UPDATING.**—

(1) **INITIAL REVIEW AND UPDATE OF GUIDANCE.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the President shall review and, if appropriate, update the guidance the President issues to assist agencies in determining—

(A) position sensitivity designation; and

(B) the appropriate background investigation to initiate for each position designation.

(2) **REVIEWS AND REVISIONS OF POSITION DESIGNATIONS.**—Not less frequently than every 4 years, the President, acting through relevant agencies (as determined by the President) and in accordance with the guidance described in paragraph (1), shall review and, if necessary, revise the position designation of positions within agencies.

(c) **REPORTS TO CONGRESS.**—Not later than 30 days after completing a review under subsection (b)(2), the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report on—

(1) any issues identified in the review; and

(2) the number of position designations revised as a result of the review.

(d) **NO CHANGE IN AUTHORITY.**—Nothing in this section limits or expands the authority of any agency to designate a position as sensitive or as requiring its occupant to have access to classified information.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported amendment be withdrawn; that the Johnson-McCaskill substitute amendment be considered and agreed to; that the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time and passed; and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The committee-reported amendment in the nature of a substitute was withdrawn.

The amendment (No. 2210) in the nature of a substitute was agreed to, as follows:

(Purpose: In the nature of a substitute)

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Securely Expediting Clearances Through Reporting Transparency Act of 2018” or the “SECRET Act of 2018”.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act—

(1) the term “Bureau” means the National Background Investigations Bureau of the Office;

(2) the term “Director” means the Director of National Intelligence acting as the Security Executive Agent; and

(3) the term “Office” means the Office of Personnel Management acting as the Suitability and Credentialing Executive Agent.

SEC. 3. REPORT ON BACKLOG OF PERSONNEL SECURITY CLEARANCE INVESTIGATIONS.

Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, and quarterly thereafter for 5 years, the Director of the Bureau, in coordination with the Director, shall submit to Congress a report on the backlog of personnel security clearance investigations at the Bureau for the most recent full calendar quarter, which shall include—

(1) the size of the backlog of personnel security clearance investigations of the Bureau, including, for each sensitivity level—

(A) the number of interim clearances granted;

(B) the number of initial investigations for Federal employees;

(C) the number of periodic reinvestigations for Federal employees;

(D) the number of initial investigations for employees of Federal contractors;

(E) the number of periodic reinvestigations for employees of Federal contractors;

(F) the number of initial investigations for employees of, and employees of contractors of, the Department of Defense;

(G) the number of periodic reinvestigations for employees of and employees of contractors of the Department of Defense;

(H) the number of employees of the Bureau conducting background investigations for the Bureau; and

(I) the number of employees of contractors of the Bureau conducting background investigations for the Bureau;

(2) the average length of time, for each sensitivity level, for the Bureau to carry out an initial investigation and a periodic reinvestigation;

(3) a discussion of the factors contributing to the average length of time to carry out an initial investigation and a periodic reinvestigation;

(4) a backlog mitigation plan, which shall include—

(A) the identification of the cause of, and recommendations to remedy, the backlog at the Bureau;

(B) the steps the Director of the Bureau shall take to reduce the backlog;

(C) process reforms to improve efficiencies in, and the quality of, background investigations by the Bureau; and

(D) a projection of when the backlog at the Bureau will be sufficiently reduced to meet required timeliness standards; and

(5) a description of improvements in the information and data security of the Bureau.

SEC. 4. REPORT ON SECURITY CLEARANCE INVESTIGATIONS OF PERSONNEL OF THE EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT.

Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director of the Office of Administration of the Executive Office of the President, in coordination with the Director and the Director of the Office, shall submit to Congress a report that explains the process for conducting and adjudicating security clearance investigations for personnel of the Executive Office of the President, including personnel of the White House Office.

SEC. 5. REPORT ON COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH BIFURCATED BACKGROUND INVESTIGATION SYSTEMS.

Not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director of the Office, in consultation with the other members of the Suitability and Security Clearance Performance Accountability Council established under Executive Order 13467 (73 Fed. Reg. 38103) and the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence, shall submit to Congress a report on the cost of maintaining comprehensive background investigations capability within the Office under the control or direction of the Bureau and a background investigations capability for Department of Defense personnel under the control or direction of the Department of Defense for implementation of the plan referenced in section 925 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2018 (Public Law 115-91), as compared to the cost of sustaining a single Government-wide background investigations enterprise.

SEC. 6. REPORTS ON CONTINUOUS EVALUATION, RECIPROCITY, AND TIMELINESS MEASURES.

Not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director shall submit to Congress reports that provide—

(1) the status of implementing continuous evaluation Government-wide, including—

(A) the number of agencies with continuous evaluation programs and how many of those programs are currently conducting automated records checks of the required data sources as identified by the Director; and

(B) a discussion of the barriers for agencies to implement continuous evaluation programs, including any requirement under a

statute, regulation, Executive Order, or other administrative requirement;

(2) a detailed explanation of efforts by agencies to meet requirements for reciprocal recognition to access classified information, including—

(A) the range of the length of time for agencies to grant reciprocal recognition to access classified information;

(B) additional requirements for reinvestigations or readjudications, by agency; and

(C) any other barriers to the timely granting of reciprocity, by agency, including any requirement under a statute, regulation, Executive Order, or other administrative requirement; and

(3) a review of whether the schedule for processing security clearances under section 3001 of the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004 (50 U.S.C. 3341) should be modified.

SEC. 7. REVIEW AND UPDATE OF POSITION DESIGNATION GUIDANCE.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

(1) the term “agency” has the meaning given the term in Executive Order 13467 (73 Fed. Reg. 38103), or any successor thereto;

(2) the term “appropriate congressional committees” means—

(A) the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and the Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives;

(3) the term “background investigation” means any investigation required for the purpose of determining the—

(A) eligibility of a covered individual for logical and physical access to Federally controlled facilities or information systems;

(B) suitability or fitness of a covered individual for Federal employment;

(C) eligibility of a covered individual for access to classified information or to hold a national security sensitive position; or

(D) fitness of a covered individual to perform work for or on behalf of the United States Government as a contractor employee; and

(4) the term “covered individual”—

(A) means a person who performs work for or on behalf of the executive branch or seeks to perform work for or on behalf of the executive branch;

(B) is not limited to Federal employees;

(C) includes all persons, not excluded under subparagraph (D), who require eligibility for access to classified information or eligibility to hold a sensitive position, including, but not limited to, contractors, subcontractors, licensees, certificate holders, grantees, experts, consultants, and government employees; and

(D) does not include—

(i) the President;

(ii) employees of the President under section 105 or 107 of title 3, United States Code (except to the extent otherwise directed by the President);

(iii) the Vice President; or

(iv) employees of the Vice President under section 106 of title 3, United States Code, or an annual legislative branch appropriations Act (except to the extent otherwise directed by the Vice President).

(b) REVIEW AND UPDATING.—

(1) INITIAL REVIEW AND UPDATE OF GUIDANCE.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director and the Director of the Office shall review and make recommendations to Congress and the President as appropriate to issue guidance to assist agencies in determining—

(A) position sensitivity designation; and

(B) the appropriate background investigation to initiate for each position designation.

(2) REVIEWS AND REVISIONS OF POSITION DESIGNATIONS.—Not less frequently than every 4 years, the President, acting through relevant agencies (as determined by the President) and in accordance with the guidance described in paragraph (1), shall review and, if necessary, revise the position designation of positions within agencies.

(c) REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 30 days after completing a review under subsection (b)(2), the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report on—

(1) any issues identified in the review; and

(2) the number of position designations revised as a result of the review.

(d) NO CHANGE IN AUTHORITY.—Nothing in this section limits or expands the authority of any agency to designate a position as sensitive or as requiring its occupant to have access to classified information.

The amendment was ordered to be engrossed and the bill to be read a third time.

The bill was read the third time.

The bill (H.R. 3210), as amended, was passed.

WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION COORDINATION ACT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 286, S. 1869.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1869) to reauthorize and rename the position of Whistleblower Ombudsman to be the Whistleblower Protection Coordinator.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, with an amendment, as follows:

(The part of the bill intended to be stricken is shown in boldface brackets and the part of the bill intended to be inserted is shown in *italics*.)

S. 1869

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 “Whistleblower Protection Coordination Act”.

SEC. 2. REAUTHORIZATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 3(d) of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)(C)—

(A) by redesignating clauses (i) and (ii) as subclauses (I) and (II), respectively, and adjusting the margins accordingly;

(B) by striking “Ombudsman who shall educate agency employees—” and inserting the following: “Coordinator who shall—”

“*(i) educate agency employees—*”;

(C) in subclause (I), as so redesignated, by striking “on retaliation” and inserting “against retaliation”;

(D) in subclause (II), as so redesignated, by striking the period at the end and inserting the following: “, including—”

“*(aa) the means by which employees may seek review of any allegation of reprisal, including the roles of the Office of the Inspec-*

tor General, the Office of Special Counsel, the Merit Systems Protection Board, and any other relevant entities; and

“(bb) general information about the timeliness of such cases, the availability of any alternative dispute mechanisms, and avenues for potential relief.”; and

(E) by adding at the end the following:

“(ii) assist the Inspector General in promoting the timely and appropriate handling and consideration of protected disclosures and allegations of reprisal, to the extent practicable, by the Inspector General; and

“(iii) assist the Inspector General in facilitating communication and coordination with the Special Counsel, the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency, the [agency] establishment, Congress, and any other relevant entity regarding the timely and appropriate handling and consideration of protected disclosures, allegations of reprisal, and general matters regarding the implementation and administration of whistleblower protection laws, rules, and regulations.”;

(2) in paragraph (2), by striking “Ombudsman” and inserting “Coordinator”;

(3) by redesignating paragraph (3) as paragraph (4); and

(4) by inserting after paragraph (2) the following:

“(3) The Whistleblower Protection Coordinator shall have direct access to the Inspector General as needed to accomplish the requirements of this subsection.”.

(b) RESPONSIBILITIES OF CIGIE.—Section 11(c) of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(5) ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES RELATING TO WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION.—The Council shall—

“(A) facilitate the work of the Whistleblower Protection Coordinators designated under section 3(d)(C); and

“(B) in consultation with the Office of Special Counsel and Whistleblower Protection Coordinators from the member offices of the Inspector General, develop best practices for coordination and communication in promoting the timely and appropriate handling and consideration of protected disclosures, allegations of reprisal, and general matters regarding the implementation and administration of whistleblower protection laws, in accordance with Federal law.”.

(c) REPORTING.—Section 5 of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by amending paragraph (20) to read as follows:

“(20)(A) a detailed description of any instance of whistleblower retaliation, including information about the official found to have engaged in retaliation; and

“(B) what, if any, consequences the establishment actually imposed to hold the official described in subparagraph (A) accountable;”;

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (3)(D), by striking “and” at the end;

(B) by redesignating paragraph (4) as paragraph (5); and

(C) by inserting after paragraph (3) the following:

“(4) whether the establishment entered into a settlement agreement with the official described in subsection (a)(20)(A), which shall be reported regardless of any confidentiality agreement relating to the settlement agreement; and”.

(d) REPEAL OF SUNSET.—Subsection (c) of section 117 of the Whistleblower Protection Enhancement Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-199; 126 Stat. 1475) is repealed.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported

amendment be agreed to; that the Grassley amendment at the desk be considered and agreed to; that the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time and passed; and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The committee-reported amendment was agreed to.

The amendment (No. 2211) was agreed to, as follows:

(Purpose: To modify the repeal of sunset provision)

On page 6, strike lines 1 through 3 and insert the following:

(d) REPEAL OF SUNSET.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (c) of section 117 of the Whistleblower Protection Enhancement Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-199; 126 Stat. 1475) is repealed.

(2) RETROACTIVE EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by paragraph (1) shall take effect on November 26, 2017.

The bill (S. 1869), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 1869

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 “Whistleblower Protection Coordination Act”.

SEC. 2. REAUTHORIZATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 3(d) of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)(C)—

(A) by redesignating clauses (i) and (ii) as subclauses (I) and (II), respectively, and adjusting the margins accordingly;

(B) by striking “Ombudsman who shall educate agency employees—” and inserting the following: “Coordinator who shall—

“(i) educate agency employees—”;

(C) in subclause (I), as so redesignated, by striking “on retaliation” and inserting “against retaliation”;

(D) in subclause (II), as so redesignated, by striking the period at the end and inserting the following: “, including—

“(aa) the means by which employees may seek review of any allegation of reprisal, including the roles of the Office of the Inspector General, the Office of Special Counsel, the Merit Systems Protection Board, and any other relevant entities; and

“(bb) general information about the timeliness of such cases, the availability of any alternative dispute mechanisms, and avenues for potential relief.”; and

(E) by adding at the end the following:

“(ii) assist the Inspector General in promoting the timely and appropriate handling and consideration of protected disclosures and allegations of reprisal, to the extent practicable, by the Inspector General; and

“(iii) assist the Inspector General in facilitating communication and coordination with the Special Counsel, the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency, the establishment, Congress, and any other relevant entity regarding the timely and appropriate handling and consideration of protected disclosures, allegations of reprisal, and general matters regarding the implementation and administration of whistleblower protection laws, rules, and regulations.”;

(2) in paragraph (2), by striking “Ombudsman” and inserting “Coordinator”;

(3) by redesignating paragraph (3) as paragraph (4); and

(4) by inserting after paragraph (2) the following:

“(3) The Whistleblower Protection Coordinator shall have direct access to the Inspector General as needed to accomplish the requirements of this subsection.”.

(b) RESPONSIBILITIES OF CIGIE.—Section 11(c) of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(5) ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES RELATING TO WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION.—The Council shall—

“(A) facilitate the work of the Whistleblower Protection Coordinators designated under section 3(d)(C); and

“(B) in consultation with the Office of Special Counsel and Whistleblower Protection Coordinators from the member offices of the Inspector General, develop best practices for coordination and communication in promoting the timely and appropriate handling and consideration of protected disclosures, allegations of reprisal, and general matters regarding the implementation and administration of whistleblower protection laws, in accordance with Federal law.”.

(c) REPORTING.—Section 5 of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by amending paragraph (20) to read as follows:

“(20)(A) a detailed description of any instance of whistleblower retaliation, including information about the official found to have engaged in retaliation; and

“(B) what, if any, consequences the establishment actually imposed to hold the offi-

cial described in subparagraph (A) accountable;”;

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (3)(D), by striking “and” at the end;

(B) by redesignating paragraph (4) as paragraph (5); and

(C) by inserting after paragraph (3) the following:

“(4) whether the establishment entered into a settlement agreement with the official described in subsection (a)(20)(A), which shall be reported regardless of any confidentiality agreement relating to the settlement agreement; and”.

(d) REPEAL OF SUNSET.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (c) of section 117 of the Whistleblower Protection Enhancement Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-199; 126 Stat. 1475) is repealed.

(2) RETROACTIVE EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by paragraph (1) shall take effect on November 26, 2017.

ORDERS FOR MONDAY, MARCH 19, 2018

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 3 p.m., Monday, March 19; 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 H.R. 1865 and that notwithstanding rule XXII, the cloture vote on that motion occur following disposition of the McAleenan nomination.

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

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL MONDAY, MARCH 19, 2018, AT 3 P.M.

Mr. McCONNELL. 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 3:29 p.m., adjourned until Monday, March 19, 2018, at 3 p.m.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZING CAPTAIN NANCY GOMEZ-FERNANDEZ IN HONOR OF WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

HON. MARIO DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, in recognition of Women's History Month, I rise today to honor Captain Nancy Gomez-Fernandez, who has been serving the Miami-Dade community as a law enforcement officer for a number of years.

Captain Gomez-Fernandez began her career in law enforcement in 2001 with the City of Pinecrest Police Department, where she was a member of the School Resource Unit, Field Training Officer, and Honor Guard. In 2007, she became a Sergeant with the newly formed Doral Police Department and helped recruit and process background checks for officers. Captain Gomez-Fernandez quickly rose through the ranks and achieved the promotion of Captain in 2015, which she currently holds.

Captain Gomez-Fernandez's service extends beyond her obligations as a police officer. In 2017, she was awarded the Life Saver Medal for saving the life of an individual who suffered a cardiac attack. This award speaks volumes to the level of dedication she has to serve and protect the people of Doral.

Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to know Captain Gomez-Fernandez and I greatly admire her service to the community. Her willingness to risk her life on a daily basis to protect and serve the constituents of Doral has made and will continue to make a difference in the lives of many. I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing this remarkable individual.

THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF ROBERT F. KENNEDY'S ANNOUNCEMENT OF CANDIDACY FOR PRESIDENT

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, 50 years ago this Friday, March 16, 1968, Senator Robert Francis Kennedy announced his candidacy for President of the United States and launched the legendary, whirlwind, wondrous 82-day campaign that captured the imagination of millions and inspired a generation.

Much has been said about Robert F. Kennedy, affectionately known to family and millions of loved ones as "Bobby."

We know of Bobby the brother; we know of Robert the passionate Senator and crusading Attorney General; we know him the tireless and determined champion of civil rights; and, sadly, we know of Robert Francis Kennedy the martyr.

These different sides of Robert Kennedy came into sharp focus during the last 11 and a half weeks of his time on this Earth.

It has been said that a man is a product of his time.

I remember the 1960s; it was a time when America was divided and riven by social unrest and civil upheaval and facing global dangers threatening the post-World War II international order.

But as I reflect back on that time, it is clear that Bobby Kennedy was not just merely a man of his time, but he was a man whose spirit, ideals, beliefs, and moral clarity transcend time and place.

Robert Kennedy stood for equality, dignity, fairness, humanity, empathy, and moral clarity.

Robert Kennedy lived these ideals during a time when they were in short supply in our society.

Robert Kennedy loved America which he knew to be good but could and must be made better.

"What is right, keep it right; what is wrong, make it right."

That pretty much sums up the belief system of Bobby Kennedy.

I think of Robert Kennedy marching with Cesar Chavez, with whom he met almost 50 years ago on this day, as Cesar Chavez was ending his consequential hunger strike in support of migrant farm workers.

When Robert Kennedy announced his candidacy for president—from the same spot in the Senate Caucus Room as had his brother 8 years before—he remarked that he was running "not to oppose any man, but to propose new policies."

Robert Kennedy also provided a roadmap for those of us in public service when he said: "I don't think we have to shoot each other, to beat each other; I think that we can do better in this country."

But, for me, Robert Kennedy's lasting legacy are his contributions advancing equality of opportunity, civil rights, and human dignity for all Americans.

Robert Kennedy's presidential platform emphasized racial equality, economic and social justice, and civic engagement and tolerance.

Robert Kennedy's appeal was universal, and knew no racial bounds because his vision for America included everyone; whites and blacks and browns, rural and urban dwellers, the poor and working and middle-class.

Robert Kennedy's message—of decency, respect, compassion, and humility—appealed to the good in Americans and was in turn embraced by people of goodwill in every region of the country.

Next month, when we mark the 50th anniversary of a terrible day in Memphis when the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was slain, let us remember the words of Robert Kennedy as he broke the news of Dr. King's death to an assembled crowd in an African American neighborhood in Indianapolis:

"What we need in the United States is not division; what we need in the United States is not hatred; what we need in the United States is not violence and lawlessness, but is love, and wisdom, and compassion toward one another; and a feeling of justice toward those

who still suffer within our country, whether they be white or whether they be black."

Two months later, on June 4, 1968, Robert Kennedy would himself be felled by an assassin's bullet at the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles, after winning the California Democratic Primary.

In the days immediately following his assassination, the full measure of the country's loss became apparent.

Over two million people assembled along the train tracks as his funeral cortege made its way from the funeral mass at New York City's St. Patrick's Cathedral to Union Station in Washington, D.C. for his interment at Arlington National Cemetery.

When the cortege reached Philadelphia, "estimates of 20,000 people, mostly African-American . . . began to sing 'The Battle Hymn of the Republic' with such force that inside, passengers began to weep."

When America lost Bobby Kennedy, it lost a big heart and a guiding hand and a generation of Americans lost its innocence.

The words used to eulogize Robert Kennedy by his brother, the late Senator Edward Kennedy, are as applicable today as they were in the hectic days of his legendary campaign for President:

"My brother need not be idealized, or enlarged in death beyond what he was in life; to be remembered simply as a good and decent man, who saw wrong and tried to right it, saw suffering and tried to heal it, saw war and tried to stop it."

The life of Robert Francis "Bobby" Kennedy teaches us at least three important lessons when it comes to the question of justice: Words have power, actions matter, moral courage is indispensable.

Many persons have one of these qualities but much rarer are those who possess two, let alone all three in the abundance and to the degree possessed by Robert Kennedy.

Is it any wonder then that we still revere Bobby Kennedy after all these years and still miss him so much?

The 1968 folk classic, "Abraham, Martin, and John," by Dion and the Belmonts still sums up the feelings of countless millions, here in America and around the world:

Has anybody here seen my old friend Bobby? Can you tell me where he's gone?

I thought I saw him walkin' up over the hill With Abraham, Martin and John.

Has anybody here seen my old friends?

Can you tell me where they've gone?

They freed a lot of people,

But, it seems the good they die young.

You know, I just looked around and they were gone.

The mortal presence of Robert Kennedy may be gone but his immortal spirit lives on and we will always remember those joyous, vibrant, and wondrous 82 days that were his legendary 1968 presidential campaign.

I ask the House to observe a moment of silence in memory of the late Robert Francis Kennedy, the former U.S. Senator from New York and Attorney General of the United States.

• 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.

RECOGNIZING THE RICHWOODS
GIRLS BASKETBALL TEAM ON
WINNING THE ILLINOIS 3A
STATE TITLE

HON. DARIN LaHOOD

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, today, I would like to recognize Peoria, Illinois' Richwoods High School girls basketball team on winning the 2018 Class 3A state title.

Returning to the state title game for the second straight year, the Lady Knights capped off the 35–1 season with a 55–46 win over La-Grange Park Nazareth. In a back and forth game, the fourth quarter proved pivotal with Richwoods going on a 17–0 run to start the quarter. Over the course of the game, the Richwoods' Knights had an amazing team effort on both offense and defense, with Senior Kourtney Crane led the Knights with 19 points.

Richwoods' win is the 1,001st in school history and they will add a fourth Class 3A state title to their trophy case, becoming only the third high school in Illinois history to achieve this milestone. Richwoods' continued success on the hardwood is a testament to the leadership of Coach Todd Hursey and the determination of the young women he coaches.

The Richwoods girls basketball team serves as a reminder to the people of our community that when we believe in ourselves and dedicate our time and effort to the goals that we set, we can achieve even the most daring outcomes. These young women exemplify the strong work ethic rooted in Central Illinois and we could not be prouder. Again, congratulations to Coach Todd Hursey and the Richwoods girls basketball team their remarkable state championship win.

IN RECOGNITION OF AMBASSADOR
FREDERIC C. HOF

HON. ADAM KINZINGER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Mr. KINZINGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Ambassador Frederic C. Hof on his retirement from the Atlantic Council. Ambassador Hof has had an impressive career as a diplomat at the United States Department of State, a private sector CEO, and an officer of the United States Army. He is a Vietnam veteran and Purple Heart recipient. As a military officer, he served on the commission that investigated the 1983 bombing of the U.S. Marine Corps headquarters at the Beirut International Airport. In 2001, he served as chief of staff on the Sharm al-Sheikh Fact-Finding Commission, headed by former Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell, and was the principal drafter of the Commission's report. During his time at the State Department, Ambassador Hof took the lead in an effort to mediate Syrian-Israeli peace and was given the rank of Ambassador in his capacity as special adviser to the Secretary of State for transition in Syria.

After joining the Atlantic Council, as the leading Syria fellow in the Rafik Hariri Center for the Middle East, Ambassador Hof devoted his time to furthering the Syrian cause through

the protection of civilians. As a prolific writer and leader, Ambassador Hof has hosted Syrian experts, activists, political leaders, and humanitarians in high level discussions pertaining to the U.S.-Syria policy and geopolitical implications of the Syrian conflict. Through his efforts, he has led the discussions on securing a stable and legitimate government in Syria and what role the United States should have. After taking on the role of director at the Rafik Hariri Center for the Middle East, Ambassador Hof continued his efforts to bring attention to the Syrian conflict and its ongoing destabilization to the region at large.

Mr. Speaker, as the seventh anniversary of the Syrian uprising approaches, I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking Ambassador Hof for his tireless efforts to bring attention to the Syrian conflict and its ongoing destabilization to the region at large. His service to this great nation is deeply appreciated and is a testament to the greatness and opportunity that these United States of America holds for freedom-loving people.

RECOGNIZING DOTTIE JOINER IN
HONOR OF WOMEN'S HISTORY
MONTH

HON. MARIO DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, in recognition of Women's History Month, I rise today to honor Dorothy "Dottie" Joiner, the City Clerk for Everglades City.

Ms. Joiner has been serving Everglades City for twenty-three years and has proved to be loyal, passionate, and driven. She began her career as a purchasing agent, then transitioned into a water billing clerk. In 2002 she was promoted to City Clerk. In her capacity as City Clerk, Dottie oversees the official City records, ranging from the financial statements to the meeting minutes. As such, she is known as the go-to person if an issue needs to be resolved.

Dottie has been crucial in supporting the City in times of crisis. She played a key role in 2005 when Hurricane Wilma destroyed City Hall, resulting in the call for the building to be condemned. She worked tirelessly with the City leadership and myself to showcase the importance of saving the historic building; and was a big part of making sure it happened. More recently, in the aftermath of Hurricane Irma, she selflessly looked after the wellbeing of the residents of Everglades City, ensuring that necessary resources were there quickly, despite having lost her own home. Dottie's selflessness during this difficult time and the support she has given our community transcends her official responsibilities.

Her dedication to Everglades City extends beyond her responsibilities as the City Clerk. She also serves on the board of the 4th of July Committee, the Betterment Association of the Everglades Area, as well as the Reach Out and Cops Program. Dottie has always placed her community first, even before herself. We are fortunate to have leaders such as Dottie in Everglades City and Florida's 25th Congressional District, and I and my wife Tia are lucky to be able to call her a friend.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to know Ms. Joiner and to have the opportunity to acknowl-

edge her remarkable work for Everglades City. I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing this remarkable individual.

IN MEMORIAM: TEXAS STATE
SENATOR JACK OGG

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today we honor the life and memory of longtime Texas lawmaker and my friend, Jack Ogg of Houston, Texas who recently passed away at the age of 84.

Jack Ogg was a political icon who had a 52-year career in Texas politics and law. He represented the Houston area for 16 years, first as a State Representative and then as a State Senator. His love for the State of Texas and the law prompted him to further serve with a run for Texas Attorney General. After an unsuccessful race, Jack returned to his renowned law practice in Houston.

When I was a criminal court judge in Houston, Senator Ogg practiced in my court.

Jack was also the father of Harris County District Attorney Kim Ogg. Kim worked alongside her father at the Ogg Law Firm and remembers her father not only as a great statesman, but a wonderful father who kept his family as his top priority. Kim said her father, "was my closest confidante." Mr. Speaker, when I saw Jack recently at the funeral of our friend, the late Texas Governor Mark White, you could tell he was beaming with pride for Kim and how she was carrying on the Ogg tradition of public service.

Those who served in the legislature alongside Jack said he did what he thought was best for his district and worked inside the rules of the legislature instead of concerning himself with partisan fights. He did what was right and stuck to his principles.

Jack told friends he was proud of authoring the bilingual education act in Texas; the bill to create Metro in Harris County; and a measure re-instating the death penalty in the state. Jack's friend Houston attorney Robert Pelton described Ogg as, "one of the finest human beings I've ever met in my life" who did many good things for the state of Texas.

I admired Jack's adventurous spirit and determination. He suffered from congestive heart failure for many years, but that didn't stop him from being active not only in Houston, but across the globe. Just a few months ago, Mr. Speaker, he took a cruise to Spain and Italy. His family said he was born with an explorer's heart and he traveled to more than 225 countries and islands, and visited all seven continents.

Senator Ogg was born in 1933 during the Depression. His family moved to Houston in the 1950s. He graduated from Robert E. Lee High School in Baytown, Texas then worked his way through the University of Houston, where he was twice elected class president. He went to law school at night at South Texas College of Law and was admitted to the State Bar of Texas in 1962. He lost his beloved wife of more than 50 years, philanthropist Connie Harner Ogg, to cancer in 2010.

Mr. Speaker, those who worked with Jack in the State Legislature and at his law practice

agree he was larger than life with a sharp mind and keen craft. Today, I salute Senator Ogg's many contributions to our state and the city of Houston. My prayers are with District Attorney Ogg, her brother Jon Ogg, their spouses, Jack's three grandchildren, as well as his brothers Larry and Jim Ogg.

We will dearly miss Senator Jack Ogg. They don't make 'em like Jack Ogg anymore. And that's just the way it is.

TRIBUTE TO ANN AND REX
WALTERS

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Ann and Rex Walters of Beaconsfield, Iowa, on the very special occasion of their 60th wedding anniversary. They were married on January 26, 1958 in Mount Ayr, Iowa.

Ann and Rex's lifelong commitment to each other and their family truly embodies our Iowa values. As they reflect on their 60th anniversary, may their commitment grow even stronger, as they continue to love, cherish, and honor one another for many years to come.

Mr. Speaker, I commend this great couple on their 60th year together and I wish them many more. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating them on this momentous occasion and in wishing them both nothing but continued success.

IN RECOGNITION OF JOHN
GILLIGAN, GREATER PITTSSTON
FRIENDLY SONS' MAN OF THE
YEAR

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize John Gilligan, who will receive the Greater Pittston Friendly Sons' "Man of the Year" Award. Mr. Gilligan will be honored on March 17, 2018, during the Friendly Sons' annual St. Patrick's Day Celebration.

John was born in Wyoming, Pennsylvania to Bernard J. and Rosari Gilligan. He is a graduate of Wyoming High School. He enlisted in the Air Force after graduation, serving one year in Da Nang, Vietnam. After four years in the Air Force, John joined the Wyoming Borough Police Department. He served on the force for thirty-two years and retired in 2004 as Chief of Police. He worked in the private sector until his appointment by Governor Edward Rendell to the post of Luzerne County Sheriff. His appointment was unanimously approved by the Pennsylvania Senate.

Gilligan is a Fourth Degree Knight of the John F. Kennedy Council No. 372 Knights of Columbus and a past Grand Knight of the Wyoming Area Council No. 8598. He is a past president of the Greater Pittston Friendly Sons of St. Patrick.

John has been married to Karen Zofcin Gilligan for thirty-two years, and they are the

proud parents of seven children. They also have eighteen grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. Gilligan's three sons, grandsons, and great-grandson are members of the Greater Pittston Friendly Sons of St. Patrick, a long-standing family tradition.

It is an honor to recognize John Gilligan as he accepts the Greater Pittston Friendly Sons' "Man of the Year" Award. I am grateful to him for his service to our country and for protecting the people of Wyoming Borough and Luzerne County. I wish him all the best this St. Patrick's Day.

RECOGNIZING GLORIA PADILLA IN
HONOR OF WOMEN'S HISTORY
MONTH

HON. MARIO DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, in honor of Women's History Month, I rise today to recognize Gloria Padilla, whose dedication to the people of Immokalee and the Redlands Christian Migrant Association (RCMA) has had a major impact in our community.

RCMA was established in 1965 and provides childcare and education services for low income and rural families. It has grown from two centers to seventy-one and is active in twenty-one counties in Florida. A lifelong resident of Immokalee, Mrs. Padilla has been a proven leader in our community. She joined the RCMA after graduating high school, becoming the youngest area coordinator in agency history. Gloria is currently tasked with overseeing seven childcare centers and twenty-four childcare homes, collectively serving 483 children.

When Hurricane Irma struck in September, she offered the RCMA Immokalee Community School as a shelter for thousands of families displaced by the storm. Additionally, she helped organize with my office the opening of Horizon Village as temporary living spaces for constituents who lost their homes as a result of Irma. I find myself fortunate to have had the opportunity to collaborate with such a dedicated individual who cares so deeply about her community.

In addition to her impressive work at the RCMA, Gloria serves on the board of the One by One Leadership Foundation and assists the community through outreach programs with her church. Through her professional and social capacity, Gloria's dedication to the people of Immokalee has improved the lives of many.

Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to know Mrs. Padilla and I greatly admire her service to Immokalee. Gloria is an exemplary citizen who has chosen to use her many talents in service of those around her. I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing this remarkable individual.

IN RECOGNITION OF FONA'S
WORKPLACE EXCELLENCE

HON. RANDY HULTGREN

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Mr. HULTGREN. Mr. Speaker, It's not every day that long-term sustained excellence can be duly recognized.

FONA International of Geneva, Illinois, provides just such an opportunity, however. I am privileged to extend my enthusiastic congratulations to Joe Slawek and the employees of FONA International for being named a National Best & Brightest Company to Work For by the National Association of Business Resources for the seventh year in a row.

FONA International creates and produces flavors for many of the largest food, beverage, and nutritional companies in the world. It has been doing this for 30 years—a testament to its sustained excellence and commitment to serving customers through cutting-edge technology and personal attention.

CEO and Founder Joe Slawek calls this the "high-tech, high touch" approach. He founded FONA International in 1987 on these principles. He built a business that could compete with the largest flavor companies but stay connected with customers and his family of employees in a way that only a small business can. The honor of this award speaks to that success.

FONA International has been cited by Fortune magazine as one of the top fifty best places to work for medium-sized businesses nationwide. Fortune also named FONA International as the Number 1 workplace in Chicagoland.

To be selected just once as a National Best & Brightest Company would be a distinguished honor. To receive this award seven years in a row is nothing less than a spectacular achievement.

I congratulate Joe Slawek and the employees of FONA International for this remarkable recognition. I thank FONA International for its years of service to the local community and for its leadership in the flavor production industry. I wish them continued success in the future.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I mistakenly voted no, when I meant to vote yes on Roll Call No. 108, H.R. 1116—the TAILOR Act of 2017.

RECOGNIZING MS. JANET TAYLOR
IN HONOR OF WOMEN'S HISTORY
MONTH

HON. MARIO DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, in honor of Women's History Month, I rise today to honor

former Hendry County Commissioner Janet Taylor. Her service in this capacity, as well as many others, has had a major impact on our community.

Born in Louisiana, Ms. Taylor moved to Florida at a young age and very quickly became involved in her community. She received her Bachelor's degree in political science from Palm Beach State College. In 1978, she joined the Clewiston Police Department and became the department's first female African American officer. She quickly rose through the ranks and reached Sergeant and Field Training Officer. She dedicated twelve years to serving and protecting those in Hendry County before retiring from the force.

Ms. Taylor was appointed Hendry County Commissioner in 1994 and served in this position for twenty-two years. As Commissioner, she represented the citizens of Hendry County and the State of Florida with passion and dedication. Her impressive resume includes serving as Chairperson of the Florida Association of Counties for twelve years as well as being a member of the National Association of Black County Commissioners. Ms. Taylor's public service extends beyond her work as Commissioner for Hendry County, as she previously served as a Government Liaison for Congressman Alcee Hastings.

Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to recognize Ms. Taylor for her remarkable service to Hendry County. Her dedication to the betterment of our community is admirable and has touched the lives of many. I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing this remarkable individual.

TRIBUTE TO WILLIAM "BILL"
BALLENGER

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Bill Ballenger of Council Bluffs, Iowa for his leadership and vision in helping organize 13 honor flights that have taken nearly 3,500 Iowa veterans to Washington, D.C. to visit memorials that were built in their honor.

Bill and his son Jeff saw a need to honor our country's aging veterans from World War II, the Korean War, and Vietnam War. The Ballengers have partnered with HyVee, Inc., Casey's General Stores, and others to raise more than \$3 million to fund this special endeavor. Carol Hagberg's father, the late James Snook, who was a World War II veteran said, "Dad felt so honored and privileged. We heard about the wonderful time he had over and over on the flight. He was very proud to have served his country."

Mr. Speaker, I applaud and congratulate Bill on his incredible efforts to organize and fund the 13 honor flights for our veterans. I am proud to represent him in the United States Congress. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Bill and in wishing him nothing but the very best.

RECOGNIZING BRAIN AWARENESS
WEEK

HON. TIM WALBERG

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Brain Awareness Week, a critical moment to discuss the impact of brain disorders on our nation and the urgent need for brain research and discovery.

Neurodegenerative disorders like Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease have tremendous, devastating impact on individuals and families. My dad had Parkinson's, so I know firsthand the physical and financial toll it takes on patients and caregivers.

These diseases also pose a serious financial burden for the nation. Today, neurological diseases cost the United States an estimated \$800 billion a year. And that figure is projected to increase dramatically over the coming years.

An estimated 5.5 million Americans are currently living with Alzheimer's disease. In my home state of Michigan, 180,000 people age 65 and older have Alzheimer's. That is projected to increase more than 20 percent—220,000 Michiganders—by 2025. And barring medical breakthroughs, the number of Americans age 65 and older with Alzheimer's is estimated to reach 16 million by 2050. Between now and 2050, the cumulative cost of caring for people with Alzheimer's is projected to exceed \$20 trillion.

Parkinson's disease is the second-most common neurodegenerative disorder in the United States. Each year, 60,000 Americans are diagnosed with Parkinson's. The current total economic burden of the disorder is estimated to be about \$14.4 billion a year in the United States. And by 2040, the prevalence of Parkinson's is expected to more than double.

Thanks to advances in brain research, we have a deeper understanding of Alzheimer's and Parkinson's, and researchers recently identified possible environmental and genetic risk factors for Parkinson's.

However, further research is required to unravel the complexities of these neurological disorders. Without breakthroughs, we will not be able to develop new, more effective treatments. Currently available treatments provide relief from some Parkinson's symptoms, but do not halt the progression of Parkinson's. Alzheimer's is the only disease in the top 10 causes of death in the U.S. that cannot be prevented, slowed or cured.

This Brain Awareness Week, I extend my gratitude to the great scientific minds who are advancing our understanding of brain disorders. And let's redouble our efforts to find new breakthroughs in brain research and bring a healthier future in reach for our nation.

DELTA SIGMA THETA SORORITY
FOUNDERS DAY CELEBRATION

HON. MIKE GALLAGHER

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Mr. GALLAGHER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority

Statewide Founders Day Celebration in Green Bay, Wisconsin. With over 700 members committed to public service, the Wisconsin chapters of the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority are a significant part of our community and I am proud to honor them.

For over 100 years, the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority has created programs and initiatives that focus on academic excellence, community service, economic development, and health and fitness, with a focus on the African-American community. "The Healthy Lifestyle Initiative—The Total Woman: Mind, Body, and Spirit" is one of the national programs led by Delta Sigma Theta that focuses on improving physical and mental health for its members and their communities. This program is just one example of how the women in the Sorority work to empower and support their communities.

From Friday, March 23, 2018 to Sunday, March 25, 2018, Green Bay, Wisconsin is proud to host the statewide Delta Sigma Theta Founders Day Celebration. This event will bring hundreds of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority members together to celebrate the organization's history and its numerous contributions since its founding on January 13, 1913.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all members of this body to join me in applauding the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority and the organization's commitment to support communities across the country and the world.

RECOGNIZING WEBSTER, FLORIDA
AS A PURPLE HEART CITY

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to recognize Webster, Florida as a Purple Heart City and honor the men and women who have selflessly served our country in the United States Armed Forces. It is with deep respect that I pause today to honor the brave men and women who were wounded in combat or gave their last full measure and made the ultimate sacrifice on our behalf.

Created by General George Washington on August 7, 1782 to recognize a soldier's meritorious action, the Purple Heart is our nation's oldest decoration. Every person that serves in the United States Armed Forces makes great sacrifices for our country and our freedoms. Many have endured combat wounds as they fought for the freedoms of complete strangers, for individuals they had never met.

We owe our veterans a debt that we can never repay. For more than two centuries the United States military has protected Americans against our enemies and the enemies of our friends. Throughout this time, the valor, dignity, and courage of our men and women in uniform has remained strong. It is due to countless lives selflessly lived and lost in defense of our country that we can stand today, free and grateful.

I congratulate Mayor Carrie Davis, Mayor Pro-Tem Michael T. Foote, Commissioners Bobby Yost, Ana Vigoa, and Mike Harris, and most of all, the men and women of Webster who have served our great nation. It is truly an honor to serve the residents of Webster.

HONORING THE MEMORY OF KAHU
MELVIN KAUILA CLARK

HON. COLLEEN HANABUSA

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Ms. HANABUSA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor an extraordinary man, Melvin Kauila Clark, who passed away on Sunday, December 24, 2017. A talented artist, Native Hawaiian traditional healer, celebrated leader of the community health center movement, and a personal friend of mine, Kauila will be deeply missed by the many people whose lives he has touched.

Kauila grew up in Wahiawa on the island of Oahu and graduated from Leilehua High School in 1963. Kauila went on to earn a bachelor's degree in drawing and painting from Graceland University and a master's degree in clay and sculpture from the University of Puget Sound. He became an internationally acclaimed artist and potter, with his works exhibited in 53 countries and museums, including in the Smithsonian here in Washington. I always admired Kauila's pottery because they reflected who he was so well. His pieces were big but also delicate, reflecting both the strength of his character and the gentle kindness of his heart. Kauila's willingness to share and donate his pieces to raise money for the communities around him demonstrated his wonderful generosity of spirit.

In Hawaii, Kauila will be fondly remembered as a Native Hawaiian traditional healer who shared his wisdom with all who sought it. He rightfully believed that the diverse communities of the United States could learn much from traditional indigenous knowledge of balance and harmony. Unsurprisingly, even though Kauila was a kahuna, a "keeper of secrets," one of the select few certified to hold that title, he preferred to be called kahu, or "priest."

A passionate advocate of the community health center movement, Kauila has dedicated much of his life towards ensuring that Americans of all backgrounds across the country receive culturally competent, patient-centered health care. Kauila and I got to know each other over the course of his work on healthcare with the Waianae community, since Kauila and I were both part of the hānai family of Auntie Agnes "Aggie" Kalaniho'okaha Cope, who first founded the Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Care Center. Kauila continued Auntie Aggie's work by serving as board director of the Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center for twenty-seven years.

Kauila dedicated much of the past nineteen years to the National Association of Community Health Centers (NACHC). Over the course of his distinguished service, he served on the Consumer/Board Member, Finance, Farmworker Health, Membership, Health Center Governance, Nominating, and Screening Committees at various points in time. Between 2005 and 2008, Kauila was treasurer for NACHC. Kauila became chair-elect of NACHC in 2009, board chair in 2011, and immediate past chair in 2015, the first Native Hawaiian to hold those positions in NACHC.

In everything he did, Kauila thought about his sons, whom he loved deeply. We used to talk about his sons and how they were growing up. I especially remember one conversa-

tion in which we chatted about how Tiger Woods's success was influencing Kauila's sons towards golf and away from football. Kauila was the grounding for his family, and it was always apparent to me that his kids came first in his heart and in everything he did.

Much can be said of the art, wisdom, and leadership that Kauila shared with the world. He will be fondly remembered and deeply missed by the people whom he encouraged, counseled, inspired, and healed. With cherished memories of Kauila in our hearts, we will continue his life's work for a better, kinder world.

90TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE
AMERICAN GOLD STAR MOTHERS

HON. FRANCIS ROONEY

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Mr. FRANCIS ROONEY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 90th anniversary of the founding of the American Gold Star Mothers. American Gold Star Mothers dates to 1928 and was founded under the Wilson Administration by Grace Darling Seibold. In 1917, during WWI, families hung banners displaying a blue star for each loved one serving overseas and a gold star for each of those loved ones that made the ultimate sacrifice. Today, the American Gold Star Mothers organization continues to aid and comfort the families of men and women who died while serving their country.

On March 24th the Southwest Florida Gold Star Mothers Chapter will hold an event commemorating the 90th anniversary of the American Gold Star Mothers and the 2nd observance of the National Vietnam War Veterans Day. We honor those mothers and families who have lost sons and daughters in recent conflicts around the world, and thank the Southwest Florida chapter for all they do for our fallen heroes and our community.

RECOGNIZING DIABETES ALERT
DAY

HON. JOHN KATKO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize the American Diabetes Association Alert Day. Observed annually on the fourth Tuesday in March, this is a day to inform the American public about the seriousness of Type 2 diabetes, particularly when left undiagnosed or untreated.

I would like to thank the American Diabetes Association, as well as numerous other organizations and researchers, who work to raise awareness of this far-reaching disease and seek an eventual cure.

Diabetes affects over 30 million Americans—almost 10 percent of the U.S. population—and nearly 1 in 4 adults are unaware that they have this disease. What's more, another 84 million Americans have prediabetes, a condition in which blood glucose levels are higher than normal, but not high enough to be diagnosed as diabetes. 9 out of 10 adults with

prediabetes are unaware of their condition and susceptibility to developing diabetes.

Whether it is a parent, child, sibling, grandparent, or neighbor, we all know someone who struggles daily with the medical upkeep of living with diabetes. That is why I join the American Diabetes Association in strongly encouraging all Americans to take the time today to learn more about Type 2 diabetes, its wide-ranging impact upon our nation and its citizens, and the susceptibility to this disease. Testing can take only 60 seconds and results can make a lifetime of difference.

I applaud the American Diabetes Association, for raising awareness about the potentially life-threatening complications associated with diabetes, and their advocacy to promote a healthy lifestyle.

HONORING THE RETIREMENT OF
COLONEL JAMES D. DIGNAN

HON. TIM RYAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize and honor the recent retirement of Colonel James Dignan from the United States Air Force and to congratulate him on his new role as President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Youngstown/Warren Regional Chamber in Ohio. Colonel Dignan concluded his service in the Air Force working in the office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for force readiness.

Colonel Dignan received his commission through the Naval Aviation Cadet (NAVCAD) program at the Aviation Officer Candidate School at NAS Pensacola, Florida, and he received his "Wings of Gold" at NAS Corpus Christi, Texas. He has served as an officer and pilot in the United States Navy, Air National Guard, and Air Force Reserve. Colonel Dignan was a command pilot with more than 6,500 hours in trainer, patrol, reconnaissance, and airlift aircraft. He has flown more than 100 hurricane penetration missions in the WC-130 and has flown combat-support missions throughout the Balkans, the Horn of Africa, and Southwest Asia. Colonel Dignan was also the commander of the 910th Airlift Wing at the Youngstown Air Reserve Station in Youngstown, Ohio. Under his leadership, he oversaw more than 1,300 personnel and was in charge of operations which provided support for nearly 2,000 Air Force, Navy, and Marine Reservists.

Now, Dignan will begin his new role as President and CEO of the Youngstown/Warren Regional Chamber. He wanted to remain in Youngstown, Ohio with his wife and three daughters who also desired to stay in the Youngstown area. His new role will allow him to continue serving the Mahoning Valley region alongside the people he loves. Dignan's managerial skills along with his past association as a Chamber board member demonstrated his ability to hit the ground running. He will be an influential voice and leader within the community, and I am enthused to work with him in his new role.

REMEMBERING MILLIE DUNN
VEASEY

HON. DAVID E. PRICE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Millie Dunn Veasey, a World War II veteran, civil rights pioneer, and community leader, who passed away this past Friday at the age of 100. My wife Lisa and I extend condolences to her family and her extensive network of friends and admirers as we celebrate her remarkable life.

Born and raised in Raleigh as one of six children, Millie graduated from Washington High School in 1942 and enlisted in the "six-triple-eight" battalion, the only all-female and all-black battalion to serve overseas during World War II. She was stationed in England for four months before transferring to France where she served as a supply officer, rising to the rank of Staff Sergeant. At the end of the war in 1945, she was selected for Officer Candidate School, but decided instead to continue her education.

Millie returned to Raleigh to attend Saint Augustine's College on the G.I. Bill. She graduated in 1953 with a degree in business administration and later obtained a master's degree at N.C. Central University. She taught business education and eighth grade English for four years in Matthews, Virginia, before returning to Raleigh to serve as secretary to then-President of Saint Augustine's College, James Boyer.

In addition to her secretarial duties, Millie joined the NAACP and eventually became the first African American female president of the Wake County chapter. In that role, she came to know and work with local and national civil rights leaders such as Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Thurgood Marshall and hosted Dr. King for his 1966 visit to Raleigh. In addition to her work in the NAACP, she served in leadership roles in her sorority, Zeta Phi Beta, and was active in the National Federation of Democratic Women and the American Legion. She and her husband, Warren Veasey, had two children, Juanita and Warren, Jr.

Mrs. Veasey retired from St. Augustine's in 1986 as director of career planning and placement. She continued to serve her community by teaching Sunday school at St. Ambrose Episcopal Church and was a mainstay of the Raleigh veterans' community. I have fond memories of visiting with her at community events around Veterans' Day. "It's something about the group," she said of her fellow veterans. "Regardless of where you are, there is a bond there that one can never break."

In an interview in the Raleigh News & Observer, Mrs. Veasey offered sage advice for living a meaningful life: "Keep busy and do something for somebody." She exemplified this maxim through her decades of dedicated service and effective leadership, inspiring many to follow in her path. We join with Mrs. Veasey's family, her many friends and admirers, and members of the communities she served, in mourning her passing and honoring her extraordinary life of leadership and service.

GO BUCS

HON. FRANCIS ROONEY

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Mr. FRANCIS ROONEY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to not only congratulate the Florida SouthWestern State College men's basketball team as they head to the NJCAA tournament for the first time in only their second season of competition, but also to wish them continued success throughout the tournament.

The Bucs clinched the Suncoast Conference Title and head to Kansas with a 29–2 overall record on the season. They are seeded sixth in the tournament. I congratulate Coach Marty Richter and all of the players for their hard work this season—best of luck and continue to make us proud.

**HONORING THE CAREER OF
STEPHEN A. ROGERS**

HON. JOHN KATKO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor the distinguished career of Stephen A. Rogers, longtime chairman of Advance Media New York, publisher of The Post-Standard, Syracuse.com, and NYup.com, who recently retired after 58 years in the news business.

A graduate of Syracuse University, Steve Rogers began working part time at The Post-Standard and The Herald-Journal in 1960 as a beat reporter covering crime. Seeking independence from his father, Stephen Rogers, then-editor and publisher of The Post-Standard, Rogers went to work for The Miami Herald as a general assignment reporter. Determined, Rogers worked hard to become The Miami Herald's managing editor for news. In 1977, he returned to Syracuse to become editorial director of The Post-Standard and The Herald-Journal. Four years later, in 1981, Steve succeeded his father as editor and publisher of both newspapers.

During his time leading the company, the newspapers won recognition for reporting on state government failures, Syracuse University basketball NCAA violations, and the Pan Am Flight 103 bombing over Lockerbie, Scotland. Under Rogers' leadership, The Post-Standard has consistently ranked as one of the best-read newspapers in the country.

For the first time in 63 years, the name of Rogers or his late father, Stephen Rogers, who preceded him as publisher, will no longer appear on The Post-Standard's masthead. As a lifelong Central New Yorker, I join many in our community in thanking Steve for his leadership and passion for journalism. I am proud to congratulate him on his much deserved retirement.

THE SEVENTH ANNIVERSARY OF
THE SYRIAN CRISIS

HON. BRENDAN F. BOYLE

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, today marks the start of the eighth year for the Syrian crisis. We are no closer to a peaceful resolution to the conflict. Arguably, the situation has only gotten worse, particularly in Eastern Ghouta where the Assad regime is doubling down on its bombings and chemical attacks on civilians. The International Committee of the Red Cross proclaims that suffering in Eastern Ghouta has reached a "critical point," stating that "ordinary people are once again trapped in a situation where life slowly becomes impossible and where goods and aid are severely limited."

Before the war, the country was, by Arab standards, solidly middle income with vibrant communities. Today, Syria's development has regressed by nearly four decades, and the Syrian economy has contracted by an estimated 40 percent. The majority of Syrians have lost their livelihoods. School attendance has dropped over 50 percent with more than two million children now out of school. An estimated 13.5 million people, including six million children, are in need of serious humanitarian assistance. 4.5 million of these people are in hard-to-reach areas, including 540,000 people in eleven besieged areas. The numbers are staggering. And we all know the images are beyond words.

Meanwhile, Assad and Putin continue to indiscriminately target civilians in all locations, as well as civilian hospitals, despite a late February UN resolution calling for a cessation of hostilities to enable humanitarian access to those in need of aid.

These atrocities led me to introduce H. Res. 632, which condemns Assad and Putin for their attacks on hospitals and medical personnel in Syria, and calls on our Secretary of State to work with the international community to conduct investigations into these serious violations of international humanitarian law.

The United States must send a clear message to Assad and Putin that the international community is watching and we will hold them accountable. As the fighting enters its eighth year, I urge this administration to complete a comprehensive U.S. strategy for Syria that specifically addresses civilian protection and these attacks on humanitarian service providers.

**HAPPY 90TH BIRTHDAY BEVERLY
GOLDFINE**

HON. RICHARD M. NOLAN

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Mr. NOLAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to a distinguished member of the Duluth community, Beverly Goldfine, who will soon be celebrating her 90th birthday. Beverly is an activist, volunteer, and mother who made it her mission early on in life to support and improve the Duluth community she loves so much.

Beverly has been active in many Duluth area organizations which help those in need

such as the Townview Improvement Corporation and the Duluth-Superior Community Foundation. She made it her goal to help Duluthians find a place to call home regardless of their income. Additionally, her husband and she established the Beverly and Erwin Goldfine Scholarship for Academic Excellence to help students at the University of Minnesota Duluth reach their full potential.

It is an honor to recognize Beverly's many accomplishments and contributions to the community she loves so much. There is no doubt her activism and selfless efforts to help those in need have improved the lives of countless people. I ask my colleagues in Congress to join me in wishing Beverly a very happy 90th birthday. What an incredible milestone.

RECOGNIZING THE OUTSTANDING
ACHIEVEMENT OF ROBERT G.
STANKIEWICZ

HON. DONALD S. BEYER, JR.

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to officially recognize the outstanding public achievement of Robert G. Stankiewicz. Mr. Stankiewicz has been in public service for close to twenty five years, the past ten with the United States Capitol Police (USCP). As the Telecommunications Manager, Mr. Stankiewicz was instrumental in the implementation of the new USCP Radio System, built the USCP Radio Team now better known as CapCom and developed the first USCP mobile radio system that provides much needed communications for DPD motorcades.

He laid the foundation and brought in a very highly skilled and diversified group of technicians that will serve the United States Capitol Police well for many years to come. Mr. Stankiewicz's retirement marks the end of an era at USCP. He is the last of the originals. His dedication and commitment to the department cannot be measured. Even more important though are the friendships he developed that will last a life time. While his time at the United States Capitol Police has ended with his retirement, I know he will be just as successful in his future endeavors. I thank him for his dedicated service.

IN HONOR OF MARCY KAPTUR
MAKING HISTORY AS THE LONG-
EST SERVING CONGRESSWOMAN

HON. NIKI TSONGAS

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Ms. TSONGAS. Mr. Speaker, today I want to recognize my colleague, Congresswoman MARCY KAPTUR, who is making history as the longest serving female member of the House of Representatives.

This is especially momentous for my district, as she now surpasses Edith Nourse Rogers, who served in Congress for 35 years and previously held the record of the longest serving female member. Representative Rogers was the first woman to represent Massachusetts in

Congress, hailing from my hometown of Lowell, Massachusetts and serving the district I now represent.

Edith Nourse Rogers became the sixth woman to serve in the House of Representatives when she was elected in 1935. She was one of only 17 upon her death in 1960. Today, MARCY KAPTUR is one of 84 women in the House, and odds are that number is sure to grow in November.

This historic moment is significant because of the remarkable commitment to public service that MARCY KAPTUR has demonstrated over the past 35 years, but also because of the model of service she represents to the thousands of women who have been motivated to run for office in recent years.

I am grateful that MARCY has brought a woman's voice to so many critical debates over the course of her tenure, and I think it is worth pointing out that she has never run unopposed. She's earned every vote she's received in 18 consecutive elections.

I want to congratulate the gentlewoman from Ohio on this remarkable achievement. May it inspire continued courage and confidence in women who seek to follow in her "persistent" footsteps.

IN RECGNITION OF THE HONOR-
ABLE MICHAEL T. VOUGH, RE-
CIPIENT OF THE GREATER
PITTSSTON FRIENDLY SONS'
ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Honorable Michael T. Vough, who will receive the Greater Pittston Friendly Sons of Saint Patrick's Achievement Award. He will be honored by the Friendly Sons during their annual Saint Patrick's Day celebration on March 17, 2018.

Judge Vough is the only son of the late Henry and Mary Noci-Vough. He is a graduate of Pittston Area High School and the University of Scranton. In May 1989, he received his Juris Doctorate from the University of Dayton School of Law.

In 1991, Judge Vough founded the Law Office of Vough & Associates, which served over three thousand clients throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and employed a staff of ten.

From 1992 to 2012, Judge Vough worked as an Assistant District Attorney for Luzerne County. As Assistant DA, he prepared, evaluated, and prosecuted all criminal cases from commission of the crime through sentencing. He prosecuted over 1,500 cases resulting in plea or trial; represented the Commonwealth in over 150 jury trials; and had a 100 percent conviction rate in seventy homicide cases. Of these seventy homicide cases, nine resulted in first degree murder convictions. He participated in three death penalty jury selection cases and had an overall 99.8 percent conviction rate in his twenty years of service with the Luzerne County District Attorney's Office.

On January 3, 2012, Judge Vough was sworn in as judge of the Luzerne County Court of Common Pleas. Since 2012, he has presided over thousands of criminal and civil

cases. He currently serves as the Criminal Court Division Administrator and has previously served as the Co-Civil Court Division Administrator.

He is married to Cindy Forlenza Vough, and they have four children, Michael, Matthew, Nicholas and Jessica.

It is an honor to recognize Judge Michael T. Vough as he accepts the Greater Pittston Friendly Sons' Achievement Award. I am grateful to him for his service to the people of Pennsylvania. I wish him all the best this Saint Patrick's Day.

HONORING SOMERSET HIGH
SCHOOL SENIOR JUSTIN RIVARD

HON. SEAN P. DUFFY

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Mr. DUFFY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable young man from Somerset, Wisconsin named Justin Rivard. Justin is a senior at Somerset High School and is finishing up his final semester. But rather than just spending that time preparing for his own graduation, Justin has gone out of his way to help others. He recently invented a device, aptly titled the "JustinKase," that protects students and teachers inside their classrooms. The steel device slips underneath a classroom door and latches to the door's jam, locking the door in place. This prevents anyone with intent to commit violence against students or teachers from accessing the room.

A teacher at Somerset High recently described Justin as having "the special combination of motivation and brains and has a motor that just keeps going." Indeed, these skills will serve Justin well as he continues to use his gifts in the service of others as a soldier in the United States Army. Everyone in Wisconsin is proud of Justin's ingenuity. And we are grateful for his decision to enter the military and defend our nation.

TRIBUTE TO BILL PAVKOV

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Bill Pavkov of Hastings, Iowa for his dedicated service to our country in World War II and the Korean War. Bill turned 90 in 2017 and has the rare distinction of serving his country in two wars.

Bill was born and raised in Doylestown, Ohio. He left school in the 10th grade to join the U.S. Army Transport Service in 1944. He was only 17 years old and his father had to give his permission in order for Bill to serve. Bill was aboard Army Transport ships that delivered both troops and supplies around the world. After his service to our country, Bill returned to Ohio, married and began his career as an over-the-road semi-truck driver. In 1960, Bill and his family moved to Iowa where he started farming and continued driving trucks. He served his community as a volunteer firefighter and as Mayor of Hastings. When Bill

retired in the 1990s he had logged 52 years as a truck driver and 30 years as a farmer.

Mr. Speaker, I commend and congratulate Bill for his many years of dedicated and devoted service to the United States of America, his family, and his community. It is with great honor that I recognize him today. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in applauding his service as a veteran and in wishing him and his family nothing but the best.

CELEBRATING THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CENTER FOR ASIAN AMERICANS UNITED FOR SELF EMPOWERMENT (CAUSE)

HON. LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise with my colleague, Congresswoman JUDY CHU, to recognize the Center for Asian Americans United for Self Empowerment (CAUSE), a nonprofit organization based in the Greater Los Angeles area. CAUSE has played a pivotal role in the promotion of civic engagement and leadership development within the local Asian Pacific American (APA) community for the last 25 years.

CAUSE began in 1993 as the Chinese Americans United for Self Empowerment. The organization has been chaired since its inception by Charlie Woo. In 2003, due to the APA community's diversifying population, CAUSE expanded its mission to serve the larger APA community, and changed its name accordingly to the Center for Asian Americans United for Self Empowerment.

CAUSE was created with the mission to advance the political and civic empowerment of the APA community through nonpartisan voter outreach, training, education, and leadership development. By providing a greater understanding of APA issues, access to resources, and a large and thriving network, CAUSE has played a pivotal role in empowering the next generation to vote, participate, and lead.

CAUSE has created a pipeline of leadership development programs that cultivates leaders for the APA community. The oldest of these programs is the Leadership Academy, an undergraduate internship program, which has graduated 26 classes and has exposed students to decision makers, policy makers, and issues of the day. The program's young leaders have developed a deeper awareness of the political issues the APA community faces in California and in Washington, D.C.

CAUSE's Leadership Institute, a six-month fellowship, trains mid-career professionals to become greater advocates for the APA community. The fellowship is comprised of intimate policy roundtable discussions, civic leadership skill development, and access to political leaders who speak at leadership luncheons.

The CAUSE Leadership Council & Network is comprised of preeminent next-generation leaders, who are selected to participate by invitation only. Members move the APA community forward through education, networks, and advancement into leadership positions. They also look to ensure equal opportunities for leadership representation by building key connections and skills necessary to advance and empower emerging leaders.

Through these programs, CAUSE has developed a network of over 200 alumni. CAUSE is also especially dedicated to advocating for more women to rise to positions of power. The CAUSE Women in Power program serves over 400 women annually through leadership conferences to discuss issues women leaders face while exploring strategies to overcome them. This program inspires women to reach their full potential.

CAUSE has been a primary source of information for foreign and native-born APAs. CAUSE's Voter Outreach, Training & Education (VOTE) Initiatives provide voters with valuable access to voter education and registration workshops, candidate debates and forums, and community issue town halls. With over 200 volunteers, the VOTE Initiatives work to increase APA turnout and voter registration, the understanding of candidates and propositions, and discussion of politics and community issues.

Today, the APA community is the fastest growing community in the U.S. and is projected to be the largest immigrant group in the country by 2055. APA voters increased from more than 2 million voters across the country in 2000 to 3.9 million voters in 2012. In addition, there has been a growth of over 600,000 new APA voters nationwide within the last three election cycles. However, only about half of eligible voters were registered in 2016, and there is still a lack of representation in political leadership roles. The APA community is sure to see increased voter activity and voter engagement under CAUSE's stewardship.

Under the leadership of CAUSE's Executive Director, Kim Yamasaki, the organization's budget for programs and staff has increased by more than 50 percent. CAUSE is better positioned than ever to fully activate and engage the APA community in politics and the world around them.

On April 5, 2018, CAUSE celebrates its silver anniversary at an event in Downtown Los Angeles with several hundred supporters in attendance. Mr. Speaker, we ask our colleagues to please join us in celebrating CAUSE's first 25 years of success. We look forward to its next 25 years with great anticipation.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LOIS FRANKEL

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, on roll call vote 104, I was not present because I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted NAY.

HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the mullahs in Tehran are among the world's worst human rights abusers. This year we have witnessed their brutality again on display as they mercilessly crushed political dissent from their own people. International attention has faded but

the Iranian people are still in the streets demanding their rights, whether they be economic opportunity, access to water, religious freedom, or gender equality. The United States must support these dissidents fighting for freedom and basic human rights.

In response, the regime has murdered dozens and locked-up thousands as it has done so many times before without punishment from the outside world. In perhaps one of the most egregious cases, in 1988 the Iranian regime initiated a systematic massacre of thousands of political dissidents. The barbaric mass executions by hanging and firing squad included teenagers and pregnant women who refused to renounce their political affiliations, including many from the MEK—today's leading Iranian dissident group.

It's important to remember and emphasize who exactly were the victims of this bloody massacre. Iranian security officials would ask detainees "What is your political affiliation?" Those who said "MEK" would be immediately placed on execution lists. So horrific was the act that the deputy to Ayatollah Khomeini at the time called it "the greatest crime committed during the Islamic Republic, for which history will condemn us."

Their day of reckoning is fast approaching. It has taken 30 years to condemn and investigate this horrific massacre. The United States must act swiftly to ensure that the Mullahs in Tehran are finally held accountable. Our government must work with international partners to also investigate other major human rights abuses such as the dozens more killed during protests in 1999, 2009, and 2017. In all cases, the families of those murdered by the regime were never told what happened to their loved ones' remains. The United States government and our allies must make it a priority to pressure the Iranian regime to disclose where the final resting place of the missing is so that their families may have a small bit of peace.

Another horrific violation of human rights and decency is taking place today on the shores of Libya. In 2011, our government self-righteously intervened in Libya to topple the regime of Muammar al-Gadhafi and then turned its back on that country. It is now a full-blown failed state where human trafficking is taking place.

Human trafficking is modern day slavery. We are seeing thousands of desperate refugees attempting to cross the war-torn country to the freedom and opportunity of Europe only to end up being exploited by slave traders. Estimates indicate there are about 500,000 to a million migrants bottled up in Libya that could be fodder for this despicable slave trade. Evil men, whether they be criminal opportunists or terrorists, are subjugating those in the most need for their own profit. You cannot put a price on human life.

The fact remains that we simply do not know enough about what exactly is going on in Libya today. The U.S. government and Congress should further investigate this tragic development of human slavery in Libya so we can get to the bottom of what is actually going on.

We must know who is exploiting migrants for profit, where the money is going, and compel Libyan authorities and the international community to respond decisively. It is our moral duty to fight for the voiceless who are being sold as chattel on the shores of Libya.

And that's just the way it is.

HONORING CONGRESSWOMAN
MARCY KAPTUR

HON. JIM JORDAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Mr. JORDAN. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to join my colleagues from Ohio and across the nation in paying tribute to the dean of the Ohio delegation, Congresswoman MARCY KAPTUR, as she becomes the longest-serving woman in the history of the House of Representatives.

Congresswoman KAPTUR has been tireless in her promotion of Toledo and the people of Ohio's Ninth Congressional District. I am grateful to my colleagues who have already spoken about her many accomplishments on behalf of her constituents throughout her congressional career.

I want to especially highlight her advocacy work on behalf of Lima's Joint Systems Manufacturing Center in my district, which is the only facility in the nation capable of producing large combat vehicles for the Department of Defense. MARCY has used her seniority on the House Appropriations Committee to stave off cuts to JSMC programs that would have devastated military readiness and destroyed the plant's supplier base. I thank her for her long-standing bipartisan work to save money for the taxpayer while keeping the skilled workers of JSMC on the job building modern, safer vehicles on which our servicemembers rely.

On behalf of the people of Ohio's Fourth Congressional District, I congratulate Congresswoman KAPTUR on achieving this milestone. Her decency and civility are a model for all who commit their lives to public service.

TRIBUTE TO BONNIE AND DARYL
HAYNES

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Bonnie and Daryl Haynes of Prescott, Iowa on the very special occasion of their 70th wedding anniversary. They celebrated their anniversary on January 18, 2018.

Bonnie and Daryl's lifelong commitment to each other and their family truly embodies Iowa values. As they reflect on their 70th anniversary, may their commitment grow even stronger, as they continue to love, cherish, and honor one another for many years to come.

Mr. Speaker, I commend this great couple on their 70th year together and I wish them many more. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating them on this momentous occasion.

REMEMBERING MR. WARREN
'RHUBARB' JONES

HON. BARRY LOUDERMILK

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Mr. Warren 'Rhubarb' Jones of Tallapoosa, Georgia, who passed away on April 2, 2017.

Rhubarb's love of music and strong work ethic led him to become one of the most talented and decorated radio personalities in the State of Georgia. In his 48 years as a disc jockey—23 of them in the Atlanta market—he earned many well-deserved accolades, including 1983 CMA and ACM DJ of the Year, 1987 Large Market CMA DJ of the Year, 1991 Atlanta Country Music Hall of Fame, and 2001 Country Music Disc Jockey Hall of Fame.

He was one of the founding members of the Georgia Radio Hall of Fame, contributing greatly to their organization. He was inducted into their inaugural class in 2007. At the time of his death, he was the longest-running morning radio personality in the Atlanta radio market. For the last couple years, he hosted mid-days on Great Classics 98.9 in West Georgia.

In 2008, Rhubarb joined the Kennesaw State University family as Senior Director of Special Projects in the Office of Development and Distinguished Lecturer in the Department of Communication. He was one of the most popular professors among their communications students and a passionate supporter of the school, even helping launch their football program.

Rhubarb was passionate about the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, and helped start the March Across Georgia in 1990. During the month of June every year, he would make stops all over the state of Georgia, collecting pennies everywhere he went. Over 18 years ago, he began running a celebrity golf tournament to advocate and raise money for their research. Through his efforts, he helped to raise over \$3.5 trillion.

On behalf of Georgia's 11th Congressional District and the United States House of Representatives, I offer my heartfelt condolences to Mrs. Donna Jones and their daughters, Presley and Callie. Mr. Jones will be fondly remembered by all of Georgia for his strong dedication to his community and his kind spirit. He is greatly missed.

HONORING JOHN CLAY SMITH, JR.

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask the House of Representatives to join me in recognizing John Clay Smith, Jr. for his years of service as interim chair of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and as Dean of Howard University School of Law. John passed away on February 15, 2018, due to complications from Alzheimer's disease. My thoughts are with John's family during this difficult time.

John Clay Smith, Jr. was born in 1942 just outside of Omaha, Nebraska. He knew he had

a passion for law at a very early age. He moved to Washington, D.C., to work as a judge with the Army Judge Advocate General's Corps and as an associate at the law firm Arent Fox. In 1974, he joined the Federal Communications Commission as chief of the cable television bureau, but later became an associate general counsel there. John Clay Smith, Jr. was named interim chair of the EEOC in 1978. It was also during this time that he was elected as the first African American national president of the Federal Bar Association.

As the first female to chair the EEOC, I served alongside John to reform it and to develop and implement guidelines related to workplace sexual harassment. Once John stepped down from his post at the EEOC, he went on to serve as Dean of Howard University School of Law from 1986 to 1988, obtaining updated equipment and increased funding for faculty members not only to raise the school's profile, but also to assist in it maintaining its accreditation. In addition, John helped raise scholarship funds for the law school. During his time at the law school, he also served as president of the National Bar Association and the Washington Bar Association. In 2004, John retired from Howard.

John graduated in 1964 from Creighton University, where he paid his tuition through scholarships and part-time jobs, and graduated from Howard University School of Law in 1967, where he was class president. He later went on to receive master's and doctoral degrees in law from George Washington University.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the House of Representatives to join me in remembering the life and legacy of John Clay Smith, Jr. as interim chairman of the EEOC and as Dean of Howard University School of Law.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. PETER A. DeFAZIO

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Mr. DeFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, on March 13, 2018, I was not present for votes due to flight delays. If I had been present, I would have voted:

On Roll Call vote 102, on the Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass H.R. 5247, I would have voted No.

On Roll Call vote 103, on the Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass H.R. 4465, I would have voted Aye.

TRIBUTE TO DAN FLORES

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Dan Flores of Council Bluffs, Iowa, on his recent retirement as a Lieutenant with the Council Bluffs Police Department after 36 years of service. Dan began his career with the Council Bluffs Police Department in 1981.

Dan said he could sum up his career by using one word, "service", and said it has

been an honor and privilege to be part of the Council Bluffs Police Department. Dan grew up in northern Iowa and attended Minnesota State University where he received his Bachelor's Degree. Council Bluffs Police Chief Tim Carmody said, "the scope of Dan's career is a testament of how officers have a true investment in their communities. It's been a heartwarming experience and an adventure."

Mr. Speaker, I applaud and congratulate Dan on his retirement and career. Dan has made a difference by helping and serving others. It is with great honor that I recognize him today. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in honoring his accomplishments and in wishing him nothing but the best in his retirement.

CENTENNIAL OF THE YEE SHAN
BENEVOLENT SOCIETY, INC.

HON. NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate the Yee Shan Benevolent Society, Inc. on its centennial celebration on March 18, 2018.

Since 1918, the Yee Shan Benevolent Society has been sharing fellowship, support, friendship, benevolence and hope with immigrants from the Pan Yu County of the Canton Province in China. Over the course of a century, it has expanded its services to include fundraising for local hospitals, health centers, non-profits and other initiatives. Today, the Society is a beloved cornerstone organization that continues to provide social and community enrichment to Chinese Americans in New York City and the greater NY region.

I am proud that the constituents of my district continue to support the traditions and values of this esteemed fraternity along with its partners, the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association and Lin Sing Association. My district is enriched and indebted to them for their service to advance the betterment of the Chinatown and Lower East Side community.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the Yee Shan Benevolent Society in New York for its commendable and exemplary work and wish it many years of continued success.

CELEBRATING FIVE GENERATIONS
AND 125 YEARS OF VARNS AND
HOOVER HARDWARE

HON. JACKIE WALORSKI

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Mrs. WALORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Varns and Hoover Hardware, a family-owned business that has been a fixture in the Middlebury community for more than 125 years and that will soon be passed down to the fifth generation.

In the late 1800s, Ellsworth Varns moved his hardware store to the heart of Middlebury, Indiana, from Michigan. The store started out serving farmers and families in this small town, but over time it grew and adapted to the changing economic times. The success and

longevity of Varns and Hoover Hardware lies in the family's dedication to serving their neighbors and providing high-quality products at a friendly and convenient location.

The store always addressed the specific needs of the town with products that served family farmers, small businesses, the large Amish community, and the growing manufacturing industry. Now more than a century later, it remains a central stop for the small town's residents to get the products they need as well as catch up with their neighbors. Its charm and character come from its welcoming and personal feel and the friendly smiles that greet you when you walk in.

Small businesses are the backbone of the American economy, and it is a privilege to represent a family so devoted to the prosperity of their community for so many years. To honor Varns and Hoover Hardware is to honor what it means to achieve the American Dream. With ownership now being passed down to fifth-generation family member Nathan Miller, I am grateful to be able to recognize such a pivotal moment in the history of this Hoosier family, their small business, and the community they serve.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Varns and Hoover Hardware and in wishing them the best in all the years to come.

HONORING THE AIROLINA YOUNG
AVIATORS PROGRAM

HON. DAVID E. PRICE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and commend the accomplishments of the Airlina Young Aviators (AYA) Program of Durham, North Carolina.

Established in 2016, AYA provides opportunities for high school students—often from disadvantaged communities—to receive professional introductory flight training and mentorship, engaging them in STEM education projects and offers classes and preparing them for flight examinations and pilot licenses. These credentials, enriched by the guidance of AYA mentors, equip students with valuable experience, achievements, skills, and references as they begin to apply to jobs, colleges, and aviation university programs.

The AYA program was founded by Captain Warren Wheeler, a Durham native who established the first African American-owned and -operated air service in the United States. An entrepreneur, aviator, and businessman, Warren paved the way for African Americans and others who wished to pursue careers in the field of aviation. In 1979, he became the first airline owner to use government employment training programs such as the federal Comprehensive Employment Training Act to train unemployed and low-income people of color who sought careers in the airline industry. In addition to providing his students with practical instruction, Wheeler served as their employment negotiator with regional and national carriers to help advance their careers.

Captain Warren continued his mission to expand and support the number of certified minority pilots by establishing AYA as part of Airlina Flight & Music Support, a non-profit

organization based in Durham, just two years ago. Through Warren's visionary leadership and the work of dedicated board members and volunteers, AYA currently supports twenty-two students attending flight simulation training, five students presently flying, and two who will take their flight tests to qualify for their pilot's licenses within the next few months.

On behalf of the people of the Fourth Congressional District of North Carolina, I applaud the work of the Airlina Young Aviators Program for empowering young members of our community and helping move the Research Triangle toward a future in which all our students can pursue and achieve their dreams. For these students, the sky truly is the limit.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE INSTALLATION OF DR. DENNIS FRISCH AS PRESIDENT OF THE AMERICAN PODIATRIC MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

HON. BRIAN J. MAST

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Mr. MAST. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Dr. Dennis Frisch, a podiatric physician who practices in his hometown of Boca Raton, Fla., for his installation on March 18, 2018, as President of the American Podiatric Medical Association.

Dr. Frisch has dedicated his life to service in his profession and his community. After graduating from Dr. William M. Scholl College of Podiatric Medicine and completing his residency at the Franklin Boulevard Community Hospital in Chicago, Ill., Dr. Frisch went into private practice in Boca Raton. 30 years later, he continues to provide podiatric care in that community.

He has been board certified in podiatric surgery by the American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons for nearly 25 years and is a founding member of the American Society of Podiatric Surgeon. Dr. Frisch has also served as president of the Florida Podiatric Medical Association, winning the FPMA Podiatrist of the Year Award and its President's Award. In addition, he has twice been named one of the top 150 Most Influential Podiatrists in America and was appointed by Governor Charlie Crist to the Florida Board of Podiatric Medicine, serving for 6 years.

Dr. Frisch has also been an active member of the American Podiatric Medical Association. He was elected to its Board of Trustees in 2007 before becoming Treasurer. He is also a member of APMA's Annual Meeting Committee and Scholarship Committee, as well as serving as the APMA Barry University liaison.

Dr. Frisch is also active in the Boca Raton community. He has served two terms as president of the Boca Raton Rotary Club and served for eight years as a Commissioner for the Greater Boca Raton Beach and Parks District. Currently, he is an appointed Board member to the City of Boca Raton Parks and Recreation Department Advisory Board. And last, but most importantly, Dr. Frisch is a proud husband to his wife Jennifer, father to his two children, Ashley and Daniel, and Pa Pa of two grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, I wish Dr. Frisch great success as he takes the helm of the American Podiatric Medical Association.

TRIBUTE TO DR. ROBERT FRYZEK

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Dr. Robert Fryzek of Glenwood, Iowa on his retirement as a practicing physician. Dr. Fryzek has served the Glenwood area for the past 54 years, practicing general family medicine and received the respect, trust, and loyalty of his patients who called him "a working man's doctor."

Dr. Fryzek graduated from Central High School in Omaha, Nebraska in 1952. He received his bachelor's degree from Creighton University in Omaha and earned his medical degree from the University of Nebraska in 1960. Dr. Fryzek served his internship at Wesley Hospital in Wichita, Kansas and spent two years at the Western Shoshone Duck Valley Indian Reservation in Owee, Nevada before moving to Glenwood, Iowa in 1963 to start his local practice. Dr. Fryzek offered weekend hours, treated patients at the local nursing home on his days off, served as the County Medical Examiner, and volunteered as the team doctor for Glenwood High School. He is a one-of-a-kind doctor who went above and beyond for his patients and community.

Mr. Speaker, I commend and congratulate Dr. Fryzek on his retirement and thank him for his many years of dedicated and devoted service to the citizens of Glenwood. I am proud to represent him in the United States Congress and I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating him for his many accomplishments and in wishing him and his family nothing but the best.

**FIRST DOMESTIC PRODUCTION OF
MOLY99 BY NORTH STAR NUCLEAR MEDICINE**

HON. MARK POCAN

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Mr. POCAN. Mr. Speaker, on February 8, 2018, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved the first domestic production of Moly99 by North Star Nuclear Medicine, which is located in Beloit, Wisconsin. Moly99 is the key substance used in 50,000 daily procedures using nuclear medicine to diagnose a variety of illness.

For many years, the United States has been dependent on foreign sources using nuclear fission offshore. These reactors, located in Canada, the Netherlands, South Africa, and Australia, are old and have been the subject of many disruptions of supply causing shortages.

Working with help from the U.S. Department of Energy and the cooperation of the FDA, North Star has developed a system to produce Moly99 without any use of uranium, resulting in little waste and no nuclear waste.

I want to congratulate George Messina, North Star's CEO, and his 130 employees, located in the cities of Beloit and Madison, on their achievement. Nuclear medicine is vital to

the diagnosis and cure of many diseases. Thanks to the dedication and perseverance of this Wisconsin company, consumers will have access to the first domestic supply of this much needed medicine.

**TRIBUTE TO MR. JOSEPH KELLY
MCCUTCHEM III**

HON. BARRY LOUDERMILK

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to my friend, Mr. Joseph Kelly McCutchen III, a man who has dedicated his life to serving the people of the state of Georgia.

Kelly was born in Ellijay, Georgia, to Joe and Betty McCutchen. He graduated from Gilmer High School and became the third generation in his family to attend the Georgia Institute of Technology, where he graduated with the highest honors. He began his career in the Trust Department of Trust Company Bank in Atlanta, where he was a vice president before he joined the Georgia Public Policy Foundation in 1993. For many years, he offered the state guidance and counsel on issues including education, tax, health care and economic policy.

Kelly became president and CEO of the Georgia Public Policy Foundation in 2010. He resigned from GPPF recently, after nearly 25 years providing Georgia's policymakers and lawmakers with the intellectual ammunition to embrace policy over politics. He remains active in Foundation policy as part of the think tank's network of Senior Fellows.

At the Georgia Public Policy Foundation, his service to the state and its people has been exemplary. Kelly helped create the Civic Renewal Project that highlights the work of outstanding community-based organizations, the "No Excuses" program to recognize and study high achieving and high poverty public schools, and award-winning statewide report cards on education, crime and taxes. During his tenure, the Foundation was named First place for highest integrity and Third place for most knowledgeable among business organizations or state associations in Georgia, by James magazine (2004) and, in January 2018, one of the Best Independent Think Tanks in the 2017 Global Go-To Think Tank Index Report.

A tireless fundraiser for GPPF and numerous nonprofit organizations, Kelly was also a member of the Leadership Georgia Class of 2001. He served on the boards of Leadership Georgia, the Georgia Tech Alumni Association, and the Conservative Policy Leadership Institute. He was a founder and Governing Board Chair of Tech High, a math, science and technology-focused public charter school in Atlanta.

He co-founded the Georgia Warrior Alliance, a nonprofit with the mission to make Georgia the national Leader in programs supporting military veterans and their families. He served on the board of the Georgia Chamber of Commerce and chaired the board of the Healthcare Institute for Neuro-Recovery and Innovation Foundation. He served on the Education Policy Committee and the Health Care Policy Committee for the Georgia Chamber of

Commerce; the Georgia Science and Technology Executive Committee; the Public Policy Committee for the Metro Atlanta United Way, and is a policy adviser for the Technology Association of Georgia.

Through his work and civic engagement, his lovely wife, Mary Kay Davis McCutchen, has been a dedicated companion. Kelly and Mary Kay live in Atlanta, as Kelly tells the rest of Georgia, "So you don't have to!" Married since 1994, the McCutchens have a son, Kelly, and a daughter, Caroline, both in college; Caroline is the family's fourth-generation attendee of Georgia Tech.

On behalf of Georgia's 11th Congressional District and the United States House of Representatives, I commend Kelly McCutchen for his many years of outstanding, dedicated and effective service.

**HONORING CONGRESSWOMAN
MARCY KAPTUR, THE LONGEST
SERVING WOMAN IN THE HISTORY
OF THE UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

SPEECH OF

HON. EDWARD R. ROYCE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 14, 2018

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate my good friend from Ohio, Congresswoman MARCY KAPTUR.

On this historic occasion—as MARCY becomes the longest-serving woman in the history of this House—I am honored to stand by her side.

As Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, I have seen firsthand the personal passion MARCY brings to protecting democracy and freedom around the globe.

Nowhere is this more evident than in her work on behalf of the people of Ukraine and the diaspora here in America.

As co-chair of the Congressional Ukrainian Caucus, she has been a tireless advocate for the democratic transition in Ukraine—and especially championing the rights of Ukrainian women. She has sponsored legislation supporting freedom and human rights in Ukraine, in addition to promoting the important role that women play in Ukraine's economy.

This is because MARCY understands the critical role that Ukrainian women can and must play in their country's future—as educators, leaders, entrepreneurs, and peacemakers.

Likewise, she wants to see more opportunity for women all around the world. I am particularly grateful for her support for my Committee's efforts to ensure that women and girls are empowered by, and included in, U.S. diplomatic efforts abroad, including legislation to promote the inclusion of women in peace negotiations and peacekeeping efforts. MARCY has also long been supportive of the Committee's efforts to promote girls' access to education.

Here in the United States, of course, MARCY has proven her commitment to promoting women's rights. I am proud to join her in sponsoring the Smithsonian Women's History Museum Act, aptly numbered, H.R. 19. Alongside our good friend from New York, CAROLYN MALONEY, we are, as MARCY put it, seeking "to record the history of over half of our citizenry in a way that brings them into full view."

I have no doubt that when we succeed in building the first National Women's History Museum, MARCY KAPTUR will be prominently represented.

MARCY is an inspiration to women and girls across the country who aspire to lead—who aspire to participate in their democracy.

I am proud to have partnered with her on these and so many other issues, and am thankful for her years of service.

CALLING FOR THE END OF THE SYRIAN CIVIL WAR AND FOR PRESIDENT BASHAR AL-ASSAD TO STEP ASIDE

HON. STEVE CHABOT

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mark the seventh anniversary of the Syrian people's demand for democracy, which began on March 15, 2011.

As a senior Member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, I have watched President Bashar al-Assad commit a catalogue of the most barbaric crimes during seven years of civil war. These include his use of chemical weapons against civilians, his mass imprisonment and murder of his own citizens, and his deliberate shelling of noncombatants. His violence has created a catastrophic refugee crisis, and the death toll from his brutal war is in the hundreds of thousands.

Worse, Russia and Iran have been keen to expand their influence in Syria—no matter the human cost. Not only has Vladimir Putin propped up Assad militarily, but he has provided diplomatic cover for Assad's crimes. Further, Tehran has entrenched itself in Syria by mobilizing and training numerous proxy fighters. This expanded influence undermines American interests, threatens Israel, and further destabilizes the Middle East.

I encourage the Administration to work with Congress and our allies to bring this war to a needed conclusion; one that transitions Syria into a post-Assad future.

TRIBUTE TO GORDON KOKENGE

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Gordon Kokenge of Clarinda, Iowa who recently retired after twenty-eight years of service to the City of Clarinda as a member of the City Council and as Mayor. Gordon was elected in 1988 to the City Council and as Mayor in 2005.

Gordon has served Clarinda with honor, dedication, and with determination to improve the lives of every citizen. During his tenure he has been a leading force in economic development in Clarinda to help develop new industries and help save local companies that have now prospered and expanded. Many citizens in Clarinda supported Gordon because of his insight, knowledge, commitment to the city, and his concern for the city's budget. He has a reputation of working for the good of the

city. Clarinda City Manager Gary McClarnon said, "Gordon has been a very good leader for the city and will be remembered as a great leader for the city during his time as a City Councilman and Mayor."

Mr. Speaker, I applaud and congratulate Gordon for taking an active role in his community. Gordon's commitment is not only for Clarinda but for all of Southwest Iowa. I am proud to represent him in the United States Congress and I ask that my colleagues in the House of Representatives join me in congratulating him for his service and wishing him nothing but continued success.

HONORING THE LIFE OF MARGARET PERKINS, CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL RECIPIENT

HON. ELISE M. STEFANIK

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Ms. STEFANIK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Margaret Perkins, a Civil Air Patrol volunteer from New York's 21st District who is being honored with the Congressional Gold Medal.

Margaret was born on November 17, 1917, and attended Rochester Institute of Technology, Skidmore College, and Columbia University. After training to fly aircraft at the Lewis Lavery Air School in Round Lake, New York, Margaret received her pilot's license from the Civil Aeronautics Authority in 1943 at only twenty-four years old, and became the first female licensed pilot in Saratoga County. As a member of the Civil Air Patrol during World War II, Margaret flew anti-sabotage missions to ensure the security of dams and other structures. She also shuttled single-engine military observation aircraft between airports at the request of the U.S. Government.

In gratitude and recognition of her service in the Civil Air Patrol during World War II, Margaret is being honored with the Congressional Gold Medal. The Medal is the highest civilian award presented by the U.S. Congress as its highest expression of national appreciation for outstanding contributions.

It is no doubt that Margaret contributed significantly to U.S. success in World War II, and I am extremely proud to rise today in honor of her achievements. New York's 21st District is forever grateful for Margaret's courageous service to her country.

THE SYRIAN SLAUGHTER MUST END

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, the past few weeks has brought an unfortunate intensification of the Syrian Civil War as the Syrian government, aided by Russia, continues to bomb rebel-held towns and cities in Syria—including targeting hospitals. This worsening crisis puts even more innocent civilians at risk as the fighting moves closer to heavily populated areas.

We should not make the same mistakes as the Obama administration, whose "strategic

patience" allowed Russia to get a foothold in the Middle East by propping up the brutal dictatorship of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad and obstructing peace efforts by the UN Security Council. Putin is knowingly allied with murderers.

That is why I am a co-sponsor of H.R. 1677, the Caesar Syria Civilian Protection Act of 2017, which would sanction anyone responsible for hindering access to humanitarian relief in Syria as well as any person who knowingly provides support to the Syrian Government in their attempt to acquire ballistic missiles. The House passed H.R. 1677 last year, and I urge the Senate to pass this bill as well.

In conclusion, God Bless our Troops, and we will never forget September 11th in the Global War on Terrorism.

HONORING CARLOS CHAIREZ

HON. J. LUIS CORREA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Mr. CORREA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Carlos Chairez for his exceptional service to his community and his country.

Mr. Chairez valiantly served his country during World War II as a Private First Class in the United States Army. Mr. Chairez served in the European Theater of war as a member of General Patton's Third Army, Fourth Armored Division. As the war came to a close, his division was converted into the peacekeeping constabulary force. With great confidence and great strength, Mr. Chairez helped create victory and a better world.

Mr. Chairez embraced his country in a time of great need. He went into a perilous domain and fought to preserve democracy and install freedom. He helped to bring peace to a region torn apart by the ravages of war.

Mr. Chairez has been happily married for almost 70 years to his wife Margarita, has 4 children, and 7 grandchildren. His love for his family and country is unparalleled and I deeply admire his dedication, charisma, and willpower. He is an outstanding role model for us all. I am honored and privileged to thank such an extraordinary man. I hope he continues to be a reminder to us all to never forget no sacrifice is too great or small.

INTRODUCTION OF THE LIFELONG IMPROVEMENTS IN FOOD AND EXERCISE ACT OF 2018

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to reintroduce the Lifelong Improvements in Food and Exercise Act, authorizing a national initiative to attack a major health problem in the United States that cannot be remedied through the health care system alone. Increasing rates of overweight and obesity are now found in Americans of every age, race and other major demographic groups, and threaten the health of Americans like no other disease or condition. In fact, the key to eliminating many of the most serious health conditions is

not only to reduce overweight and obesity, but also to encourage exercise of all kinds.

The LIFE Act would provide \$25 million to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for a coordinated national effort to reverse increasingly sedentary lifestyles and diets that are high in fat and sugar. Specifically, my bill seeks to provide the first national strategy to combat the overweight and obesity epidemic by directing the CDC to do three things: train health professionals to recognize the signs of obesity early and to educate people concerning healthy lifestyles, such as proper nutrition and regular exercise; conduct public education campaigns about how to recognize and address overweight and obesity; and develop intervention strategies to be used by the states in everyday life, such as in the workplace and in community settings. This legislation, however, meets the bare minimum for what is needed to address our most important health crisis.

In 2010, estimates from the CDC National Center for Health Statistics showed that since 1980, the percentage of children who are overweight has more than doubled, and the percentage of adolescents who are overweight has tripled. The CDC also reports that Type 2 Diabetes, once considered an adult disease, is now widespread among children. The rising cost of the health care system, including insurance premiums, reflects this epidemic. Today, chronic diseases, many of which are caused or exacerbated by overweight and obesity, account for 70 percent of all deaths in the U.S., and 86 percent of U.S. medical care costs.

A focused national health initiative would provide guidance to the states to engage in similar programs, as mayors of some cities have done. A national focus could lead to changes, such as full participation in high school physical education classes, which dropped from 42 percent in 1991 to 33 percent in 2005. Changes in nutrition are equally critical because more than half of all young people consume too much fat, a factor in the doubling of the percentage of overweight youth. Data also show an increase in unhealthy eating habits for adults and no change in physical activity.

According to a 2017 study conducted by the American College of Sports Medicine, the District of Columbia is one of the fittest cities in the United States and, yet, even here, obesity continues to be a severe problem. Most of the obesity epidemic is exercise-and-food-related. Approximately one-fifth of District residents are considered obese.

I urge my colleagues to join me in support of this important legislation to mobilize the country now before entirely preventable health conditions, which often begin in childhood, overwhelm the nation's health care system.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF ROBERT C. SWEENEY

HON. JOSH GOTTHEIMER

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Mr. GOTTHEIMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Robert C. Sweeney—a bold and courageous community leader, a pioneer for New Jersey workers, and a devoted husband, father, and grandfather.

He will be deeply missed by the entire State of New Jersey, particularly our brothers and sisters in labor for whom he tirelessly advocated throughout his entire life.

Bob was committed to fighting for the working men and women of New Jersey. For twenty-five years, Bob served as President and Business Manager of Local 399 of the International Association of Bridge, Structural and Ornamental Ironworkers in South Jersey. As the longest-serving business manager in the history of the ironworkers, Bob fought vigorously to defend the labor movement and New Jersey's dedicated workforce. Bob's unflinching values and passionate leadership continue to live on through the steadfast work of his sons—Robert Sweeney, New Jersey Senate President Stephen Sweeney, and New Jersey AFL-CIO Vice President Richard Sweeney.

Mr. Speaker, I am deeply grateful for Bob Sweeney's invaluable contributions to our community and our state, and I am confident that his memory will serve as an inspiration for our future generations.

IN RECOGNITION OF GREG COLLINS, GREATER WILKES-BARRE FRIENDLY SONS' MAN OF THE YEAR

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Greg Collins, who will receive the "Man of the Year" Award from the Wilkes-Barre Friendly Sons. He will be honored during the Friendly Sons annual Saint Patrick's Day celebration on Friday, March 16, 2018. Greg has forty years of finance experience and is the former senior vice president and area president of Wells Fargo Bank.

Greg is a native of Kingston, Pennsylvania. After graduating from West Side Central Catholic, he began his career as a teller at Wyoming National Bank. While working as a teller, Greg attended night classes at Misericordia University, majoring in business administration. While working for Wyoming National Bank and its successors, Greg took on more responsibility, taking management positions and eventually advancing to senior leadership roles. From 2009 until his retirement in September 2017, Greg served as Wells Fargo's community bank area president for Northeastern Pennsylvania. He led more than three hundred team members and oversaw the operations of thirty-seven Wells Fargo branch banking offices across nine counties.

Greg remains an active member of the community in his retirement. He is a member of the board of trustees at Misericordia University, a board member of the Greater Wilkes-Barre Chamber of Business and Industry, Leadership Wilkes-Barre, the Wilkes-Barre YMCA, the Wilkes-Barre General Hospital, and the United Way of Wyoming Valley. In 2015, he chaired the American Heart Association Gala for Northeastern Pennsylvania. He was the recipient of the 2015 North Star Award from the Northeastern Pennsylvania Council Boy Scouts of America, the 2015 Distinguished Leadership Award from Leadership Wilkes-Barre, and the 2015 Community Serv-

ice Award from the Salvation Army. Greg is a 2010 graduate of Leadership Wilkes-Barre's Executive Leadership Program and a 4th-degree member of the Knights of Columbus.

It is an honor to recognize Greg Collins as he accepts the "Man of the Year" Award from the Wilkes-Barre Friendly Sons. I am grateful to him for his forty years of service to the people of Northeastern Pennsylvania, and I thank him for his continued leadership in his community. I wish him all the best on this Saint Patrick's Day.

TRIBUTE TO JEFF BALLENGER

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Jeff Ballenger of Council Bluffs, Iowa for his leadership and vision in helping organize 13 honor flights that have taken nearly 3,500 Iowa veterans to Washington, D.C. to visit memorials built in their honor.

Jeff and his father, Bill Ballenger, saw a need to honor our country's aging veterans from World War II, the Korean War, and Vietnam War. The Ballengers have partnered with HyVee, Inc., Casey's General Stores, and others to raise more than \$3 million to fund this special endeavor. Jeff said, "It takes nearly 200 volunteers to help make each honor flight a success. Dad and I might be the front, but we could not do it without the volunteers who are so important in turning the plans into a reality."

Mr. Speaker, I applaud and congratulate Jeff on his dedication and diligence to promote, organize, and fund the 13 honor flights for our Veterans. I am proud to represent him in the United States Congress. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Jeff and in wishing him nothing but continued success in all his endeavors.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 7TH AN- NIVERSARY OF THE START OF THE SYRIAN WAR

HON. ADAM KINZINGER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Mr. KINZINGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mark the 7th anniversary of the beginning of the Syrian War.

Since the conflict began in 2011, over 500,000 Syrians have been killed, including 50,000 children by the murderous dictator Bashar al-Assad and his Russian and Iranian backers. These brutal regimes not only target civilians with their artillery strikes, but the Assad regime continues to use chemical weapons, including chlorine gas, to kill his own citizens with impunity.

Over the last 7 years, over 30 chemical weapons attacks have taken place in Syria. Bashar al Assad has used these chemical weapons in clear violation of international law, and against countless resolutions by the United Nations Security Council. The world

has seen the heartbreaking images of children gasping for their lives, body bags lining the streets, and horrific videos of these chemical weapon attacks. We cannot turn a blind eye to the genocide before us.

The situation in Syria today is devastating with no signs of immediate improvement. As I have said before, in order to prevent the rise of the next generation of terrorists and killers, we must ensure that Bashar al-Assad is removed from power. I believe the United States of America was put on this Earth to be an example of self-governance and order in a world drowning in strongmen, oppression, and poverty.

Mr. Speaker, it is time for the United States to exert leadership in Syria. If we fail to act and if we fail to lead, we are failing humanity. Failing to act in Syria is a failure on us all. We must learn from history, learn from past mistakes, and take action as a global leader for freedom and hope. Stopping Assad's genocide in Syria is part of our mission statement, and I will continue to do what I can in support of that mission. I urge my colleagues to join me in doing the same.

IN RECOGNITION OF MRS. LILLIE
RUTH GANTT-EVANS

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the work and service of a dedicated community activist, engaged citizen, and dear friend of longstanding Mrs. Lillie Ruth Gantt-Evans. She will be honored by South Macon Arts Revitalization Technology (SMART), Inc. at the International Cherry Blossom Gospel Extravaganza in Macon, Georgia on Friday, March 23, 2018.

Lillie is a native of Macon, Georgia and a product of the Bibb County School System. After graduating from high school, she went on to attend Crandall Business College, complete nursing training at Hemlock School of Nursing and Spirometry training through Marshfield Clinic at St. Joseph's Hospital. She also studied Early Childhood Education at Fort Valley State University.

Once she received her nursing degree, she began working as a nurse at Macon Hospital (now The Medical Center). Lillie was one of the first African-American nurses to work in the intensive care unit. After five years at Macon Hospital, she transferred to Robins Air Force Base Hospital where she worked as a nurse for twenty-five years. Beyond her duties and responsibilities as a nurse, she has also dedicated her personal life to helping people from all walks of life in her community. In 1968, during her tenure at Robins Air Force Base Hospital, Lillie opened Gantt's Preschool and G and J Adult Day Care. Once she retired from Robins Air Force Base Hospital in 1986, she opened M.A. Evans School to help students whose birthday delayed their enrollment in school. She kept the school running for 52 years without requiring government funding. She renamed G and J Adult Day Care to L and J Adult Day Care to pay tribute to her late mother, who helped to run her businesses while she worked as a nurse.

Throughout her career, Lillie has been recognized for her commitment and leadership in

the community. These acknowledgements include the J. C. Penny Golden Rule Award; the Department of the Air Force Service Award; the Legendary Educator Award; the Humanitarian of the Year Award; an Honorary Doctorate from the City of Macon in 2002; and appointments as Lieutenant Colonel, Aide-De-Camp, and to the Governor's Staff by then Governor Jimmy Carter in 1991.

In conjunction with her professional accomplishments, Lillie became the first African-American to be appointed as President of the Democratic Women's Party and the first African-American woman to serve as Chair of the Democratic Party of Macon-Bibb County.

Lillie's distinguished achievements have been mirrored by her extensive involvement in civil rights. After witnessing several racial injustices against African-Americans, Lillie decided to get involved in the Civil Rights Movement. She marched locally and throughout Georgia alongside Hosea Williams, William P. Randall, and Tyrone Brooks to advocate for civil rights and equal treatment of African Americans.

Lillie's faith has always instilled within her a desire to positively shape the community in which she lives. As a member of New Pleasant Grove Missionary Baptist Church, she regularly incorporates her faith into her commitment to public service by serving as an active participant in the Gospel Choir, the Nurse's Guild, and the Trustee's Ministry.

Dr. Benjamin E. Mays often said: "You make your living by what you get, you make your life by what you give." We are so grateful that Lillie has dedicated her time and talents to improve the quality of life for others. A woman of great integrity, her efforts, her dedication, and her expertise are unparalleled. Middle Georgia shines a little brighter because of Lillie Gantt-Evans.

Lillie has accomplished much throughout her life, but none of this would have been possible without the love and support of her husband, Benjamin; her children, Merita, Chandra, Gregory, and Jimmy (deceased); her grandchildren; and the countless others positively who impacted her life over the years.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join my wife Vivian and me, along with the more than 730,000 constituents of the Second Congressional District, in extending our sincerest congratulations and appreciation to Mrs. Lillie Ruth Gantt-Evans for her dedicated service to the people of Middle Georgia.

HONORING CORA COLE-MCFADDEN

HON. DAVID E. PRICE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the career of a devoted public servant, community leader, and friend, Cora Cole-McFadden, who has recently concluded her service on The Durham City Council and as the city's Mayor Pro Tempore.

A native of Durham, North Carolina, Cora developed her organizational skills and showed a keen sense of justice as early as her teenage years. She and three other classmates desegregated Hillside High School, a defining event that began her lifelong commitment to fighting for equal rights for all members of the Durham community.

Cora's career is marked by many "firsts." She served as the first African American woman to lead a department in the City of Durham and the first African American woman to be named the city's Mayor Pro Tempore. She was also the first recipient of the City of Durham's Diversity Change Agent Award, which is now named in her honor.

In her seventeen years in the Durham City Council and as Mayor Pro Tempore, Cora was a tenacious advocate for safe and affordable housing, accessible healthcare, and empowering youth in the Durham community. She championed the City of Durham Youth Commission's representation at the first-ever Youth Summit sponsored by the North Carolina League of Cities. She helped spur the creation of a local teen center, and constantly sought ways to serve disadvantaged youth.

Cora has served in various leadership positions in the Durham community, including the NAACP, the Housing Appeals Board, the Homeless Services Advisory Committee, the Joint City-County Planning Committee, and the Mayor's Committee for Persons with Disabilities. She has also served on the board of the National League of Cities and has been active in the North Carolina League of Municipalities. Although she is retiring from public office, no one doubts that Cora will find ways to express her love of the people of the Bull City and continue to serve.

I am personally indebted to Cora Cole-McFadden for years of good advice and loyal support—from the time I first learned my district was being redrawn to include Durham right up to the present. She is quick with a smile and a word of encouragement, even in difficult times. Her energy and optimism are infectious—you know you can do the job and you certainly don't want to let her down.

Lisa and I, along with constituents in the Fourth District and colleagues in the North Carolina congressional delegation, want to thank Cora Cole-McFadden for her generous and inclusive spirit and her dedicated service. We wish her and her family the very best as she begins the next chapter of her life.

TRIBUTE TO JESS AND CHASE
WELLER

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Jess and Chase Weller, of Weller Farms. They were recently awarded the Iowa Farm Environmental Leader Award by the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, and the Iowa Governor's office.

They were nominated for this award because of their implementation of soil health and conservation practices on their farming operation. They have recognized improved water quality and soil sustainability is important for not only their business but also for the farmers working and living near them and the citizens of Iowa.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to recognize Jess and Chase Weller for this award, and for working hard to make sure Iowa is a quality place to farm and live for many years to come.

I am proud to represent them in the United States Congress and ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating the Wellers and wishing them nothing but continued success.

HONORING THOMAS (TOM)
PETERS, PH.D.

HON. JARED HUFFMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Thomas (Tom) Peters, Ph.D., for his twenty years of stellar leadership and exemplary public service as President and CEO of the Marin Community Foundation.

A native of San Francisco, Dr. Peters finished his undergraduate degree at San Francisco State University, before going to the University of Minnesota, where he completed a Doctorate in Psychology and Health Science. He began his public health career in 1974 at

the San Francisco Department of Public Health, and would go on to achieve repeated success and advancement over the course of 24 years, finishing that chapter of his professional life as the Director of Marin County's Department of Health and Human Services.

In 1998, Dr. Peters became the President and CEO of the Marin Community Foundation (MCF). Combining his clinical and philanthropic careers to head one of the largest community foundations in the country, Dr. Peters has become a leading national voice for community philanthropy, advocating for and facilitating the dedication of private resources for the public good. MCF has distributed more than \$1.3 billion in grants to nonprofits working in critical community issues, ranging from education, healthcare, and the environment, to economic opportunity and access to the arts.

Under his leadership, Marin Community Foundation became the first community foundation to approve a non-discrimination policy for its donor advised funds. He set the example for others to say NO to organizations, projects, and programs that discriminate on

the basis of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, medical condition, veteran status, marital status, disability, ancestry, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic protected by law.

A respected community leader and champion for equity, he frequently offers the community a moral compass for taking action on important matters, like breaking down barriers to academic achievement and raising the bar for underserved communities, working to protect public lands and the environment, securing affordable housing where supply has been historically elusive, and fighting for comprehensive immigration reform.

Mr. Speaker, Dr. Peters has been a champion of champions on a wide array of critical issues, and has led the Marin Community Foundation to take actions that have produced positive impacts throughout the region. Therefore, please join me in expressing my deep appreciation and praise for his indomitable leadership on the occasion of his 20th anniversary as President and CEO of the Marin Community Foundation.

Daily Digest

HIGHLIGHTS

See Final Résumé of Congressional Activity (including the History of Bills) for the First Session of the 115th Congress.

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S1741–S1771

Measures Introduced: Eleven bills were introduced, as follows: S. 2556–2566. **Page S1765**

Measures Passed:

SECRET Act: Senate passed H.R. 3210, to require the Director of the National Background Investigations Bureau to submit a report on the backlog of personnel security clearance investigations, after withdrawing the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute, and agreeing to the following amendment proposed thereto: **Pages S1768–70**

McConnell (for Johnson/McCaskill) Amendment No. 2210, in the nature of a substitute. **Pages S1769–70**

Whistleblower Protection Coordination Act: Senate passed S. 1869, to reauthorize and rename the position of Whistleblower Ombudsman to be the Whistleblower Protection Coordinator, after agreeing to the committee amendment, and the following amendment proposed thereto: **Pages S1770–71**

McConnell (for Grassley) Amendment No. 2211, to modify the repeal of sunset provision. **Pages S1770–71**

Measures Considered:

Allow States and Victims to Fight Online Sex Trafficking Act—Agreement: Senate continued 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. **Pages S1742–63**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that at approximately 3 p.m., on Monday, March 19, 2018, Senate resume consideration of the

motion to proceed to consideration of the bill; and that notwithstanding Rule XXII, the vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the motion to proceed to consideration of the bill occur following disposition of the nomination of Kevin K. McAleenan, of Hawaii, to be Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security. **Page S1771**

Messages from the House: **Page S1763**

Measures Referred: **Pages S1763–64**

Executive Communications: **Page S1764**

Executive Reports of Committees: **Pages S1764–65**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages S1765–66**

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: **Pages S1766–67**

Additional Statements: **Page S1763**

Amendments Submitted: **Pages S1767–68**

Authorities for Committees to Meet: **Page S1768**

Privileges of the Floor: **Page S1768**

Adjournment: Senate convened at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 3:29 p.m., until 3 p.m. on Monday, March 19, 2018. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Majority Leader in today's Record on page S1771.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION REQUEST AND FUTURE YEARS DEFENSE PROGRAM

Committee on Armed Services: Committee concluded a hearing to examine United States Pacific Command in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2019 and the Future Years Defense Program, after receiving testimony from Admiral Harry

B. Harris, Jr., USN, Commander, United States Pacific Command, Department of Defense.

340B DRUG DISCOUNT PROGRAM

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions: Committee concluded a hearing to examine perspectives on the 340B Drug Discount Program, after receiving testimony from Bruce Siegel, America's Essential Hospitals, and Lori M. Reilly, Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America, both of Washington, D.C.; Sue Veer, Carolina Health Centers, Inc., Greenwood, South Carolina, on behalf of the National Association of Community Health Centers; and Joseph Hill, American Society of Health-System Pharmacists, Bethesda, Maryland.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on the Judiciary: Committee concluded a hearing to examine 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.

NOMINATION

Select Committee on Intelligence: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the nomination of Lieutenant General Paul M. Nakasone, to be Director of the National Security Agency, Department of Defense, after the nominee testified and answered questions in his own behalf.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 31 public bills, H.R. 5292–5322; and 3 resolutions, H. Con. Res. 115; and H. Res. 785–786 were introduced.

Pages H1651–52

Additional Cosponsors:

Pages H1653–54

Report Filed: A report was filed today as follows:

H.R. 4566, to amend the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act to provide relief to nonbanks from certain stress test requirements under such Act, with an amendment (H. Rept. 115–601).

Page H1650

Recess: The House recessed at 10:31 a.m. and reconvened at 12 noon.

Page H1615

Guest Chaplain: The prayer was offered by the Guest Chaplain, Reverend Dom Elias M. Carr, All Saints Regional Catholic School, Glen Cove, NY.

Page H1615

Unanimous Consent Agreement: Agreed by unanimous consent that the question of adopting amendment number 1 printed in part B of H. Rept. 115–595 to H.R. 4545 may be subject to postponement as though under clause 8 of rule 20.

Page H1624

Regulation A+ Improvement Act: The House passed H.R. 4263, to amend the Securities Act of 1933 with respect to small company capital formation, by a yea-and-nay vote of 246 yeas to 170 nays, Roll No. 110.

Pages H1634–42

Rejected the Beatty 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 235 nays, Roll No. 109.

Pages H1640–41

Pursuant to the Rule, the amendment printed in part D of H. Rept. 115–595 shall be considered as adopted.

Page H1634

H. Res. 773, the rule providing for consideration of the bills (H.R. 4545), (H.R. 1116), and (H.R. 4263) was agreed to yesterday, March 14th.

Financial Institutions Examination Fairness and Reform Act: The House passed H.R. 4545, to amend the Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council Act of 1978 to improve the examination of depository institutions, by a yea-and-nay vote of 283 yeas to 133 nays, Roll No. 112.

Pages H1624–34, H1642–43

Pursuant to the Rule, the amendment printed in part A of H. Rept. 115–595 shall be considered as adopted.

Page H1624

Rejected:

Maxine Waters (CA) amendment (No. 1 printed in part B of H. Rept. 115–595) that sought to narrow the applicability of the bill's additional appeal process from applying to all financial institutions regardless of their size, including megabanks and payday lenders, to only small, community banks and credit unions with less than \$10 billion in assets (by a yea-and-nay vote of 184 yeas to 233 nays, Roll No. 111).

Pages H1624–25, H1642–43

H. Res. 773, the rule providing for consideration of the bills (H.R. 4545), (H.R. 1116), and (H.R. 4263) was agreed to yesterday, March 14th.

Financial Stability Oversight Council Improvement Act and Stress Test Improvement Act—Rule for Consideration: The House agreed to 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 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, by a recorded vote of 235 yeas to 177 nays, Roll No. 114, after the previous question was ordered by a yea-and-nay vote of 232 yeas to 182 nays, Roll No. 113.

Pages H1618–24, H1643–45

Meeting Hour: Agreed by unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 12 noon on Monday, March 19th for Morning Hour debate.

Page H1645

Senate Referrals: S. 2155 was held at the desk. S. 1869 was held at the desk.

Senate Messages: Messages received from the Senate today appear on pages H1624 and H1649.

Quorum Calls—Votes: Five yea-and-nay votes and one recorded vote developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H1641, H1641–42, H1642–43, H1643, and H1644–45. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 5:07 p.m.

Committee Meetings

APPROPRIATIONS—U.S. ARMY

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Defense held a budget hearing on the U.S. Army. Testimony was heard from Mark T. Esper, Secretary of the Army; and General Mark A. Milley, Chief of Staff of the Army.

APPROPRIATIONS—DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies held a budget hearing on the Department of Veterans Affairs. Testimony was heard from David J. Shulkin, Secretary, Department of Veterans Affairs.

APPROPRIATIONS—DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development, and Related Agencies held a budget hearing on the Department of Energy. Testimony was heard from Rick Perry, Secretary, Department of Energy.

APPROPRIATIONS—DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies held a budget hearing on the Department of Health and Human Services. Testimony was heard from Alex Azar, Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services.

APPROPRIATIONS—OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL, DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies held a budget hearing on the Office of the Inspector General of the Department of Agriculture. Testimony was heard from the following Department of Agriculture officials: Phyllis K. Fong, Inspector General; Gil H. Harden, Assistant Inspector General for Audit; and Ann Coffey, Assistant Inspector General for Investigations.

SECURITY CHALLENGES IN EUROPE AND POSTURE FOR INTER-STATE COMPETITION WITH RUSSIA

Committee on Armed Services: Full Committee held a hearing entitled “Security Challenges in Europe and Posture for Inter-state Competition with Russia”. Testimony was heard from General Curtis M. Scaparrotti, Commander, U.S. European Command.

FISCAL YEAR 2019 BUDGET REQUEST ON AIR FORCE AIRBORNE INTELLIGENCE, SURVEILLANCE, AND RECONNAISSANCE (ISR) PROGRAMS

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Tactical Air and Land Forces held a hearing entitled “Fiscal Year 2019 Budget Request on Air Force Airborne Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance

(ISR) Programs”. Testimony was heard from Lieutenant General John Dolan, Director of Operations (J3), Headquarters, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; Lieutenant General Jerry Harris, Jr., Deputy Chief of Staff for Strategic Plans and Requirements (A8), Headquarters, U.S. Air Force; Lieutenant General Anthony Ierardi, Director, Force Structure, Resources, and Assessments (J8), Headquarters, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; and Susan Thornton, Director for Information Dominance Programs (SAF/AQI), Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Acquisition.

FISCAL YEAR 2019 BUDGET REQUEST FOR NATIONAL SECURITY SPACE PROGRAMS

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Strategic Forces held a hearing entitled “Fiscal Year 2019 Budget Request for National Security Space Programs”. Testimony was heard from Kenneth P. Rapuano, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense and Global Security, Department of Defense; General John J. Raymond, Commander, Air Force Space Command; and Betty Sapp, Director, National Reconnaissance Office.

STRENGTHENING ACCESS AND ACCOUNTABILITY TO WORK IN WELFARE PROGRAMS

Committee on Education and the Workforce: Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Development held a hearing entitled “Strengthening Access and Accountability to Work in Welfare Programs”. Testimony was heard from Adam Meier, Deputy Chief of Staff for Policy, Office of the Governor, Kentucky; and public witnesses.

EVALUATING CFIUS: ADMINISTRATION PERSPECTIVES

Committee on Financial Services: Subcommittee on Monetary Policy and Trade held a hearing entitled “Evaluating CFIUS: Administration Perspectives”. Testimony was heard from Heath P. Tarbert, Assistant Secretary for International Markets and Investment Policy, Department of the Treasury, Richard E. Ashooh, Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Department of Commerce; and Eric D. Chewning, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Manufacturing and Industrial Base Policy, Department of Defense.

AFTER THE BREACH: THE MONETIZATION AND ILLICIT USE OF STOLEN DATA

Committee on Financial Services: Subcommittee on Terrorism and Illicit Finance held a hearing entitled “After the Breach: the Monetization and Illicit Use of Stolen Data”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Full Committee held a 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. H.R. 4681, H.R. 4744, H. Res. 644, and H. Con. Res. 111 were ordered reported, as amended.

PREPAREDNESS, RESPONSE, AND REBUILDING: LESSONS FROM THE 2017 DISASTERS

Committee on Homeland Security: Full Committee held a hearing entitled “Preparedness, Response, and Rebuilding: Lessons from the 2017 Disasters”. Testimony was heard from Brock Long, Administrator, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security; Major General Donald E. Jackson, Jr., Deputy Commanding General, Civil and Emergency Operations, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Department of the Army, Department of Defense; John V. Kelly, Acting Inspector General, Office of the Inspector General, Department of Homeland Security; Reed Clay, Chief Operating Officer, Office of the Governor, Texas; Wesley Maul, Director, Division of Emergency Management, Florida; José E. Meléndez-Ortiz, Vice-Chairman, Committee on Federal and International Relations, and Status, Commonwealth of Puerto Rico; and a public witness.

BANG FOR THE BORDER SECURITY BUCK: WHAT DO WE GET FOR \$33 BILLION?

Committee on Homeland Security: Subcommittee on Border and Maritime Security held a hearing entitled “Bang for the Border Security Buck: What do we get for \$33 billion?”. Testimony was heard from Claire M. Grady, Under Secretary for Management, Directorate for Management, Department of Homeland Security; Ronald D. Vitiello, Acting Deputy Commissioner, Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security; Rebecca Gambler, Director, Homeland Security and Justice, Government Accountability Office; and public witnesses.

POLICY PRIORITIES AT THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AND THE ADMINISTRATION'S FISCAL YEAR 2019 BUDGET PROPOSAL

Committee on Natural Resources: Full Committee held a hearing entitled "Policy Priorities at the Department of the Interior and the Administration's Fiscal Year 2019 Budget Proposal". Testimony was heard from Ryan Zinke, Secretary, Department of the Interior.

ABANDONED HARDROCK MINES AND THE ROLE OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ENTITIES

Committee on Natural Resources: Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources held a hearing entitled "Abandoned Hardrock Mines and the Role of Non-Governmental Entities". Testimony was heard from Autumn Coleman, Program Manager, Abandoned Mine Lands Program, Department of Environmental Quality, Montana; Jeff Graves, Director, Office of Active and Inactive Mines, Colorado; David Strohmaier, County Commissioner, Missoula County, Montana; and a public witness.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Full Committee held a markup on H.R. 50, the "Unfunded Mandates Information and Transparency Act of 2017"; H.R. 2846, the "Federal Agency Customer Experience Act of 2017"; H.R. 4809, the "GOOD Act"; H.R. 5253, 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 Bloomington, Illinois, as the "Bloomington 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 des-

ignate 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". H.R. 50, H.R. 2846, H.R. 4809, H.R. 3303, H.R. 4446, H.R. 1496, and H.R. 3184 were ordered reported, as amended. H.R. 5253, H.R. 1376, H.R. 2979, H.R. 4574, H.R. 4722, H.R. 4840, H.R. 4890, H.R. 4960, and S. 931 were ordered reported, without amendment.

AN EXAMINATION OF FEDERAL PERMITTING PROCESSES

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Subcommittee on the Interior, Energy, and Environment held a hearing entitled "An Examination of Federal Permitting Processes". Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION BUDGET PROPOSAL FOR FISCAL YEAR 2019

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology: Full Committee held a hearing entitled "An Overview of the National Science Foundation Budget Proposal for Fiscal Year 2019". Testimony was heard from France Córdova, Director, National Science Foundation; and Maria T. Zuber, Chair, National Science Board.

BUILDING A 21ST CENTURY INFRASTRUCTURE FOR AMERICA: WATER RESOURCES PROJECTS AND POLICY

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure: Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment held a hearing entitled "Building a 21st Century Infrastructure for America: Water Resources Projects and Policy". Testimony was heard from R.D. James, Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works), Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army—Civil Works; and Lieutenant General Todd T. Semonite, Commanding General and Chief of Engineers, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

FY 2019 DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS BUDGET REQUEST FOR THE VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: Subcommittee on Health held a hearing entitled "FY 2019 Department of Veterans Affairs Budget Request for the Veterans Health Administration". Testimony was heard from Carolyn M. Clancy, M.D., Executive in Charge, Veterans Health Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs; Rachel Mitchell, Deputy Chief Financial Officer, Veterans Health Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs; and public witnesses.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FISCAL YEAR 2019 BUDGET: VETERANS BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION AND THE BOARD OF VETERANS' APPEALS

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs; and Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity held a joint hearing entitled "U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Fiscal Year 2019 Budget: Veterans Benefits Ad-

ministration and the Board of Veterans' Appeals". Testimony was heard from Cheryl L. Mason, Chairman, Board of Veterans' Appeals, Department of Veterans Affairs; and public witnesses.

Joint Meetings

No joint committee meetings were held.

**COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR MONDAY,
MARCH 19, 2018**

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

No meetings/hearings scheduled.

House

Committee on Rules, Full Committee, hearing on H.R. 4566, the "Alleviating Stress Test Burdens to Help Investors Act"; and H.R. 5247, the "Trickett Wendler, Frank Mongiello, Jordan McLinn, and Matthew Bellina Right to Try Act of 2018", 5 p.m., H-313 Capitol.

Final Résumé of Congressional Activity

FIRST SESSION OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIFTEENTH CONGRESS

The first table gives a comprehensive résumé of all legislative business transacted by the Senate and House.

The second table accounts for all nominations submitted to the Senate by the President for Senate confirmation.

DATA ON LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITY

January 3, 2017 through January 3, 2018

	<i>Senate</i>	<i>House</i>	<i>Total</i>
Days in session	195	192	..
Time in session	1,166 hrs., 34'	858 hrs., 32'	..
Congressional Record:			
Pages of proceedings	8,289	10,434	..
Extensions of Remarks .....	..	1,769	..
Public bills enacted into law	33	67	100
Private bills enacted into law .....	..	..	..
Bills in conference .....	..	..	..
Measures passed, total	438	668	1,106
Senate bills	114	30	..
House bills	67	441	..
Senate joint resolutions	8	6	..
House joint resolutions	17	20	..
Senate concurrent resolutions	10	9	..
House concurrent resolutions	8	16	..
Simple resolutions	214	146	..
Measures reported, total	* 271	*476	747
Senate bills	211	2	..
House bills	28	370	..
Senate joint resolutions	1	..	..
House joint resolutions .....	..	2	..
Senate concurrent resolutions	2	..	..
House concurrent resolutions .....	..	4	..
Simple resolutions	29	98	..
Special reports	14	6	..
Conference reports	1	2	..
Measures pending on calendar	174	114	..
Measures introduced, total	2,713	5,619	8,332
Bills	2,265	4,724	..
Joint resolutions	51	124	..
Concurrent resolutions	31	97	..
Simple resolutions	366	674	..
Quorum calls	3	1	..
Yea-and-nay votes	325	354	..
Recorded votes .....	..	355	..
Bills vetoed .....	..	..	..
Veto overridden .....	..	..	..

DISPOSITION OF EXECUTIVE NOMINATIONS

January 3, 2017 through January 3, 2018

Civilian nominations, totaling 594, disposed of as follows:

Confirmed	322
Unconfirmed	146
Withdrawn	36
Returned to White House	90

Other Civilian nominations, totaling 1,211, disposed of as follows:

Confirmed	1,200
Unconfirmed	2
Returned to White House	9

Air Force nominations, totaling 5,978, disposed of as follows:

Confirmed	5,899
Unconfirmed	76
Withdrawn	1
Returned to White House	2

Army nominations, totaling 6,617, disposed of as follows:

Confirmed	6,604
Unconfirmed	12
Withdrawn	1

Navy nominations, totaling 4,285, disposed of as follows:

Confirmed	4,273
Unconfirmed	11
Returned to White House	1

Marine Corps nominations, totaling 1,314, disposed of as follows:

Confirmed	1,314
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Summary

Total nominations carried over from the First Session	0
Total nominations received this Session	19,999
Total confirmed	19,612
Total unconfirmed	247
Total withdrawn	38
Total returned to the White House	102

*These figures include all measures reported, even if there was no accompanying report. A total of 198 written reports have been filed in the Senate, 484 reports have been filed in the House.

HISTORY OF BILLS ENACTED INTO PUBLIC LAW

(115th Cong., 1st Sess.)

BILLS ENACTED INTO PUBLIC LAW (115TH, 1ST SESSION)

	Law No.		Law No.		Law No.		Law No.		Law No.
S. 84	115-2	S. 1616	115-60	H.R. 339	115-53	H.R. 1362	115-16	H.R. 3819	115-62
S. 114	115-46	S. 1617	115-81	H.R. 353	115-25	H.R. 1370	115-96	H.R. 3823	115-63
S. 178	115-70	S. 1766	115-107	H.R. 366	115-38	H.R. 1545	115-86	H.R. 3949	115-89
S. 190	115-78	S. 1866	115-64	H.R. 374	115-49	H.R. 1616	115-76	H.R. 4374	115-92
S. 305	115-15	S. 2273	115-100	H.R. 375	115-39	H.R. 1679	115-87	H.R. 4661	115-98
S. 327	115-66			H.R. 381	115-109	H.R. 1927	115-104		
S. 371	115-94	S.J. Res. 1	115-18	H.R. 510	115-50	H.R. 2142	115-112	H.J. Res. 37	115-11
S. 419	115-36	S.J. Res. 30	115-27	H.R. 518	115-115	H.R. 2210	115-47	H.J. Res. 38	115-5
S. 442	115-10	S.J. Res. 34	115-22	H.R. 534	115-32	H.R. 2228	115-113	H.J. Res. 40	115-8
S. 496	115-33	S.J. Res. 35	115-28	H.R. 560	115-101	H.R. 2266	115-72	H.J. Res. 41	115-4
S. 504	115-79	S.J. Res. 36	115-29	H.R. 601	115-56	H.R. 2288	115-55	H.J. Res. 42	115-17
S. 544	115-26	S.J. Res. 49	115-58	H.R. 609	115-9	H.R. 2331	115-114	H.J. Res. 43	115-23
S. 583	115-37			H.R. 624	115-59	H.R. 2430	115-52	H.J. Res. 44	115-12
S. 585	115-73	H.R. 1	115-97	H.R. 657	115-40	H.R. 2519	115-65	H.J. Res. 45	115-13
S. 652	115-71	H.R. 39	115-1	H.R. 699	115-110	H.R. 2611	115-117	H.J. Res. 57	115-14
S. 782	115-82	H.R. 72	115-3	H.R. 863	115-111	H.R. 2810	115-91	H.J. Res. 58	115-35
S. 810	115-67	H.R. 194	115-85	H.R. 873	115-51	H.R. 2989	115-77	H.J. Res. 66	115-24
S. 920	115-80	H.R. 228	115-93	H.R. 954	115-116	H.R. 3031	115-84	H.J. Res. 67	115-20
S. 1083	115-42	H.R. 244	115-31	H.R. 1117	115-69	H.R. 3110	115-61	H.J. Res. 69	115-54
S. 1094	115-41	H.R. 255	115-6	H.R. 1228	115-19	H.R. 3218	115-48	H.J. Res. 76	115-21
S. 1141	115-68	H.R. 267	115-108	H.R. 1238	115-43	H.R. 3243	115-88	H.J. Res. 83	115-30
S. 1266	115-95	H.R. 274	115-34	H.R. 1242	115-102	H.R. 3298	115-45	H.J. Res. 99	115-74
S. 1393	115-105	H.R. 304	115-83	H.R. 1306	115-103	H.R. 3364	115-44	H.J. Res. 111	115-90
S. 1532	115-106	H.R. 321	115-7	H.R. 1329	115-75	H.R. 3732	115-57		
S. 1536	115-99								

BILLS VETOED

Title	Bill No.	Date introduced	Committee		Date Reported		Report No.		Date of passage		Public Law	
			House	Senate	House	Senate	House 115—	Senate 115—	House	Senate	Date approved	No. 115—
To amend title 5, United States Code, to codify the Presidential Innovation Fellows Program, and for other purposes.	H.R. 39	Jan. 3, 2017	OGR						Jan. 11, 2017	Jan. 17, 2017	Jan. 20, 2017	1
To provide for an exception to a limitation against appointment of persons as Secretary of Defense within seven years of relief from active duty as a regular commissioned officer of the Armed Forces.	S. 84	Jan. 10, 2017		AS		Jan. 12, 2017		0	Jan. 13, 2017	Jan. 12, 2017	Jan. 20, 2017	2
To ensure the Government Accountability Office has adequate access to information.	H.R. 72	Jan. 3, 2017	OGR	HS&GA					Jan. 4, 2017	Jan. 17, 2017	Jan. 31, 2017	3
Providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of a rule submitted by the Securities and Exchange Commission relating to "Disclosure of Payments by Resource Extraction Issuers."	H.J. Res. 41	Jan. 30, 2017	FS						Feb. 1, 2017	Feb. 3, 2017	Feb. 14, 2017	4
Disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of the Interior known as the Stream Protection Rule.	H.J. Res. 38	Jan. 30, 2017	NR						Feb. 1, 2017	Feb. 2, 2017	Feb. 16, 2017	5
To authorize the National Science Foundation to support entrepreneurial programs for women.	H.R. 255	Jan. 4, 2017	SST	CST		Feb. 1, 2017		0	Jan. 10, 2017	Feb. 14, 2017	Feb. 28, 2017	6
To inspire women to enter the aerospace field, including science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, through mentorship and outreach.	H.R. 321	Jan. 5, 2017	SST	CST		Feb. 1, 2017		0	Jan. 10, 2017	Feb. 14, 2017	Feb. 28, 2017	7
Providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Social Security Administration relating to Implementation of the NICS Improvement Amendments Act of 2007.	H.J. Res. 40	Jan. 30, 2017	Jud						Feb. 2, 2017	Feb. 15, 2017	Feb. 28, 2017	8
To designate the Department of Veterans Affairs health care center in Center Township, Butler County, Pennsylvania, as the "Abie Abraham VA Clinic".	H.R. 609	Jan. 23, 2017	VA	VA					Feb. 13, 2017	Feb. 17, 2017	Mar. 13, 2017	9
To authorize the programs of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and for other purposes.	S. 442	Feb. 17, 2017	SST						Mar. 7, 2017	Feb. 17, 2017	Mar. 21, 2017	10
Disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of Defense, the General Services Administration, and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration relating to the Federal Acquisition Regulation.	H.J. Res. 37	Jan. 30, 2017	OGR						Feb. 2, 2017	Mar. 6, 2017	Mar. 27, 2017	11
Disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of the Interior relating to Bureau of Land Management regulations that establish the procedures used to prepare, revise, or amend land use plans pursuant to the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976.	H.J. Res. 44	Jan. 30, 2017	NR						Feb. 7, 2017	Mar. 7, 2017	Mar. 27, 2017	12
Providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Department of Education relating to accountability and State plans under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.	H.J. Res. 57	Feb. 1, 2017	E&W						Feb. 7, 2017	Mar. 9, 2017	Mar. 27, 2017	13

Providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Department of Education relating to teacher preparation issues.	H.J.	Res.	58	Feb. 1, 2017	E&W	.....	.....	.....	Feb. 7, 2017	Mar. 8, 2017	Mar. 27, 2017	14
To amend title 4, United States Code, to encourage the display of the flag of the United States on National Vietnam War Veterans Day.	S.		305	Feb. 3, 2017	Jud	.....	.....	.....	Mar. 21, 2017	Feb. 3, 2017	Mar. 28, 2017	15
To name the Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic in Pago Pago, American Samoa, the Faleomavaega Eni Fa'au'a Hunkin VA Clinic.	H.R.		1362	Mar. 6, 2017	VA	.....	.....	.....	Mar. 7, 2017	Mar. 15, 2017	Mar. 31, 2017	16
Disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of Labor relating to drug testing of unemployment compensation applicants.	H.J.	Res.	42	Jan. 30, 2017	WM	.....	.....	.....	Feb. 15, 2017	Mar. 14, 2017	Mar. 31, 2017	17
Approving the location of a memorial to commemorate and honor the members of the Armed Forces who served on active duty in support of Operation Desert Storm or Operation Desert Shield.	S.J.	Res.	1	Jan. 3, 2017	ENR	.....	.....	.....	Mar. 15, 2017	Mar. 8, 2017	Mar. 31, 2017	18
To provide for the appointment of members of the Board of Directors of the Office of Compliance to replace members whose terms expire during 2017, and for other purposes.	H.R.		1228	Feb. 27, 2017	HA	.....	.....	.....	Mar. 15, 2017	Mar. 21, 2017	Apr. 3, 2017	19
Providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the final rule of the Department of the Interior relating to "Non-Subsistence Take of Wildlife, and Public Participation and Closure Procedures, on National Wildlife Refuges in Alaska".	H.J.	Res.	69	Feb. 7, 2017	NR	.....	.....	.....	Feb. 16, 2017	Mar. 21, 2017	Apr. 3, 2017	20
Disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of Labor relating to "Clarification of Employer's Continuing Obligation to Make and Maintain an Accurate Record of Each Recordable Injury and Illness".	H.J.	Res.	83	Feb. 21, 2017	E&W	.....	.....	.....	Mar. 1, 2017	Mar. 22, 2017	Apr. 3, 2017	21
Providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Federal Communications Commission relating to "Protecting the Privacy of Customers of Broadband and Other Telecommunications Services".	S.J.	Res.	34	Mar. 7, 2017	CST	.....	.....	.....	Mar. 28, 2017	Mar. 23, 2017	Apr. 3, 2017	22
Providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the final rule submitted by Secretary of Health and Human Services relating to compliance with title X requirements by project recipients in selecting subrecipients.	H.J.	Res.	43	Jan. 30, 2017	EC	.....	.....	.....	Feb. 16, 2017	Mar. 30, 2017	Apr. 13, 2017	23
Disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of Labor relating to savings arrangements established by qualified State political subdivisions for non-governmental employees.	H.J.	Res.	67	Feb. 7, 2017	E&W	.....	.....	.....	Feb. 15, 2017	Mar. 30, 2017	Apr. 13, 2017	24

Title	Bill No.	Date introduced	Committee		Date Reported		Report No.		Date of passage		Public Law	
			House	Senate	House	Senate	House 115—	Senate 115—	House	Senate	Date approved	No. 115—
To improve the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's weather research through a focused program of investment on affordable and attainable advances in observational, computing, and modeling capabilities to support substantial improvement in weather forecasting and prediction of high impact weather events, to expand commercial opportunities for the provision of weather data, and for other purposes.	H.R. 353	Jan. 6, 2017	SST				.....	.....	Jan. 9, 2017	Mar. 29, 2017	Apr. 18, 2017	25
To amend the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 to modify the termination date for the Veterans Choice Program, and for other purposes.	S. 544	Mar. 7, 2017		VA	.....		.....	.....	Apr. 5, 2017	Apr. 3, 2017	Apr. 19, 2017	26
Providing for the reappointment of Steve Case as a citizen regent of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution.	S.J. Res. 30	Mar. 2, 2017	HA	RAdm			.....	.....	Apr. 6, 2017	Mar. 27, 2017	Apr. 19, 2017	27
Providing for the appointment of Michael Govan as a citizen regent of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution.	S.J. Res. 35	Mar. 8, 2017	HA	RAdm			.....	.....	Apr. 6, 2017	Mar. 27, 2017	Apr. 19, 2017	28
Providing for the appointment of Roger W. Ferguson as a citizen regent of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution.	S.J. Res. 36	Mar. 8, 2017	HA	RAdm			.....	.....	Apr. 6, 2017	Mar. 27, 2017	Apr. 19, 2017	29
Making further continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2017, and for other purposes.	H.J. Res. 99	Apr. 26, 2017	App				.....	.....	Apr. 28, 2017	Apr. 28, 2017	Apr. 28, 2017	30
Making appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2017, and for other purposes.	H.R. 244	Jan. 4, 2017	VA	HEL&P			.....	.....	Feb. 13, 2017	Mar. 21, 2017	May 5, 2017	31
To require the Secretary of State to take such actions as may be necessary for the United States to join the Bureau of International Expositions, and for other purposes.	H.R. 534	Jan. 13, 2017	FA	FR		May 3, 2017	.....	0	Apr. 25, 2017	May 4, 2017	May 8, 2017	32
To repeal the rule issued by the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration entitled "Metropolitan Planning Organization Coordination and Planning Area Reform".	S. 496	Mar. 2, 2017	TI	BHUA			.....	.....	Apr. 27, 2017	Mar. 8, 2017	May 12, 2017	33
To provide for reimbursement for the use of modern travel services by Federal employees traveling on official Government business, and for other purposes.	H.R. 274	Jan. 4, 2017	OGR	HS&GA		Apr. 24, 2017	.....	31	Jan. 10, 2017	May 2, 2017	May 16, 2017	34
Disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of Labor relating to savings arrangements established by States for non-governmental employees.	H.J. Res. 66	Feb. 7, 2017	E&W				.....	.....	Feb. 15, 2017	May 3, 2017	May 17, 2017	35
To require adequate reporting on the Public Safety Officers' Benefits program, and for other purposes.	S. 419	Feb. 16, 2017		Jud	.....	Mar. 9, 2017	.....	0	May 17, 2017	May 16, 2017	June 2, 2017	36
To amend the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to authorize COPS grantees to use grant funds to hire veterans as career law enforcement officers, and for other purposes.	S. 583	Mar. 8, 2017		Jud	.....	May 11, 2017	.....	0	May 17, 2017	May 16, 2017	June 2, 2017	37

To amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to direct the Under Secretary for Management of the Department of Homeland Security to make certain improvements in managing the Department's vehicle fleet, and for other purposes.	H.R.	366	Jan. 6, 2017	HS	HS&GA	Apr. 24, 2017	.....	32	Jan. 31, 2017	May 2, 2017	June 6, 2017	38
To designate the Federal building and United States courthouse located at 719 Church Street in Nashville, Tennessee, as the "Fred D. Thompson Federal Building and United States Courthouse".	H.R.	375	Jan. 9, 2017	TI		Mar. 7, 2017	23	.....	Mar. 7, 2017	May 24, 2017	June 6, 2017	39
To amend title 5, United States Code, to extend certain protections against prohibited personnel practices, and for other purposes.	H.R.	657	Jan. 24, 2017	OGR	HS&GA	Mar. 29, 2017	67	.....	May 1, 2017	May 25, 2017	June 14, 2017	40
To amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the accountability of employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.	S.	1094	May 11, 2017		VA	.....	.....	0	June 13, 2017	June 6, 2017	June 23, 2017	41
To amend section 1214 of title 5, United States Code, to provide for stays during a period that the Merit Systems Protection Board lacks a quorum.	S.	1083	May 10, 2017	OGR	HS&GA		.....	.....	May 25, 2017	May 11, 2017	June 27, 2017	42
To amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to make the Assistant Secretary of Homeland Security for Health Affairs responsible for coordinating the efforts of the Department of Homeland Security related to food, agriculture, and veterinary defense against terrorism, and for other purposes.	H.R.	1238	Feb. 28, 2017	HS EC Agr	HS&GA	Mar. 16, 2017	42	.....	Mar. 22, 2017	May 24, 2017	June 30, 2017	43
To provide congressional review and to counter aggression by the Governments of Iran, the Russian Federation, and North Korea, and for other purposes.	H.R.	3364	July 24, 2017	FA Int Jud OGR AS FS R WM TI		.....	.....	.....	July 25, 2017	July 27, 2017	Aug. 2, 2017	44
To authorize the Capitol Police Board to make payments from the United States Capitol Police Memorial Fund to employees of the United States Capitol Police who have sustained serious line-of-duty injuries, and for other purposes.	H.R.	3298	July 19, 2017	HA	RAdm		.....	.....	July 24, 2017	July 27, 2017	Aug. 4, 2017	45
To authorize appropriations and to appropriate amounts for the Veterans Choice Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs, to improve hiring authorities of the Department, to authorize major medical facility leases, and for other purposes.	S.	114	Jan. 12, 2017	VA	VA		.....	.....	July 28, 2017	May 25, 2017	Aug. 12, 2017	46
To designate the community living center of the Department of Veterans Affairs in Butler Township, Butler County, Pennsylvania, as the "Sergeant Joseph George Kuskick VA Community Living Center".	H.R.	2210	Apr. 27, 2017	VA		.....	.....	.....	July 17, 2017	Aug. 1, 2017	Aug. 16, 2017	47
To amend title 38, United States Code, to make certain improvements in the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.	H.R.	3218	July 13, 2017	VA AS		July 24, 2017	247	.....	July 24, 2017	Aug. 2, 2017	Aug. 16, 2017	48
To remove the sunset provision of section 203 of Public Law 105-384, and for other purposes.	H.R.	374	Jan. 9, 2017	NR		.....	.....	.....	Jan. 30, 2017	Aug. 3, 2017	Aug. 18, 2017	49

Title	Bill No.	Date introduced	Committee		Date Reported		Report No.		Date of passage		Public Law	
			House	Senate	House	Senate	House 115—	Senate 115—	House	Senate	Date approved	No. 115—
To establish a system for integration of Rapid DNA instruments for use by law enforcement to reduce violent crime and reduce the current DNA analysis backlog.	H.R. 510	Jan. 12, 2017	Jud	Jud	May 11, 2017		117	.....	May 16, 2017	Aug. 1, 2017	Aug. 18, 2017	50
To authorize the Global War on Terror Memorial Foundation to establish the National Global War on Terrorism Memorial as a commemorative work in the District of Columbia, and for other purposes.	H.R. 873	Feb. 6, 2017	NR		July 28, 2017	.....	264	.....	July 28, 2017	Aug. 3, 2017	Aug. 18, 2017	51
To amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to revise and extend the user-fee programs for prescription drugs, medical devices, generic drugs, and biosimilar biological products, and for other purposes.	H.R. 2430	May 16, 2017	EC		July 11, 2017	.....	201	.....	July 12, 2017	Aug. 3, 2017	Aug. 18, 2017	52
To amend Public Law 94-241 with respect to the Northern Mariana Islands.	H.R. 339	Jan. 5, 2017	NR	ENR			.....	.....	Jan. 30, 2017	Aug. 1, 2017	Aug. 22, 2017	53
Granting the consent and approval of Congress for the Commonwealth of Virginia, the State of Maryland, and the District of Columbia to enter into a compact relating to the establishment of the Washington Metrorail Safety Commission.	H.J. Res. 76	Feb. 16, 2017	Jud	Jud	July 17, 2017	.....	227	.....	July 17, 2017	Aug. 4, 2017	Aug. 22, 2017	54
To amend title 38, United States Code, to reform the rights and processes relating to appeals of decisions regarding claims for benefits under the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.	H.R. 2288	May 2, 2017	VA	VA	May 19, 2017		135	.....	May 23, 2017	Aug. 1, 2017	Aug. 23, 2017	55
Making continuing appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2018, and for other purposes.	H.R. 601	Jan. 23, 2017	FA	FR	June 5, 2017		.....	0	Jan. 24, 2017	Aug. 1, 2017	Sept. 8, 2017	56
To amend section 1113 of the Social Security Act to provide authority for increased fiscal year 2017 and 2018 payments for temporary assistance to United States citizens returned from foreign countries.	H.R. 3732	Sept. 11, 2017	WM Bud			.....	.....	.....	Sept. 11, 2017	Sept. 11, 2017	Sept. 12, 2017	57
Condemning the violence and domestic terrorist attack that took place during events between August 11 and August 12, 2017, in Charlottesville, Virginia, recognizing the first responders who lost their lives while monitoring the events, offering deepest condolences to the families and friends of those individuals who were killed and deepest sympathies and support to those individuals who were injured by the violence, expressing support for the Charlottesville community, rejecting White nationalists, White supremacists, the Ku Klux Klan, neo-Nazis, and other hate groups, and urging the President and the President's Cabinet to use all available resources to address the threats posed by those groups.	S.J. Res. 49	Sept. 6, 2017			.....	.....	.....	.....	Sept. 12, 2017	Sept. 11, 2017	Sept. 14, 2017	58
To restrict the inclusion of social security account numbers on Federal documents sent by mail, and for other purposes.	H.R. 624	Jan. 24, 2017	OGR WM		May 23, 2017	.....	150	.....	May 24, 2017	Sept. 6, 2017	Sept. 15, 2017	59

To award the Congressional Gold Medal to Bob Dole, in recognition for his service to the nation as a soldier, legislator, and statesman.	S.	1616	July 24, 2017	FS	BHUA					.....	Sept. 5, 2017	Sept. 5, 2017	Aug. 3, 2017	Sept. 15, 2017	60
To amend the Financial Stability Act of 2010 to modify the term of the independent member of the Financial Stability Oversight Council.	H.R.	3110	June 29, 2017	FS			Sept. 5, 2017	.....	293	.....		Sept. 5, 2017	Sept. 19, 2017	Sept. 27, 2017	61
To amend title 38, United States Code, to extend certain expiring provisions of law administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.	H.R.	3819	Sept. 25, 2017	VA Bud AS				.....	.....	.....		Sept. 25, 2017	Sept. 27, 2017	Sept. 29, 2017	62
To amend title 49, United States Code, to extend authorizations for the airport improvement program, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the funding and expenditure authority of the Airport and Airway Trust Fund, to provide disaster tax relief, and for other purposes.	H.R.	3823	Sept. 25, 2017	WM TI EC FS Bud				.....	.....	.....		Sept. 28, 2017	Sept. 28, 2017	Sept. 29, 2017	63
To provide the Secretary of Education with waiver authority for the reallocation rules and authority to extend the deadline by which funds have to be reallocated in the campus-based aid programs under the Higher Education Act of 1965 due to Hurricane Harvey, Hurricane Irma, and Hurricane Maria, to provide equitable services to children and teachers in private schools, and for other purposes.	S.	1866	Sept. 26, 2017				.....	.....	.....	.....		Sept. 28, 2017	Sept. 26, 2017	Sept. 29, 2017	64
To require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint commemorative coins in recognition of the 100th anniversary of The American Legion.	H.R.	2519	May 18, 2017	FS				.....	.....	.....		Sept. 25, 2017	Sept. 28, 2017	Oct. 6, 2017	65
To direct the Securities and Exchange Commission to provide a safe harbor related to certain investment fund research reports, and for other purposes.	S.	327	Feb. 7, 2017		BHUA			Mar. 13, 2017	.....	0		Sept. 27, 2017	Sept. 11, 2017	Oct. 6, 2017	66
To facilitate construction of a bridge on certain property in Christian County, Missouri, and for other purposes.	S.	810	Apr. 4, 2017	TI	EPW			Aug. 2, 2017	.....	142		Sept. 25, 2017	Aug. 3, 2017	Oct. 6, 2017	67
To ensure that the United States promotes the meaningful participation of women in mediation and negotiation processes seeking to prevent, mitigate, or resolve violent conflict.	S.	1141	May 16, 2017		FR			June 8, 2017	.....	93		Sept. 25, 2017	Aug. 3, 2017	Oct. 6, 2017	68
To require the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to submit a report regarding certain plans regarding assistance to applicants and grantees during the response to an emergency or disaster.	H.R.	1117	Feb. 16, 2017	TI	HS&GA		Mar. 9, 2017	Sept. 18, 2017	31	158		Mar. 27, 2017	Oct. 4, 2017	Oct. 18, 2017	69
To prevent elder abuse and exploitation and improve the justice system's response to victims in elder abuse and exploitation cases.	S.	178	Jan. 20, 2017	Jud EC	Jud			Mar. 23, 2017	.....	9		Oct. 3, 2017	Aug. 1, 2017	Oct. 18, 2017	70
To amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize a program for early detection, diagnosis, and treatment regarding deaf and hard-of-hearing newborns, infants, and young children.	S.	652	Mar. 15, 2017	EC	HEL&P			May 1, 2017	.....	0		Oct. 3, 2017	Sept. 6, 2017	Oct. 18, 2017	71
Making additional supplemental appropriations for disaster relief requirements for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2018, and for other purposes.	H.R.	2266	May 1, 2017	Jud	Jud		May 17, 2017		130	.....		May 17, 2017	Sept. 27, 2017	Oct. 26, 2017	72

Title	Bill No.	Date introduced	Committee		Date Reported		Report No.		Date of passage		Public Law	
			House	Senate	House	Senate	House 115—	Senate 115—	House	Senate	Date approved	No. 115—
To provide greater whistleblower protections for Federal employees, increased awareness of Federal whistleblower protections, and increased accountability and required discipline for Federal supervisors who retaliate against whistleblowers, and for other purposes.	S. 585	Mar. 8, 2017	OGR VA	HS&GA		May 4, 2017	.....	44	Oct. 12, 2017	May 25, 2017	Oct. 26, 2017	73
Providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection relating to "Arbitration Agreements".	H.J. Res. 111	July 20, 2017	FS			.....	.....	.....	July 25, 2017	Oct. 24, 2017	Nov. 1, 2017	74
To increase, effective as of December 1, 2017, the rates of compensation for veterans with service-connected disabilities and the rates of dependency and indemnity compensation for the survivors of certain disabled veterans, and for other purposes.	H.R. 1329	Mar. 2, 2017	VA	VA	May 19, 2017		134	.....	May 23, 2017	Oct. 25, 2017	Nov. 2, 2017	75
To amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to authorize the National Computer Forensics Institute, and for other purposes.	H.R. 1616	Mar. 17, 2017	Jud HS	Jud			.....	.....	May 16, 2017	Oct. 2, 2017	Nov. 2, 2017	76
To establish the Frederick Douglass Bicentennial Commission.	H.R. 2989	June 21, 2017	OGR		Oct. 5, 2017	.....	340	.....	Oct. 11, 2017	Oct. 18, 2017	Nov. 2, 2017	77
To provide for consideration of the extension under the Energy Policy and Conservation Act of nonapplication of No-Load Mode energy efficiency standards to certain security or life safety alarms or surveillance systems, and for other purposes.	S. 190	Jan. 23, 2017		ENR	.....	May 24, 2017	.....	76	Oct. 11, 2017	Aug. 1, 2017	Nov. 2, 2017	78
To permanently authorize the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Business Travel Card Program.	S. 504	Mar. 2, 2017		HS&GA	.....	Aug. 1, 2017	.....	140	Oct. 23, 2017	Sept. 26, 2017	Nov. 2, 2017	79
To establish a National Clinical Care Commission.	S. 920	Apr. 24, 2017		HEL&P	.....	May 1, 2017	.....	0	Oct. 11, 2017	Sept. 6, 2017	Nov. 2, 2017	80
To designate the checkpoint of the United States Border Patrol located on United States Highway 77 North in Sarita, Texas, as the "Javier Vega, Jr. Border Patrol Checkpoint".	S. 1617	July 24, 2017	TI	HS&GA			.....	.....	Oct. 10, 2017	Aug. 3, 2017	Nov. 2, 2017	81
To reauthorize the National Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force Program, and for other purposes.	S. 782	Mar. 30, 2017	Jud	Jud		June 8, 2017	.....	0	Oct. 3, 2017	June 15, 2017	Nov. 2, 2017	82
To amend the Controlled Substances Act with regard to the provision of emergency medical services.	H.R. 304	Jan. 5, 2017	EC Jud	HEL&P			.....	.....	Jan. 9, 2017	Oct. 24, 2017	Nov. 17, 2017	83
To amend title 5, United States Code, to provide for flexibility in making withdrawals from a Thrift Savings Plan account, and for other purposes.	H.R. 3031	June 23, 2017	OGR		Oct. 10, 2017	.....	343	.....	Oct. 11, 2017	Nov. 6, 2017	Nov. 17, 2017	84
To ensure the effective processing of mail by Federal agencies, and for other purposes.	H.R. 194	Jan. 3, 2017	OGR	HS&GA	Mar. 29, 2017	Oct. 19, 2017	66	176	May 17, 2017	Nov. 8, 2017	Nov. 21, 2017	85
To amend title 38, United States Code, to clarify the authority of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to disclose certain patient information to State controlled substance monitoring programs, and for other purposes.	H.R. 1545	Mar. 15, 2017	VA	VA	May 22, 2017		144	.....	May 23, 2017	Nov. 15, 2017	Nov. 21, 2017	86

To ensure that the Federal Emergency Management Agency's current efforts to modernize its grant management system includes applicant accessibility and transparency, and for other purposes.	H.R.	1679	Mar. 22, 2017	TI	HS&GA	May 2, 2017	Sept. 18, 2017	107	159	May 2, 2017	Nov. 13, 2017	Nov. 21, 2017	87
To amend title 40, United States Code, to eliminate the sunset of certain provisions relating to information technology, to amend the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015 to extend the sunset relating to the Federal Data Center Consolidation Initiative, and for other purposes.	H.R.	3243	July 14, 2017	OGR		Oct. 10, 2017	.....	344	.....	Oct. 11, 2017	Nov. 8, 2017	Nov. 21, 2017	88
To amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the designation of State approving agencies for multi-State apprenticeship programs for purposes of the educational assistance programs of the Department of Veterans Affairs.	H.R.	3949	Oct. 4, 2017	VA		Nov. 7, 2017	.....	398	.....	Nov. 7, 2017	Nov. 15, 2017	Nov. 21, 2017	89
Making further continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2018, and for other purposes.	H.J. Res.	123	Dec. 4, 2017	App			.....	.....	.....	Dec. 7, 2017	Dec. 7, 2017	Dec. 8, 2017	90
To authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.	H.R.	2810	June 7, 2017	AS		July 6, 2017	.....	200	.....	July 14, 2017	Sept. 18, 2017	Dec. 12, 2017	91
To amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to authorize additional emergency uses for medical products to reduce deaths and severity of injuries caused by agents of war, and for other purposes.	H.R.	4374	Nov. 13, 2017	EC AS			.....	.....	.....	Nov. 15, 2017	Nov. 16, 2017	Dec. 12, 2017	92
To amend the Indian Employment, Training and Related Services Demonstration Act of 1992 to facilitate the ability of Indian tribes to integrate the employment, training, and related services from diverse Federal sources, and for other purposes.	H.R.	228	Jan. 3, 2017	NR			.....	.....	.....	Feb. 27, 2017	Nov. 29, 2017	Dec. 18, 2017	93
To make technical changes and other improvements to the Department of State Authorities Act, Fiscal Year 2017.	S.	371	Feb. 14, 2017	FA	FR		.....	.....	.....	July 28, 2017	May 1, 2017	Dec. 18, 2017	94
To authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to enter into contracts with nonprofit organizations to investigate medical centers of the Department of Veterans Affairs.	S.	1266	May 25, 2017	VA	VA		.....	.....	.....	Dec. 6, 2017	Nov. 9, 2017	Dec. 20, 2017	95
To amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to issue Department of Homeland Security-wide guidance and develop training programs as part of the Department of Homeland Security Blue Campaign, and for other purposes.	H.R.	1370	Mar. 6, 2017	HS Jud	HS&GA	May 22, 2017	.....	143	.....	May 23, 2017	Nov. 6, 2017	Dec. 22, 2017	96
To provide for reconciliation pursuant to titles II and V of the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2018.	H.R.	1	Nov. 2, 2017	WM		Nov. 13, 2017	.....	409	.....	Nov. 16, 2017	Dec. 2, 2017	Dec. 22, 2017	97
To reauthorize the United States Fire Administration, the Assistance to Firefighters Grants program, the Fire Prevention and Safety Grants program, and the Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response grant program, and for other purposes.	H.R.	4661	Dec. 15, 2017	SST			.....	.....	.....	Dec. 18, 2017	Dec. 21, 2017	Jan. 3, 2018	98

Title	Bill No.	Date introduced	Committee		Date Reported		Report No.		Date of passage		Public Law	
			House	Senate	House	Senate	House 115—	Senate 115—	House	Senate	Date approved	No. 115—
To designate a human trafficking prevention coordinator and to expand the scope of activities authorized under the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's outreach and education program to include human trafficking prevention activities, and for other purposes.	S. 1536	July 12, 2017	TI	CST	Aug. 3, 2017		.....	177	Dec. 19, 2017	Sept. 14, 2017	Jan. 3, 2018	99
To extend the period during which vessels that are shorter than 79 feet in length and fishing vessels are not required to have a permit for discharges incidental to the normal operation of the vessel.	S. 2273	Dec. 21, 2017			.....		.....	.....	Dec. 22, 2017	Dec. 21, 2017	Jan. 3, 2018	100
To amend the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area Improvement Act to provide access to certain vehicles serving residents of municipalities adjacent to the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, and for other purposes.	H.R. 560	Jan. 13, 2017	NR	ENR	May 9, 2017		.....	51	Jan. 30, 2017	Dec. 21, 2017	Jan. 8, 2018	101
To establish the 400 Years of African-American History Commission, and for other purposes.	H.R. 1242	Feb. 28, 2017	OGR		May 1, 2017		105	.....	May 1, 2017	Dec. 21, 2017	Jan. 8, 2018	102
To provide for the conveyance of certain Federal land in the State of Oregon, and for other purposes.	H.R. 1306	Mar. 2, 2017	NR		July 11, 2017		204	.....	July 11, 2017	Dec. 21, 2017	Jan. 8, 2018	103
To amend title 54, United States Code, to establish within the National Park Service the African American Civil Rights Network, and for other purposes.	H.R. 1927	Apr. 5, 2017	NR	ENR	July 24, 2017		241	.....	July 26, 2017	Dec. 21, 2017	Jan. 8, 2018	104
To streamline the process by which active duty military, reservists, and veterans receive commercial driver's licenses.	S. 1393	June 21, 2017		CST	.....		.....	161	Dec. 21, 2017	Sept. 14, 2017	Jan. 8, 2018	105
To disqualify from operating a commercial motor vehicle for life an individual who uses a commercial motor vehicle in committing a felony involving human trafficking.	S. 1532	July 12, 2017	TI	CST	Aug. 3, 2017		.....	188	Dec. 21, 2017	Sept. 14, 2017	Jan. 8, 2018	106
To reauthorize the SAFER Act of 2013, and for other purposes.	S. 1766	Sept. 6, 2017	Jud	Jud	Sept. 28, 2017		.....	0	Dec. 21, 2017	Oct. 23, 2017	Jan. 8, 2018	107
To redesignate the Martin Luther King, Junior, National Historic Site in the State of Georgia, and for other purposes.	H.R. 267	Jan. 4, 2017	NR	ENR	May 9, 2017		.....	49	Mar. 15, 2017	Dec. 21, 2017	Jan. 8, 2018	108
To designate a mountain in the John Muir Wilderness of the Sierra National Forest as "Sky Point".	H.R. 381	Jan. 9, 2017	NR	ENR	June 14, 2017		.....	111	Jan. 30, 2017	Dec. 21, 2017	Jan. 10, 2018	109
To amend the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 to modify provisions relating to certain land exchanges in the Mr. Hood Wilderness in the State of Oregon.	H.R. 699	Jan. 24, 2017	NR	ENR	May 9, 2017		.....	59	Feb. 27, 2017	Dec. 21, 2017	Jan. 10, 2018	110
To facilitate the addition of park administration at the Coltsville National Historical Park, and for other purposes.	H.R. 863	Feb. 3, 2017	NR	ENR	May 16, 2017		.....	70	Feb. 27, 2017	Dec. 21, 2017	Jan. 10, 2018	111
To improve the ability of U.S. Customs and Border Protection to interdict fentanyl, other synthetic opioids, and other narcotics and psychoactive substances that are illegally imported into the United States, and for other purposes.	H.R. 2142	Apr. 25, 2017	HS		Sept. 21, 2017		317	.....	Oct. 24, 2017	Dec. 21, 2017	Jan. 10, 2018	112

To provide support for law enforcement agency efforts to protect the mental health and well-being of law enforcement officers, and for other purposes.	H.R.	2228	Apr. 28, 2017	Jud	Jud	Nov. 28, 2017	428	Nov. 28, 2017	Dec. 21, 2017	Jan. 10, 2018	113
To require a new or updated Federal website that is intended for use by the public to be mobile friendly, and for other purposes.	H.R.	2331	May 3, 2017	OGR		Nov. 13, 2017	406	Nov. 15, 2017	Dec. 21, 2017	Jan. 10, 2018	114
To amend the Energy Policy and Conservation Act to exclude power supply circuits, drivers, and devices designed to be connected to, and power, light-emitting diodes or organic light-emitting diodes providing illumination from energy conservation standards for external power supplies, and for other purposes.	H.R.	518	Jan. 13, 2017	EC	ENR			Jan. 23, 2017	Dec. 21, 2017	Jan. 12, 2018	115
To remove the use restrictions on certain land transferred to Rockingham County, Virginia, and for other purposes.	H.R.	954	Feb. 7, 2017	NR		July 11, 2017	203	July 11, 2017	Dec. 21, 2017	Jan. 12, 2018	116
To modify the boundary of the Little Rock Central High School National Historic Site, and for other purposes.	H.R.	2611	May 23, 2017	NR		Sept. 5, 2017	290	Sept. 12, 2017	Dec. 21, 2017	Jan. 12, 2018	117

TABLE OF COMMITTEE ABBREVIATIONS

AG .....Aging	CST .....Commerce, Science and Transportation	F'in .....Finance	IA .....Indian Affairs	SST .....Science, Space, and Technology
Agr .....Agriculture	E&W .....Education and the Workforce	FS .....Financial Services	Int .....Intelligence	SB .....Small Business
ANF .....Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry	EC .....Energy and Commerce	FA .....Foreign Affairs	Jud .....Judiciary	SBE .....Small Business and Entrepreneurship
App .....Appropriations	ENR .....Energy and Natural Resources	FR .....Foreign Relations	NR .....Natural Resources	TI .....Transportation and Infrastructure
AS .....Armed Services	EPW .....Environment and Public Works	HEL&P .....Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions	OGR .....Oversight and Government Reform	VA .....Veterans' Affairs
BHUA .....Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs	Eth .....Ethics	HS .....Homeland Security	R .....Rules	WM .....Ways and Means
Bud .....Budget		HS&GA .....Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs	RAdm .....Rules and Administration	
		HA .....House Administration		

Next Meeting of the SENATE

3 p.m., Monday, March 19

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

12 noon, Monday, March 19

Senate Chamber

Program for Monday: Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to consideration of H.R. 1865, Allow States and Victims to Fight Online Sex Trafficking Act.

At 5:30 p.m., Senate will vote on confirmation of the nomination of Kevin K. McAleenan, of Hawaii, to be Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security.

Following disposition of the nomination of Kevin K. McAleenan, Senate will vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the motion to proceed to consideration of H.R. 1865, Allow States and Victims to Fight Online Sex Trafficking Act.

House Chamber

Program for Monday: To be announced.

Extensions of Remarks, as inserted in this issue

HOUSE

Beyer, Donald S., Jr., Va., E323
 Bishop, Sanford D., Jr., Ga., E330
 Boyle, Brendan F., Pa., E322
 Cartwright, Matt, Pa., E319, E323, E329
 Chabot, Steve, Ohio, E328
 Correa, J. Luis, Calif., E328
 DeFazio, Peter A., Ore., E325
 Diaz-Balart, Mario, Fla., E317, E318, E319, E319
 Duffy, Sean, P., Wisc., E323
 Frankel, Lois, Fla., E324
 Gallagher, Mike, Wisc., E320
 Gottheimer, Josh, N.J., E329
 Hanabusa, Colleen, Hawaii, E321

Hastings, Alcee L., Fla., E319
 Huffman, Jared, Calif., E331
 Hultgren, Randy, Ill., E319
 Jackson Lee, Sheila, Tex., E317
 Jordan, Jim, Ohio, E325
 Katko, John, N.Y., E321, E322
 Kinzinger, Adam, Ill., E318, E329
 LaHood, Darin, Ill., E318
 Loudermilk, Barry, Ga., E325, E327
 Mast, Brian J., Fla., E326
 Nolan, Richard M., Minn., E322
 Norton, Eleanor Holmes, The District of Columbia, E325, E328
 Pocan, Mark, Wisc., E327
 Poe, Ted, Tex., E318, E324

Price, David E., N.C., E322, E326, E330
 Rooney, Francis, Fla., E321, E322
 Roybal-Allard, Lucille, Calif., E324
 Royce, Edward R., Calif., E327
 Ryan, Tim, Ohio, E321
 Stefanik, Elise M., N.Y., E328
 Tsongas, Niki, Mass., E323
 Velázquez, Nydia M., N.Y., E326
 Walberg, Tim, Mich., E320
 Walorski, Jackie, Ind., E326
 Webster, Daniel, Fla., E320
 Wilson, Joe, S.C., E328
 Young, David, Iowa, E319, E320, E323, E325, E325, E327, E328, E329, E330



Congressional Record

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