



United States  
of America

# Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 115<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 164

WASHINGTON, MONDAY, MARCH 19, 2018

No. 47

## Senate

The Senate met at 3 p.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.

Most high God, You are the great King of the Earth. Nations must submit to Your sovereignty, for You hold the hearts of national and global leaders in Your hands.

May our lawmakers remember that You can show them a way out of any difficulty, empowering them to not give up. Remind them that the tests they face are similar to what other generations have experienced and that You will enable them to prevail as You have done in the past.

Lord, thank You for Your faithfulness, mercy, and love.

We pray in Your great 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.

### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. YOUNG). 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 re-

sume consideration of the motion to proceed to H.R. 1865, which the clerk will report.

The 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 MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

### SENATE AGENDA

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, this is the start of another busy week in the Senate. We have a lot to accomplish for the American people.

This week, we will take up an omnibus that builds on the bipartisan funding agreement we reached back in February. It will provide our Armed Forces with the stable funding they need to meet emerging challenges.

Among other important matters, it will also strengthen our fight against the scourge of opioid addiction—an issue the President has already declared a public health emergency and is continuing to address today up in New Hampshire.

We have several concrete opportunities to make America safer and more secure. First, we will vote on the confirmation of Kevin McAleenan, the President's nominee for Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection. Mr. McAleenan is a 16-year veteran of the CBP. He served under administrations of both parties. His nomination carries the unflinching support of a bipartisan group of leaders and was thoroughly vetted in committee. Ensuring our national security means steady control over what and who comes across our borders. I would urge everyone to join me in voting to confirm him later today.

Later this week, the Senate will turn to another important matter relating

to America's safety and security. We will take up legislation to combat the evil of sex trafficking. Keeping children safe from exploitation has been a key focus for several of us going back some years. In 1984, I advocated the passage of the Missing Children's Assistance Act. In the 1990s, I was proud to introduce measures that mandated centralized reporting for missing children's cases and created a national database and screening system to identify abusers. In 2003, I joined a number of colleagues as founding members of the Senate Caucus on Missing, Exploited and Runaway Children. As recently as 2015, the Senate passed the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act. This week, it is time to build on those achievements and take another step.

It is time to confront the reality that trafficking has largely moved from the street corner to the smartphone. From 2010 to 2015, the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children saw reports of suspected child sex trafficking increase more than eightfold. Last year alone, more than 8,500 cases were reported to the National Human Trafficking Hotline. Part of the problem is a 1996 communications law that is being misused to protect websites that knowingly facilitate sex trafficking. The legislation before the Senate will reform that law and ensure these institutions can be held accountable for facilitating these heinous crimes. Senator PORTMAN has worked long and hard on this subject. He has helped assemble a broad, bipartisan coalition.

I would urge everyone to join me in voting to advance this legislation later this afternoon.

### TAX REFORM

Mr. President, now, on one final matter, the good news about tax reform keeps piling up. Here is one important headline from just a few days ago. "U.S. consumer confidence hits 14-year high." That is right; tax reform is contributing to a dynamic, growing economy, and Americans are taking notice.

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



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In fact, according to the Wall Street Journal, “Optimism improved markedly for households in the bottom third of income distribution.” Remember that the next time my friends across the aisle claim tax reform is only helping the big guys. It is just a political talking point.

In the real world, businesses large and small are thriving. In my home State of Kentucky, Goodwood Brewing Company has crunched the numbers and expects a tax reform savings of \$30,000. They are planning to use it to purchase new equipment and hire new employees. According to the CEO, Ted Mitzlaff, tax reform is offering “a significant benefit—hardly crumbs.”

Last Wednesday, President Trump visited a Boeing manufacturing facility in St. Louis to hear how tax reform is helping those Americans. For Boeing’s workers, tax reform means a new \$300 million investment in workforce development, training, philanthropy, and workplace improvements, but the President didn’t just hear from the hometown crowd.

Bonnie Brazzeal works in the cafeteria at the College of the Ozarks—that is in Southwest Missouri, more than 250 miles away from St. Louis. Bonnie made the trip to tell President Trump: “I work in the cafeteria at [the] College of the Ozarks alongside the hard-working students and I am grateful for the bonus. . . . I put mine in savings for my retirement.” Renee Crooker, also at the College of the Ozarks, said: “This bonus could not have come at a better time.” Her daughter was gravely ill but out of the country. Renee’s tax reform bonus enabled her to fly to her daughter’s bedside. Brandon Pister is a supervisor at Mid-Am Metal Forming. He received a tax bonus too. It helped him afford the deductible when his 2-year-old son needed surgery.

These Americans’ tax reform stories are amazing and so is the fact that only one Senator from Missouri voted to help all this good news happen. Their senior Senator joined Democrats in a party-line vote to block tax reform and keep Washington’s foot on the brake of our economy. When Democratic leaders called these historic middle-class tax cuts crumbs, the senior Senator from Missouri followed suit and called them scraps.

I am proud that Republicans, including Missouri’s junior Senator, looked past this partisan rhetoric and stood up for the middle-class families who deserve to keep more of their own money. Because we did, Bonnie, Renee, Brandon, and millions more hard-working Americans are already reaping the benefits.

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.

#### FIX NICS BILL

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I am pleased to learn that Senator CORY BOOKER, our colleague from New Jersey, is the 73rd cosponsor of the Fix NICS bill, which I have introduced and which I hope will be passed out of the Senate soon. This bill is designed to fix the National Instant Criminal Background Check System, which, if it had been working the way it was designed to, would have caught the shooter at Sutherland Springs, perhaps saving the lives of 26 people who lost their lives in that little Baptist church outside of San Antonio; 20 more were shot and will suffer those wounds the rest of their lives.

Today the news brought us the fact that apparently there had been a recommendation by mental health professionals that Nikolas Cruz, the shooter in Parkland, FL, be committed for involuntary treatment, but apparently that never materialized. That was the recommendation, but it never actually happened. If that had happened, under the current law, his name would have been included in the Florida upload of background check information, and that would have prevented him from legally buying a firearm.

So we are starting to see the different data points that begin to paint a picture of the sorts of things that we could do here in Washington, DC, to save lives in these future mass shooting events. We know the President has said to the Department of Justice that he wants bump stocks banned. Of course, that was the instrument used to kill dozens of people in Las Vegas and injure 851 more.

So by addressing things like the background check system, improving the mental health response, eliminating the bump stock—which takes a semiautomatic weapon and makes it operate essentially like an automatic weapon—and by providing assistance to our schools so that they can harden themselves against potential attacks, we can begin to see a picture of the sorts of things we ought to be doing to prevent future mass shootings like the one we saw most recently in Parkland, FL. It is simply our responsibility to make sure we do everything we humanly can.

I know that after these horrific events, people throw up their hands and say: We need to do something. Well, we need to do something that matters and that will save lives in the future. I think we now begin to have a picture of the sorts of things we can do, starting with the passage of the Fix NICS background check system. It is the only piece of legislation I know of that now has 73 cosponsors, with Senator BOOKER of New Jersey being added as the 73rd today. It is the only bill I know of that has that kind of broad, widespread support and that will actually, if implemented, save lives.

Mr. President, this week we will be discussing another important subject—one that perhaps people do not want to

hear about; rather, they would prefer that it not exist at all because it is a manifestation of evil. The subject is online sex trafficking. Unfortunately, it happens in the shadows of our society. Today, the internet and other forms of technology have made certain forms of predatory, perverted behavior easier to engage in without getting caught.

The legislation we are voting on this week aims to protect our children, provide justice to victims of human trafficking, and to make sure Federal laws do not protect profiteering web domains where sex trafficking occurs.

The Stop Enabling Sex Traffickers Act, or SESTA, would allow sex trafficking victims to have their day in court by eliminating Federal liability protections for technology providers that knowingly—knowingly—facilitate online sex trafficking. It would allow State and local law enforcement to investigate and prosecute providers that violate Federal sex trafficking laws.

I am proud to be one of the original cosponsors of this legislation and to have been working on it with my colleagues to get it to this point today. The bill was introduced last summer after a 2-year inquiry by the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, which culminated in a report. The report found not only that sex trafficking has run rampant in certain online spaces but also that websites have tried to cover it up. Well, no longer. Last fall, the Senate Commerce Committee unanimously approved SESTA, and the House passed it last month. This week, it is our turn.

Senator PORTMAN, the junior Senator from Ohio, has been this bill’s greatest champion since its inception. He has been informing us time and again of the ways in which sex trafficking has moved—as he likes to say it—from the street corner to the smartphone. He spoke on the floor earlier this year and reminded us that even as technology develops and gives us new opportunities to learn, to innovate, and to connect with one another, it is not an unalloyed good. In the wrong hands, by the wrong people, it can be misused. As Senator PORTMAN urged us, we need to shine a light onto the “dark side of the internet,” an area he called a “stain on our national character.” He is absolutely right, of course. The buying and selling of young people for sex is a moral scourge, and how we respond is a measure of our national conscience.

In the committee’s investigation, one website in particular came up over and over and over again; that is, backpage.com, which is responsible for perhaps three-quarters of all child trafficking reports—three-quarters. It eventually became clear that even though that site was actively helping to sell young women for sex and even though the victims and their families were suing backpage.com in response, none of the lawsuits were successful because of what some people are coming to believe is an outdated immunity for

technology providers under a Federal law known as the Communications Decency Act. Courts have repeatedly emphasized that the broad reach of one section of that statute protects websites that help to buy and sell underage girls for sex. Judges across the country have said it is up to Congress to change the law, and now it is our time to do just that.

The original law was intended to protect free speech, which, of course, is important. I, of course, like all of our colleagues, am a firm believer in the First Amendment, but free speech is no license to engage in illegal activity. Free speech can't be used as an excuse to offer young people into sexual servitude. And the internet cannot be a safe place for terrorists and child sex traffickers.

At last count, 67 Senators have joined this effort as cosponsors. We are joined by anti-human trafficking advocates, law enforcement organizations, State attorneys general, the civil rights community, faith-based groups, and tech companies like Facebook and Oracle. We have all made clear that we stand behind SESTA.

I hope our colleagues will join me in voting for this important legislation this week and ensure that websites and online platforms can be held accountable for facilitating sex trafficking.

#### YEMEN RESOLUTION

On another matter, Mr. President, this week, the Senate may vote on a privileged resolution offered by three of our colleagues—the junior Senators from Utah, Vermont, and Connecticut—which would direct the President to cut off financial support and other support for the Saudi-led coalition in Yemen. This, of course, is a proxy war, in many ways, between Iran, which has intervened in the civil war in Yemen, and—not only to allow the Saudis the means to defend themselves against incursions and attacks by the Houthis, Iranian-backed rebels, but also to facilitate our relationship with the Saudis and the Emirates, which is very important in terms of our anti-ISIS and anti-al-Qaida effort, with cells of these organizations located in Yemen too.

Our support, of course, is already narrowly circumscribed—our support for the Saudi-led coalition in Yemen. General Mattis, our Secretary of Defense, has described this as our alternative to putting American boots on the ground. We operate by, with, and through our allies by providing logistical support, intelligence, and some technical advice. Currently, in Yemen it takes the forms intelligence-sharing, military advice, and logistical support, such as air-to-air refueling. This is very clearly noncombatant support, at least as traditionally defined and historically known, and it is meant to improve processes and procedures and increase compliance with the international law of armed conflict.

The very support we are providing aids in mitigating civilian casualties

and the deteriorating humanitarian crisis brought on by the Iranian-backed Houthis. I know the Presiding Officer has been leading the charge on addressing the humanitarian crisis there, which is mind-boggling, to be sure.

Contrary to the resolution's sponsors' claims, though, the U.S. military is not engaged in hostilities in Yemen, as that term has historically been understood and applied, since it is not in direct conflict or exchanging fire with Houthi forces. Of course, we all share a concern with what is at stake in Yemen and in Saudi Arabia and in the gulf region but also civilian casualties, which this resolution creates problems with. Almost everyone is aware that Yemen has been suffering from a severe humanitarian crisis for years. Were we to remove U.S. targeting and logistical support from the Saudi coalition, then the humanitarian situation could get even worse than it has been.

Both political parties recognize the important role the United States plays in support of our partners' efforts to push back against the malign forces that have been coalescing in Yemen. In fact, President Obama was the one who first implemented the refueling and logistical support policy that remains in effect today.

In 2016, Senator MENENDEZ—now the ranking member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee—criticized the international community's failure to address the Iranian-fueled conflicts that included support to a Houthi insurgency that helped topple the internationally recognized Government of Yemen. Senator MENENDEZ went on to say: "I have a sense we are creating a permissive environment."

I agree with Senator MENENDEZ that we should not abandon our partners and leave a "permissive environment"—a vacuum, a void—for bad actors to fill.

If there is one lesson that I thought we learned after 9/11, when 3,000 Americans were killed when two planes were hijacked—actually, four were hijacked; two went into the World Trade Center, one into the Pentagon, and one landed in Pennsylvania because passengers on the plane overwhelmed the hijackers—what we learned is that what happens in the Middle East does not stay in the Middle East. What happened in Afghanistan is that the Taliban provided a safe haven for Osama bin Laden and al-Qaida, and they used that safe haven to train and export their terrorist attacks against countries around the world but primarily against the United States. That is what happened on 9/11/2001.

That is why we can't allow a safe haven, a void, in Yemen, not to mention the fact that Iran continues to use proxies in places like Lebanon, Syria, and Yemen, among others, to try to fight the United States in a low-grade war that has been going on literally since 1979. I should mention Iraq as one of those countries as well.

It is precisely because of the delicate and desperate situation in Yemen that

I am making the argument that any consideration to withdraw U.S. troops from fulfilling their limited auxiliary role in this conflict would have broad impacts on our global partnerships and counterterrorism efforts. It is not a decision to be made in haste or a decision to be made lightly; therefore, I believe the idea deserves the careful consideration of the committee of jurisdiction, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. If the Senate takes this vote without adequate preparation and deliberation and passes this resolution, we lose that chance for careful consideration. We lose the chance to have the Senate Foreign Relations Committee issue a thoroughly researched and deliberated recommendation to the entire Senate.

Even more troubling is the prospect that this resolution could set a precedent—one in which a few Members' preferred policies are prioritized over the normal Senate procedures and more thoughtful committee deliberation, with unintended global impacts. Yemen is not the only place where we are addressing challenges to peace and to our country by, with, and through allies, without Americans engaging in direct hostilities. So this would have unintended global impact.

Secretary of Defense James Mattis has voiced his concerns over this resolution. In a letter to congressional leadership, he said that new restrictions on the U.S. military could increase civilian casualties and jeopardize our partners' cooperation on counterterrorism efforts. On top of that list would be the Saudis and the Emirates, among others, and other people are watching as well. And it will reduce our influence in the key region.

He warned that a withdrawal of our noncombat support in Yemen could embolden rebels in the area, enable further missile strikes on Saudi Arabia, and threaten shipping lanes in the Red Sea—one of the key chokepoints for international commerce—right there on the western border of Yemen. All this combined could stoke the embers of an even greater regional conflict in the Middle East with unknown consequences. More importantly, it would damage U.S. credibility and strengthen Iran's position in Yemen and throughout the Middle East more broadly.

I hope our colleagues will think soberly and thoughtfully about this resolution and insist that a fulsome debate take place where it belongs, initially, and that is within the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. I have talked to Senator CORKER, the chairman of that committee. He will speak for himself, but I think he certainly believes that the committee can help the Senate make a good decision after giving the committee an opportunity to have hearings and to consider all the intended and unintended consequences of this resolution.

I know our colleagues who have offered the resolution mean well and their intentions are good, but sometimes—particularly in the area of

international conflict and global interactions with different countries—our actions beget an unintended consequence. I think it is good to be safe in the first place and to take this matter through the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, where I have every confidence that Senator CORKER, as the chairman, and Ranking Member MENENDEZ can guide the members of that committee through a process that will help us in the end to make a better decision.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. ERNST). Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### GUN VIOLENCE

Mr. MURPHY. Madam President, it has been 32 days since the tragedy in Parkland. I think Senator NELSON may be coming to the floor very soon. Frankly, every day since then, there has been a series of tragedies all across this country. On average, 90 people lose their lives every single day to gun violence. There has been, over the course of the last year, a mass shooting, on average, every single day. Most of them aren't covered in the newspaper, but there is an incident in which four or more people are shot, on average, more than once per day in this country.

Of course, it has now been more than 5 years since the devastating tragedy in my State, where 20 first graders lost their lives. This is deeply personal to all of us here in this Chamber.

It became very personal to me last week when my 6-year old came home from school to tell me about his active shooter drill. He is 6, and he is in kindergarten. In his kindergarten class, they have a small bathroom that all of the kids in the class use. He explained to me that for their active shooter drill, all 25 kids in his classroom—a whole bunch of 5- and 6-year-olds—were shoved inside this tiny, little bathroom together, crunched together, shoulder to shoulder, with the door locked. Imagine how frightening that would be to a 6-year-old child, even if they didn't completely understand why they were there.

He said to me when he got home that night: Daddy, I didn't like it. In the most powerful, most affluent country in the world, our children should not have to go through that; never mind those who have actually had to face down someone with a gun inside their classroom or inside their school.

What is devastating to the parents in Parkland and Sandy Hook, what is devastating to the parents in Baltimore, in New Haven, and in Chicago is that we refuse to have a debate on the Senate floor about how we can help ad-

dress this epic mass slaughter, this gun violence epidemic in this country.

I have been taking pains over the course of the last 6 months to try to reach out across the aisle and find common ground with my colleagues on some commonsense legislation about changes to our gun laws. I am proud to have worked with Senator CORNYN on a small bill that would encourage States to comply with existing law—the Fix NICS Act. It now has over 60 Republican and Democratic cosponsors, enough that it could overcome a cloture motion.

I have come to the floor today to ask that we come to an agreement—Republicans and Democrats—by which we can have an open debate on the issue of gun violence for the American public before we break for a 2-week Easter recess. We are going to go back to our States and have a wonderful time with our friends and families, while many others continue to grieve all across this country and many others will enter the ranks of those who grieve because, during the 14 days that we will be away, thousands of people will die from gunshot wounds. I just can't imagine that we would make a decision to go home at the end of this week without having had a debate on the Senate floor for the American people to see how we can try to respond to this cry, this call from the American public to do something.

These kids have been amazing. Literally hundreds of thousands of children walked out of school last week, and hundreds of thousands more students and their parents will be here in Washington for marches and at 600 other marches all around the country this weekend.

The polls tell us over and over again that 9 out of 10 Americans want us to take bold steps forward. Record numbers of American citizens believe the laws that exist today are not sufficient. This isn't a controversial issue outside of Washington. It is controversial only here, inside this Chamber. If we remain silent, if we refuse to have a debate on the Senate floor, we are failing the people who sent us here.

I have come to the floor today to propose a very reasonable path forward so that we can have a debate and some up-or-down votes on proposals this week. From what I understand, there is still a lot of discussion happening with respect to the budget. Obviously, we have to get that done by the end of the week, but it is not ready yet, so we have time this week to have a short but meaningful debate on the issue of guns.

Here is what I am proposing. I am proposing that we have a unanimous consent agreement whereby we can have a time-limited debate—I would suggest perhaps not more than 6 hours—and at the end of that period of time, we have six votes, three votes propounded by the Democratic side and three votes on measures propounded by the Republican side.

I think it is no secret the amendments that Senate Democrats would offer. We would want to see a vote on universal commercial background checks to make sure that commercial sales of guns are subject to background checks. That is something President Trump said he was for at the White House, and he has encouraged the Congress to work on it. Let's have an up-or-down vote on background checks.

I think Democrats would clearly want to see the bipartisan compromise, which has been worked out by Senator BLUMENTHAL and Senator GRAHAM with respect to protective orders, red flag orders, come before the Chamber. It simply makes sense that we do what Florida is doing: Pass a law that allows for law enforcement, after a viable court process, to take away weapons temporarily from someone who poses a threat. The problem in Florida was, even if they had done something about this young man, they didn't have the legal ability to take his weapons away, even if he had made those kinds of threats in public. Florida is correcting that with their new law. We should do the same at the Federal level.

On our side, there is also interest in talking about the kinds of weapons that are legal and the kinds of weapons that are not. I am a believer, of course, that there is a class of military-style tactical semiautomatic weapons that are best if they are not in the hands of civilians. Obviously, that issue divides our side too. So if that were to come up for a vote, there will be Democrats for it and Democrats against it.

On the other two measures, there will be Republicans for them and Republicans against them. Some Republicans are for universal background checks; some aren't. There are many Republicans on record as being for protective orders, and there are others who will not vote for them.

We will have no idea, the American public will have no idea, and our constituents will have no idea what we are really willing to do and what we are not willing to do unless we have a debate. This is our last chance before we go home.

What I am proposing, I think, is reasonable, practical, and viable. We can get it done—six total amendments to the Fix NICS Act, time limited, perhaps only 6 hours. We could be in and out of that debate in a day. I have talked with my leadership about it. I am confident that Democratic leadership would support that path forward, and I propose it to Republican leadership tonight, as we enter this week, as a means of having this debate that the American public so badly needs. The alternative is unthinkable—going home, letting over a month pass since Parkland, since this outcry for action from kids across America, and not even attempting to get something done here.

I understand this issue is still difficult. I don't understand why my Republican colleagues will not support

something like background checks, an issue supported by 97 percent of Americans. It is pretty hard to find anything in America that is supported by 97 percent of Americans. Apple pie and Grandma probably don't get 97 percent approval ratings in this country, but universal background checks do. So, yes, I am frustrated that my Republican colleagues don't just come to the floor and agree to pass something that has mind-blowing universal support in the public, but what is more offensive is that we don't even try.

What is more offensive to me is that we don't even make an attempt to put these measures on the floor of the Senate and let them be voted up or down. I don't want the gun lobby to have veto power over the legislation that gets passed here, but even worse than that is for the gun lobby to have veto power over what we even debate.

I propose a total of six amendments and a total of 6 hours of debate. I would argue that is insufficient to meet the moment, but I get it that time is running out, that there is not a lot of interest from some Members on the Republican side to enter into this debate. So we are very willing to have a short, time-limited debate to see what we can get consensus on and what we can't get consensus on, and whatever moves out of this building, whatever amendments get passed, then we live with it and live to fight another day.

It has been 5 years since the tragedy in my State and now 32 days since Parkland. I don't think we should wait one day longer before we have an open debate on the Senate floor about how we, as those entrusted with the safety of our children, do something about the epidemic of gun violence in this country.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

ECONOMIC GROWTH, REGULATORY RELIEF, AND CONSUMER PROTECTION BILL

Mr. TESTER. Madam President, I rise today to reflect on the landmark legislation that this body passed with overwhelming bipartisan support last week. It isn't every day that folks in Congress can work together in a bipartisan way to get something done that will benefit Main Streets across rural America, but that is exactly what we did last week. I am very proud of that effort.

I say a big thank-you to the chairman of the Banking Committee, Chairman CRAPO, for the work he has done, his ability to listen, his commonsense perspective, and his patience. It would not have happened without those qualities that Chairman CRAPO exhibited.

I also want to single out three Senators who worked very hard on this bill. There are a number of others who did, too, but I am just going to mention Senators HEITKAMP, DONNELLY, and WARNER. Those folks did yeoman's work in bringing into view the challenges that our banking industry has out there, coming up with solutions for

those challenges, and coming up with consumer protections to put into this bill to move it forward. There were many others. I think there were 17 or 18 cosponsors on the Democratic side of the aisle, but I say a special thank you to Senators HEITKAMP, DONNELLY, and WARNER for their advocacy, input, knowledge, expertise, and their ability to work to get things done.

People ask me: Senator TESTER, why did you write this bill? Well, I was a part of the folks who wrote this bill for good reason. I remember very well that during the financial crisis, then-Secretary of the Treasury Henry Paulson came in—it was in 2008, I believe—and said that we were on the cusp of a financial meltdown in this country. I remember some of the free and irresponsible activities that were done in the financial system. I remember bringing regulators in front of the Banking Committee and ripping them up one side and down the other as to why we had gotten into this situation. In the end, we came up with a bill called Dodd-Frank.

Dodd-Frank was put together after a lot of public input and a lot of hearings, and it was put into effect really to regulate the folks who got us into the situation we were in. At that moment in time, we had banks that were too big to fail, folks who were doing no-doc or low-doc loans, and foreclosures happening everywhere. We put in the regulation.

One of the things we heard when we put in the Dodd-Frank regulation was that it was a big bill and that it was going to need to be changed, adapted—however you want to put it—moving forward. I believe that bill was passed in 2009. Here we are 8 or 9 years later, and we look at Dodd-Frank and see that in some cases, it has done exactly as was intended, especially for the larger banks. Some could argue that there is more work to be done there.

One of the negative things that resulted from the Dodd-Frank regulation was that some of that regulation bled down onto our local community banks and credit unions. This is particularly concerning to me because I come from a very rural part of this country. It is a small town where, when my grandfather homesteaded, they had all sorts of options when they marketed their grain. In the 1940s and 1950s, when my folks took over in my small town, I believe there were five grain elevators there. When Sharla and I took over in the late 1970s, there were three. Today, there is one.

You ask, why does that have anything to do with the banking industry, JON? Well, it is consolidation. And the consolidation didn't happen overnight; it took decades. You end up with less competition in the marketplace when it comes to selling your grains.

That same thing could be adapted to what has gone on in our community banks over the last 8 or 9 years, where they have been bought up by bigger banks. The bigger banks will tell you

that they have to get bigger to be able to compete with the regulations put on them. So they were bought up, and the same thing will extrapolate out over time.

Those folks who say: Well, this isn't necessary because banks are making a lot of money—look, banks may be operating today, but they are looking into the future, as any good business does, and they are saying to themselves: Do I really have what it takes to stick around? They can see the writing on the wall, and they are selling out because of it. There are no ifs, ands, or buts about this—this will result in less consumer choice and more consolidation, making the bigger banks even bigger and really helping the folks who caused the crisis back in 2008—ultimately, the biggest of the big banks.

We have seen the consolidation at grocery stores, grain elevators, and even bars. The truth is that it isn't all due to one single thing. The consolidation in the financial industry and on the ground isn't due to just regulations. Technology has its impact, and a moving population also has its impact.

As I looked at this 5 years ago, I said: If we don't do something to tweak Dodd-Frank, we are going to end up in a situation where we don't have consumer choice to buy that house or expand that business or start that new business—what entrepreneurs do. So as a policymaker, I thought it was my job to look ahead to the next generation of people who are going to be out there in rural America, whether it is a Main Street small business or a farm or a family who is working for a business. That is why I helped write this bill, because from a rural America perspective, it was the right thing to do, and it was time to do something for the next generation, for our kids and our grandkids, so that they could have the kind of opportunity that, quite frankly, my folks and my grandparents had given to my generation.

I am not the kind of person who will sit back on the sidelines and complain about stuff over a cup of coffee. When we see a problem, my folks taught me to work and try to fix it. I see a problem, and there is little doubt in my mind that if we had not done what we did last week to give some regulatory relief to community banks and credit unions, things would have continued to get worse in rural America. They still may get worse in rural America, but at least we have done what we needed to do in this body to try to change that.

There are some out there who, for whatever reason—and I haven't quite been able to figure it out yet—are spreading misinformation about this bill. Maybe it is just the day we live in. So let me set the record straight about this bill.

This bill does not help the Wall Street banks. It does not. Those who say it does are not correct. This bill does not set us up for another financial crisis. In fact, the authors of the original Dodd-Frank bill, Chris Dodd and

Barney Frank—both smart guys whom I admire—wrote:

As the authors of the original Dodd-Frank reform law, we want all Montanans to know that the banking bill Senator Tester helped write does not dismantle Dodd-Frank as some people claim. Jon knows Montana and challenges facing rural America. While we did not agree with every part of this bill, it helps local credit unions and community banks across Montana while keeping protections in place that are designed to prevent another financial crisis.

Those are the original authors. That is why it is called Dodd-Frank—because it is from Chris Dodd and Representative Barney Frank.

The other thing the bill does not do is it does not leave banks unregulated. There is implication by some out there that this bill deregulates 25 of the 40 largest banks. To me, that implication is that now they are no longer regulated. The fact is, all the banks are highly regulated for safety and soundness. Quite frankly, this does not leave banks unregulated. They still have plenty of regulation to go through.

In conclusion, the bill we passed last week does several things. I believe it is going to increase access to capital, particularly in rural America. I think it makes the regulation fit the risk, while still continuing to crack down on risky behavior. It has great consumer protection components to it. Last and certainly not least, from my perspective, it is good for rural America.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

#### EB-5 REGIONAL CENTER PROGRAM

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I rise today to bring to my colleagues' attention an issue that is important to millions of individuals who understand that American citizenship is something that ought to be treasured.

The American people understand that our citizenship is a blessing and shouldn't be given away cheaply. Unfortunately, for too many years, this body has witnessed the perversion and degradation of a program that sells—yes, we sell citizenship to some people.

This program originally had a good purpose. In return for investing money in underserved areas and creating good-paying American jobs, immigrant entrepreneurs could eventually become U.S. citizens. Sadly, in the last decade, this program has been hijacked by big-moneyed New York City real estate interests—to be specific, the Real Estate Roundtable. These developers now take almost all the foreign investment from this program, and for the last few years, they have actively prevented this body from enacting any reforms and needed reforms.

For those who are not aware, I am talking about the EB-5 Regional Center Program. I have been fighting in a bipartisan way for years to reform this corrupt and scandal-clad program. I have been fighting to protect our national security, to ensure foreign investment is going to the most deserving areas, and to make sure that Amer-

ican citizenship isn't sold at rock-bottom prices in order to feed the addiction of New York interests to cheap money. But no matter how hard I fought, each and every time we tried to reform this program, these same moneyed interests have used their political influence and political connections to block any meaningful reforms. This is sickening and is exactly why most American people sometimes question what we do here in Washington, DC.

After more than 3 years of trying to fix this broken and scandal-plagued program, I have finally come to the conclusion that it can't be fixed, and since it can't be fixed, the EB-5 Regional Center Program needs to be terminated. Let me explain to my colleagues and directly to the American people exactly how I have reached that conclusion.

Several years ago, I started working with then-Ranking Member LEAHY of the Judiciary Committee on reforms to the EB-5 Regional Center Program. Through the hard work and dedication of our staffers, we discovered the program is riddled with fraud and corruption and poses a real and serious threat to our national security. I will explain some of those things we discovered.

First, investments can be spent before business plans are approved.

Next, regional center operators can charge excessive fees of foreign nationals in addition to their required investments.

Next, none of the jobs created have to be direct or verifiable jobs but rather are indirect and based on estimates of economic modeling; again, not knowing for sure if jobs are created.

Next, investment funds from foreign sources are not adequately vetted. Gifts and loans from anyone are acceptable sources of funds from foreign nationals.

Next, there is no prohibition against foreign governments owning or operating these regional centers or projects. So let me emphasize—that is right—foreign governments can own businesses that sell our citizenship. Now, think about that.

Another problem is regional centers don't have to certify that they comply with security laws.

Next, there are no required background checks on anyone associated with the regional centers.

Just take this example: One need look no further than the indictment last September of two Chinese fraudsters who stole more than \$50 million in foreign investment and managed to sell U.S. citizenship to individuals on the Chinese Government's most wanted list.

Next, gerrymandering continues in rural and urban distressed areas and, as a result, lose out.

There is no transparency on how funds are spent and who is paid and what investors are told about the projects they invest in.

The list can still go on and on and on, but I have given my colleagues just

some examples. I could literally speak for hours about the corruption of the program.

Faced with this appalling list of fraud, corruption, and national security loopholes, for 3 years, I have been working with Senator LEAHY and our counterparts in the House of Representatives to produce real EB-5 reform. Our staffers have spent countless hours, nights, and weekends meeting with congressional colleagues and industry stakeholders to hammer out a compromise that is fair to all sides, but our offers have constantly been rejected by the Big Money industries, and related real estate roundtables, every single time—not just this time. We reached a compromise with the vast differences of views to start out but still ended up with a compromise. Somehow, these powerful interests are able step in and stop it. This time has been no different than at least three previous times we have gotten this far.

Let me explain how we have been doing this. For the last year, my staff, along with Chairman GOODLATTE of the House Judiciary Committee, Senator CORNYN, and Senator FLAKE—these teams have worked around the clock to produce an EB-5 reform package. Everyone made numerous concessions in order to reach a compromise. After more than 20 meetings, and of course countless hours of drafting, we produced a reform package that was fair to all sides. Our reforms would reauthorize the Regional Center Program for 6 years, providing the certainty that industry has long said it craves.

Our compromise would have permanently set aside 3,000 visas for rural and underserved urban areas and would have increased the minimum investment amount to \$925,000. In recognition of longstanding industry concerns, we agreed to reduce the investment differential between nonpriority areas and priority areas to a mere \$100,000.

Finally, we would have implemented a host of badly needed integrity measures that would have cracked down on investment fraud, cracked down on foreign corruption, and cracked down on bad business practices.

Our reforms had the unanimous support of Invest in the USA, the largest EB-5 trade association. Our reforms had the support of the EB-5 Rural Alliance, a group working to ensure that rural America has a fair shake at attracting EB-5 money.

Why are rural areas such a high concern? Because, quite frankly, way back in the 1990s, that was one of the goals of the EB-5 program—to help economic development in rural America, but these reforms weren't acceptable to the Big Money New York industry stakeholders that currently dominate the program. Because Big Money interests aren't happy with these reforms, we have been told they will not become law.

I have laid out a lot here, letting it sink in for a minute. In spite of the fact that reforms were agreed to by

congressional offices and had the support of the largest EB-5 trade association, they will not become law because a few EB-5 businesses, with lots and lots of money and lots and lots of political power, have used their political connections and influence, once again—for the third time; maybe even the fourth time over a period of that many years—to reach some sort of reform on a program we have demonstrated—I shouldn't say we have demonstrated—we have repeated what the FBI and national security people and people in the Justice Department have said about the shortcomings of this program.

I said, at the beginning of my remarks, I finally realize this program cannot be reformed. I would have to say this for my present ranking member, Senator FEINSTEIN, she has been telling me that for three or four years: Forget about reforming it; we ought to do away with it. The Regional Center Program is simply too corrupted to be saved, and it needs to be ended.

The American people deserve better than what we are seeing as a result of hard-working Members of the House and Senate trying to reform this program and getting nothing done.

So what happens here at the last minute? It will get stuck in an omnibus appropriations bill to extend it again for a period of time with the same bad practices that are going on. Why does that have to happen when it is so obvious what is wrong?

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MORAN). The Senator from Florida.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Senator WYDEN and I be permitted to speak for up to 5 minutes each prior to the vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### GUN VIOLENCE

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, this Saturday, students from Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, FL, are going to lead hundreds of thousands of Americans all around the country in calling for commonsense gun control measures at the March For Our Lives.

Since this terrible shooting in Parkland, FL, on Valentine's Day, we have seen students all across the country say: Enough. This is a movement that cannot be stopped, and, frankly, we owe it to the students—the next generation—to get this right in the policies and the laws we adopt.

Just a few weeks ago, I went to one of the student's homes in Parkland—a group of them. We talked. Indeed, just last week, a number of the students came to my office here in Washington. It is amazing that at 15, 16, and 17 years old, these students are looking to us in this Congress to, at a minimum, consider legislation that could have prevented the slaughter that happened in Parkland just a month ago.

In Florida, we have witnessed these students march on the State capitol

and demand action. The legislature listened, in part. They made some changes in the law, like changing the age to 21 to buy an assault rifle. That is the same age in Florida law that says you can't buy a handgun until age 21. It was a small step, but it was a step in the right direction to address the problem we are confronting, but we need to do more.

I am so grateful for the resilience of these students, the power of their voices, and the strength of their activism, moving the lawmakers in Washington and in State capitals all across this country to act.

The students, the parents, the teachers, all of them we have asked: What do you want? And they say, obviously, we want commonsense things. We can start with universal background checks in the purchase of a weapon. That would then allow, universally, if you have a background check, you couldn't go to a gun show where there is not a federally licensed dealer and acquire a weapon without having a background check. Why is having a background check a commonsense thing to do? Because you not only pick up someone with a criminal record, you would pick up someone who had a restraining order for whatever reason—it could be mental, it could be domestic abuse. You would pick up somebody being on the terrorist watch list or you could pick up someone who had been on the terrorist watch list. That was the case with the killer in the Orlando Pulse Night Club shooting.

Clearly, that is a commonsense thing to approach this problem.

There is another commonsense thing; that is, these military assault rifles with the long—what I call the banana clips. These are clips that are shaped like a banana or even straight ones that hold 30 rounds. You know, there are State laws in the country that if you are going to hunt wild game, there are certain restrictions on the number of shells or bullets you can put in your gun. My goodness, why wouldn't we want to say there is a limitation on the number of bullets in a clip instead of these long clips that have 30 rounds?

It was used even in the shooting out in Arizona that our colleague Congresswoman Gabby Giffords was one of the victims of, and it was when the gunman was reloading with another clip that he was tackled to the ground; otherwise, there would have been more people who would have been harmed that day.

So it is another commonsense thing that people are asking for and that these students are bringing to light as they argue this case; that they don't want to be in a school where they have this kind of violence that is threatened. The students, the teachers, the parents just want our schools and our communities to be safe. As we have seen across the country, we have had too much violence with these military-style weapons. Nightclubs, churches, movie theaters, outdoor concerts—it

goes on and on. Students want to feel safe, and what some students have witnessed is unimaginable.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for 1 additional minute.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. NELSON. The velocity of a bullet fired from an assault weapon compared to the velocity of a handgun is three times the velocity or speed of the handgun bullet. As a result, when that bullet hits its target, the energy is nine times that hitting the target than what a handgun bullet does.

They built a movement now that inspires student walks across the country. In just 5 days, they are inspiring marches across the country, and the future is bright because of these students. But it is up to us to make sure that what happened in Parkland never happens again.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

#### NOMINATION OF KEVIN MCALEENAN

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, in a few minutes the Senate will vote on the nomination of Mr. Kevin McAleenan to serve as Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

As the ranking Democrat on the committee with jurisdiction over trade policy, I am particularly interested in working with Mr. McAleenan on an issue that is of longstanding, bipartisan concern; and that is tougher, smarter enforcement of America's trade laws.

Mr. McAleenan is a longtime public servant, and he has been aware that the Finance Committee has put in many hours over the last few years to guarantee that this agency has tough new tools to fight trade cheats and protect our workers. It is vital that those tools be put to good use because their trade-related mission—defending American jobs from trade rip-offs—has too often gotten short shrift. It doesn't matter what kind of trade deals you sign or what laws you put on the books if you aren't serious about enforcing them. That is where their trade mission comes in.

In my discussions with this nominee, it is clear that he understands that when it comes to trade, this country has to do trade done right, and tougher trade enforcement is especially important.

I will close with the mention of another issue that this agency has seen over the last few months, and that is the onslaught of Americans being stopped at the border and forced to unlock their personal electronic devices for inspection. It clearly invades their personal privacy.

Senator PAUL and I have introduced bipartisan legislation on this—there is bipartisan legislation in the other body—that recognizes that law enforcement should have to get a warrant before searching a device at the border, and it comes with strong protections to

let Americans know when and how they consent to having their devices searched.

In my judgment, this is just common sense, particularly because the U.S. Supreme Court has already ruled that digital is fundamentally different. They did that when they ruled that law enforcement needs a warrant to search a phone after an arrest.

We are going to keep pushing for our bipartisan legislation. In the meantime, we need to work with this agency on this critical issue that ensures, once again, that this country recognizes that security and liberty are not mutually exclusive and that you can have policies that do both.

I want to continue to engage with him, if confirmed, to make sure that the constitutional rights of law-abiding Americans do not disappear at the border.

As I indicated, he is a public servant with many, many years of experience. I support his nomination.

I yield the floor.

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Kevin K. McAleenan, of Hawaii, to be Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, all postcloture time is expired.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the McAleenan nomination?

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS), and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY).

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

The result was announced—yeas 77, nays 19, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 56 Ex.]

#### YEAS—77

Alexander	Cantwell	Coons
Baldwin	Capito	Corker
Barrasso	Carper	Cornyn
Bennet	Casey	Cortez Masto
Blunt	Cassidy	Cotton
Boozman	Cochran	Crapo
Brown	Collins	Cruz

Daines	Kennedy	Risch
Donnelly	King	Rounds
Enzi	Klobuchar	Rubio
Ernst	Lankford	Sasse
Fischer	Leahy	Scott
Flake	Lee	Shaheen
Gardner	Manchin	Shelby
Graham	McCaskill	Smith
Grassley	McConnell	Stabenow
Hassan	Moran	Sullivan
Hatch	Murkowski	Tester
Heitkamp	Murphy	Thune
Heller	Murray	Tillis
Hirono	Nelson	Warner
Hoeven	Paul	Whitehouse
Inhofe	Perdue	Wicker
Isakson	Peters	Wyden
Johnson	Portman	Young
Jones	Reed	

#### NAYS—19

Blumenthal	Harris	Schatz
Booker	Heinrich	Schumer
Cardin	Kaine	Udall
Duckworth	Markey	Van Hollen
Durbin	Menendez	Warren
Feinstein	Merkley	
Gillibrand	Sanders	

#### NOT VOTING—4

Burr	Roberts
McCain	Toomey

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

#### CLOTURE MOTION

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

#### CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 339, H.R. 1865, an act to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to clarify that section 230 of such Act does not prohibit the enforcement against providers and users of interactive computer services of Federal and State criminal and civil law relating to sexual exploitation of children or sex trafficking, and for other purposes.

Mitch McConnell, John Kennedy, John Cornyn, Dan Sullivan, Joni Ernst, James Lankford, Richard Burr, Johnny Isakson, Thom Tillis, Mike Crapo, Steve Daines, John Hoeven, Tom Cotton, Roger F. Wicker, Patrick J. Toomey, Mike Rounds, Rob Portman.

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

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the motion to proceed to H.R. 1865, an act to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to clarify that section 230 of such Act does not prohibit the enforcement against providers and users of interactive computer services of Federal and State criminal and civil law relating to sexual exploitation of children or sex trafficking, and for other purposes, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS), and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY).

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 94, nays 2, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 57 Leg.]

#### YEAS—94

Alexander	Flake	Murphy
Baldwin	Gardner	Murray
Barrasso	Gillibrand	Nelson
Bennet	Graham	Perdue
Blumenthal	Grassley	Peters
Blunt	Harris	Portman
Booker	Hassan	Reed
Boozman	Hatch	Risch
Brown	Heinrich	Rounds
Cantwell	Heitkamp	Rubio
Capito	Heller	Sanders
Cardin	Hirono	Sasse
Carper	Hoeven	Schatz
Casey	Inhofe	Schumer
Cassidy	Isakson	Scott
Cochran	Johnson	Shelby
Collins	Jones	Shaheen
Coons	Kaine	Shelby
Corker	Kennedy	Smith
Cornyn	King	Stabenow
Cortez Masto	Klobuchar	Sullivan
Cotton	Lankford	Tester
Crapo	Leahy	Thune
Cruz	Lee	Tillis
Daines	Manchin	Udall
Donnelly	Markey	Van Hollen
Duckworth	McCaskill	Warner
Durbin	McConnell	Warren
Enzi	Menendez	Whitehouse
Ernst	Merkley	Wicker
Feinstein	Moran	Young
Fischer	Murkowski	

#### NAYS—2

Paul	Wyden
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#### NOT VOTING—4

Burr	Roberts
McCain	Toomey

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 94, the nays are 2.

Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn having voted in the affirmative, the motion is agreed to.

#### LEGISLATIVE SESSION

ALLOW STATES AND VICTIMS TO FIGHT ONLINE SEX TRAFFICKING ACT OF 2017—MOTION TO PROCEED—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Cloture having been invoked on the motion to proceed to H.R. 1865, the Senate will resume legislative session and consideration of the motion to proceed.

The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, we just had a vote in this Chamber on a very significant piece of legislation. It was the motion to proceed to it. It was agreed to with good Republican and Democratic majorities, with both sides of the aisle supporting moving to this debate.

Because we have cosponsors from both sides of the aisle, I feel confident that we will get to an end point, and we



must. This issue of trafficking human beings is something the Senate must stand up against, particularly because there is a Federal law that now permits trafficking online that otherwise would be considered a criminal act. I want to talk a little about that legislation tonight.

We probably will not have the final vote until Wednesday, and some of the information I will provide tonight will be setting the reasons, the basis for doing this legislation. Then, between now and Wednesday, we will have to learn more about the specifics of it, what is happening online, and how the U.S. Senate can step in and provide the legislation to remediate what is an obvious problem to anyone who looks at this issue.

Human trafficking is such an egregious crime. We all, I hope, agree with that. It is also a very lucrative crime—\$150 billion a year is the estimate, and that is probably second only to the drug trade in terms of the amount of money involved. Think about this. This is selling human beings.

The Senate has taken steps in this body in a bipartisan way over the past 6 or 7 years to focus on this issue, and I certainly commend my colleagues for that. Senator RICHARD BLUMENTHAL, a Democrat, and I, as a Republican, started a bipartisan caucus to stop human trafficking about 6 years ago. We started with the two of us, and now there are a couple of dozen. There are many Members who are engaged and involved in this.

Over those past 6 years, the Senate has passed legislation to increase the penalties on those who buy children for sex. For the first time in a decade and a half, we increased the Federal penalties.

We have helped to stop international trafficking by U.S. Government contractors overseas with legislation that was signed into law.

We have helped with regard to finding missing children by requiring for the first time that those missing children have a photograph attached to them. Unbelievably, until that legislation, most kids in my home State of Ohio and other States who went missing did not have the information provided to law enforcement and others—people who work in shelters, people who are in the juvenile justice system—to be able to find those children. Why is that so important? Because, as you can imagine, kids who go missing are sometimes the most vulnerable to being trafficked.

We also passed legislation to improve the data on trafficking. There is legislation called the Sex Trafficking Data and Response Act, which we passed in this body to provide better information about this problem so we could come up with better solutions by understanding what is going on. Trafficking is in the shadows. It is very profitable, but it is an illicit activity. So that legislation was critical.

By the way, the primary author of that legislation was Senator RON

WYDEN of Oregon. Senator WYDEN will probably be on this floor over the next couple of days talking about some of the concerns he has about the online legislation we have, but I want you to know that Senator WYDEN has been out front on opposing trafficking through this Sex Trafficking Data and Response Act. I was the lead Republican on that legislation, so I worked with him, and I commend him for that.

We also passed legislation to change the paradigm in Federal law and treat these children who are trafficked as victims rather than as criminals. The key is to get these young people into treatment, longer term recovery, and deal with what is, as you can imagine, a very traumatic situation—often related to drugs as well, so drug treatment. Something that I think is perhaps the most important thing we can do is to understand that these are victims who, in order to get back on their feet, need to be taken from the criminal justice system and put into the kind of treatment they need.

Despite efforts here in the Senate—and by others around the country, by the way—to deal with this trafficking issue and raise an awareness of it, unbelievably today, as we stand here in this country, we are seeing an increase in one type of trafficking, and that is sex trafficking. You might ask, how could that be possible? We passed all this legislation to help. We have gotten increased consciousness about the issue. People are more aware of the problem, and certainly there is a consensus that this is something we ought to crack down on. Yet it is happening. I will tell you what the experts say. They say it is happening for one simple reason, and that is that more and more women and children are being sold online—the ruthless efficiency of the internet. So that is where this legislation focuses, and it focuses there because that is where we see the problem.

Traffickers are using the internet to sell women and children, and we have a responsibility to act. If we don't act, we will allow a Federal law that was passed by this body 21 years ago, which I think inadvertently has created part of the problem by shielding these websites, to remain.

I will talk more about this later in the week as we get into the specifics of our legislation and why it would address the problem, but the bottom line is that we have a real problem.

The anti-trafficking group Polaris—we recently received its 2017 report. The report illustrates the true nature of the crisis. This is the heat chart put up by Polaris. It shows the locations of cases reported to the National Human Trafficking Hotline last year alone, in 2017. As we can see—and this explains why we see such strong, bipartisan support for our legislation—this is happening everywhere, in every State in the Union. Unfortunately, it is increasing, not decreasing, despite all the efforts locally and even here at the Federal level.

The national hotline that Polaris runs—and I hope to be at that hotline, by the way, later this week, as they are opening a new facility and expanding what they are doing—experienced a 13-percent increase in reported cases nationwide just last year. So despite all the efforts, they are actually seeing an increase. In my home State of Ohio alone, 371 cases of human trafficking were reported to the hotlines. Across the country, their hotlines handled a record 8,759 cases in 2017, up from 7,737 reported cases in 2016. Again, these are only the cases that are reported. That doesn't mean there aren't many, many more cases out there that are not reported to the hotlines.

In the 10 years they have operated these hotlines, by the way, human trafficking reports have increased 842 percent. Again, it is unbelievable that this is happening in this country in this century and increasing.

I chair the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations. A couple of years ago, being interested in this issue, we started to talk to some of the experts around the country. I met with people back home—particularly the victims of trafficking and some of the survivors—and I kept hearing the same thing from everybody, whether it was the advocacy groups for those being trafficked, law enforcement, or the social service agencies that are helping to treat these women and girls who are dealing with the trauma we talked about earlier. The one thing I kept hearing was the word “backpage.” That is just one website, but it seemed as though there were a lot of people being trafficked on that one website. I certainly heard it back home, where these women and girls said to me: Rob, this has moved from the street corner to the smartphone, and backpage is where I was trafficked.

Nearly 75 percent of all child trafficking reports that the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children receives from the public involved backpage—75 percent of the reports.

Another anti-trafficking organization called Shared Hope International says that service providers working with child sex-trafficking victims have reported that more than 80 percent of their clients were bought and sold on backpage.

We talked earlier about how lucrative this business is, but one website seems to have practically monopolized it.

With that knowledge, in 2015 the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, led by Ranking Member CLAIRE MCCASKILL from Missouri and me, conducted an investigation. We spent 18 months researching this. We looked at every angle of this issue, and specifically we looked into how backpage operates. It wasn't easy because backpage was not willing to cooperate, as you can imagine. What we did find was that the company was far more complicit in these crimes than we had previously thought.

We subpoenaed backpage for their company documents, and they refused to comply. When you refuse to comply with a subpoena around here, normally we can kind of tell people: Well, if you don't comply, we will bring the full weight of the criminal law on you. They still wouldn't comply. So we had to come to the floor of the U.S. Senate to enforce the subpoenas, which hadn't been done in 21 years around here. Fortunately, when we made our case to our colleagues here in the Senate, everyone in the Senate said: Yes, let's be sure they do comply by taking this to the criminal justice system and allowing our lawyers here to take this case. So we did.

We thought, well, we will win a case at the district court level, which we did, and that will be it. No, they appealed that. We won a case at the circuit court level, and we thought that was it. No, they appealed that. Are you getting the drift here that they did not want to supply these documents and did not want to testify? Finally, we took it all the way to the Supreme Court of the United States, and the Supreme Court agreed with us and told them that they had to comply, with the threat of criminal sanctions if they did not.

Having won that, we then found ourselves in possession of over 1 million pages of documents. In other words, they flooded us with documents, and our lawyers did a good job going through them. Through this investigation, we found what some of us had kind of thought might be the case, which was that this company was actually complicit. In other words, they knew what they were doing, and they were knowingly facilitating criminal sex trafficking of vulnerable women and children. They actually coached traffickers on how to edit the adult classified ads to post so-called clean ads for these illegal transactions. Then, of course, they would cover up evidence of those crimes in order to increase their own profits.

In 2006, as an example, backpage executives instructed staff to edit the text of adult ads—not to take them down, mind you, but to edit them—which is exactly how they facilitated this type of trafficking. By October 2010, backpage executives had a formal process in place, we learned through all these documents, of both manual and automated deletion of incriminating words and phrases in ads.

This is an email from one of backpage's executives in 2010. It says:

I'm attaching a spreadsheet with the most current list of coded items to be stripped out. Email your lists to me by the end of the day. . . . Thanks.

In other words, they were telling these people who were posting ads: Oh, you can't say this word or that word because then law enforcement will know that we are engaged in selling underaged girls online. So they told them to take out those words. It is unbelievable.

What kinds of words were stripped out of the ads, allowing sex trafficking posts to stay up without violating the posting words? These are the kinds of words they took out: "teenage," "little girl," "school girl." "Cheerleader" was one of them. For those of you who are literary types, one was "Lolita," which is a novel about an underaged girl and an older man, and also "fresh" and "AMBER Alert."

These are the kinds of people we are dealing with here. Once these incriminating words were removed, the posts could then go on the website. That is how backpage coached the traffickers on how to get away with their crimes. Again, this filter didn't stop the ads, even though they knew it was illegal activity; they only edited them to try to hide that. So it didn't change what was advertised—the fact that these were underaged girls; they only edited the way it was advertised. Of course, this did nothing to stop the criminal activity, but it facilitated it knowingly.

The incentive? Why would backpage go through all of this? Quite simply, profits. This is a very profitable enterprise.

What is the cost of these crimes? It is very profitable, but the cost is human dignity, trauma. The cost is far more than money; it is suffering and sometimes human life. I have heard stories about this. I know my colleagues in the Senate have heard stories about it, and that is why there is so much support for this legislation across the country. These individual stories are compelling, they are powerful, and they are heartbreaking.

Imagine for a moment that your daughter is missing. She has been gone for several weeks. She is 14 years old. Someone says: You ought to look on this website called backpage. So you do. You look on backpage—you are a mom—and you find your daughter.

This is the story of Kubiiki Pride and M.A. She told her story bravely before our Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations. She told us the details, and we were able to use that as part of our investigation and to come up with a legislative response. She said she actually told backpage—she called them and said: I found my daughter. She has been missing for weeks. She is on your website. Thank you for taking down the ad and helping me to connect with my daughter.

As you can imagine, these were sexually explicit photographs of a 14-year-old girl. She didn't know whether she was alive or dead, so she was excited to find her but appalled by what she saw, as any of us would be.

What did backpage say? We can't take down the ad because you didn't pay for it, did you?

She said: Of course, I didn't pay for it; she is my daughter.

That is the level of evil we are talking about.

This is another story of another brave individual who has come forward.

This is Nacole, the mom, and J.S. Nacole also bravely testified in front of the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations. J.S. was a 15-year-old when she ran away. She loved her family, and she wrote them a 5-page letter saying how much she loved them, but she chose to leave the safety of her family and home, and she ended up in a homeless shelter for teens. A 22-year-old woman who was posing as a teen there approached her and said, "I can help you make some money" and then introduced her to a pimp, who then sold her on backpage. For more than 3 months, she was sold online multiple times a day.

Finally, an undercover police officer posing as a customer rescued her. Thankfully, he did, because for some many of the girls, the story goes on and sometimes ends in a very tragic way.

This is Yvonne Ambrose. Yvonne actually testified before the Commerce Committee. She and her mom did a beautiful job talking about her heartbreak and her tragic encounter with backpage. Yvonne got a call on Christmas Eve in 2016 that every parent dreads. It was about her daughter Desiree. They said in the call that her 16-year-old daughter had been murdered after being exploited and sold for sex on backpage.com. One of the backpage customers apparently was the one who murdered her beautiful daughter.

Yvonne is honoring Desiree's memory by working with us to try to hold these websites accountable, and Kubiiki and Nacole are fighting for justice.

These are only three examples tonight, but there are so many others and so many I have experienced back home. Again, these are heartbreaking stories. One girl told me she started to be trafficked at age 9 by her father. Some others have told me of not having parents at home, being in foster homes and leaving the foster homes either when they were emancipated at age 18 or earlier and the horrible situation they found themselves in.

I have had the opportunity to meet with survivors in cities around Ohio—in Dayton at Oasis House, in Columbus at Alvis, in Akron, Toledo, Cincinnati, and Cleveland. The majority of these young women tell me the same thing about backpage. Usually there are drugs involved as well that create a dependency.

Unbelievably, for years, these websites have gotten away with this because when parents like Yvonne, Kubiiki, or Nacole file a lawsuit for damages to try to stop what is going on, they are told: We are immune. When the prosecutors in these local communities step up and ask: "How could this illegal activity be going on? This is illegal to do on the street corners, certainly it is illegal to do online," the judges say: We are immune.

We will get into this later as to why that happens, how it happens, and what

we are doing about it in this legislation. I look forward to that discussion. I look forward to the debate on the Senate floor as to how we came up with a very targeted and very specific approach to this that doesn't interfere with the freedom of the internet at all, but it does stop activity that never was imagined. When Congress passed a law 21 years ago, it never imagined it would permit this kind of criminal activity online.

Tonight I thank those families who had the courage to step forward, tell their stories publicly, and channel their grief into something constructive, which is to come up with a legislative solution that helps address this problem so the next 14-year-old daughter or 16-year-old daughter does not find herself in these same horrible situations, with all the trauma and all the heartbreak that occurs.

Justice cannot be seen, but its absence can be felt, and that is what is happening now, an absence of justice. Those who have been trafficked online only see the websites that knowingly facilitated it to prosper and escape legal consequences. That has to stop. That is an injustice to me.

I look forward to further debate again this week. I look forward to the vote on Wednesday. If we can pass the Stop Enabling Sex Traffickers Act, we will make a difference. We will save lives. We will save women, girls, and boys from going through this traumatic experience and instead enable them to achieve their God-given potential in life.

I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

#### YEMEN WAR POWERS RESOLUTION

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I come to the floor tonight to discuss America's role in the crisis in Yemen.

I have here a picture of the fractured remains of buildings, people fleeing from those buildings, and a small child, probably in her father's arms. This represents the challenge of the bombing that is going on in that nation. I am here tonight to discuss America's role in that bombing and the fact that here in the Chamber we need to debate how it is we have come to the point of supporting this bombing when the War Powers Act clearly says we should not be.

When our Founding Fathers wrote our Constitution, they designated the President as the Commander in Chief, but they gave Congress, the House, and the Senate the sole power to declare war. Article I, section 8 states unequivocally: "The Congress shall have the power . . . to declare war."

It is only Congress that can take our Nation from peace to war. If one has any doubt about that, consider the words of James Madison himself, the father of our Constitution. He said: "In no part of the constitution is more wisdom to be found, than in the clause which confides the question of war or peace to the legislature, and not to the executive department."

Now, the clearly stated responsibility in our Constitution was reinforced by the 1973 War Powers Resolution, often referred to as the War Powers Act. That particular piece of legislation stated as its purpose the following: "It is the purpose of this joint resolution to fulfill the intent of the framers of the Constitution of the United States and insure that the collective judgment of both the Congress and the President will apply to the introduction of United States Armed Forces into hostilities." It goes on to say: "The constitutional powers of the President as Commander-in-chief to introduce United States Armed Forces into hostilities, or into situations where imminent involvement in hostilities is clearly indicated by the circumstances, are exercised only"—and that is a critical word—"pursuant to (1) a declaration of war, (2) specific statutory authorization, or (3) a national emergency created by attack upon the United States."

The picture I showed you showing the fractured remains of buildings and people fleeing that bombing in Yemen, that activity is not taking place subject to a declaration of war by this body—we have done no such thing—nor is there any specific statutory authorization for our assistance in that, nor is there a national emergency created by an attack upon the United States where that is justified.

Tomorrow this Chamber will take up this issue. We will be voting on a resolution put forward by our colleagues Senator SANDERS, Senator LEE, and Senator MURPHY calling for the removal of our Armed Forces in this role of supporting Saudi Arabia in this war against the Houthis.

There are two basic components of our presence in Yemen, and those are very distinct and not to be confused. The first is counterterrorism efforts in which we are directly engaged against associated forces of al-Qaida. This is a role that stems from the authorization for the use of military force that we passed in this Chamber in 2001. Members may come to the floor and argue about whether that initial authorization for use of military force involving al-Qaida in Afghanistan has been stretched beyond recognition. I would argue it has been stretched substantially and perhaps beyond recognition, but that is not the issue we are debating this week.

This week we are addressing the central issue of whether our involvement in supporting Saudi Arabia in its role in war against the Houthis in Yemen has violated our Constitution and the War Powers Act, and we have to confront and face how our assistance is contributing to a vast humanitarian crisis in that country. We may not have boots on the ground in support of the Saudi war against the Houthis, but we are very involved.

As we judge whether this involvement is violating the Constitution and the War Powers Act, we should turn to

section 8, the interpretation of the joint resolution. It says:

Authority to introduce United States Armed Forces into hostilities or into situations wherein involvement in hostilities is clearly indicated by the circumstances shall not be inferred—

(1) from any provision of law . . . including any provision contained in any appropriation Act, unless—

This is the key—

such provision specifically authorizes the introduction of the United States Armed Forces into hostilities.

It is very clear. The interpretation of this joint resolution says there is no room here to be participating in hostilities—that is a war—even in a supporting role, unless it has been specifically authorized by Congress. This interpretation of the joint resolution section of the War Powers Act goes on to say:

(c) For purposes of this joint resolution, the term "introduction of United States Armed Forces" includes—

You see the language here—

the assignment of member of such armed forces to command, coordinate, participate in the movement of, or accompany the regular or irregular military forces of any foreign country or government when such military forces are engaged.

There is the key fact that was laid out when we passed the War Powers Act. This War Powers Act doesn't just address us directly engaging in hostilities or directly confronting an enemy on the battlefield, it includes these provisions of commanding, coordinating, participating in the movement of, or accompanying military forces of a foreign country.

There is no question that we are coordinating and participating in the movement of the Saudi forces, so let's take a look at exactly how we are involved. The administration comes back and says: Yes, but we are not directly bombing the Houthis. We are not directly putting boots on the ground and shooting them.

It is clear the War Powers Act includes coordinating with, participating with, supporting, and partnering, if you will, with a foreign country involved in such a war. We are very involved.

First, we are involved by refueling Saudi planes en route to bombing the forces of the Houthis in Yemen. That is pretty direct involvement, and it goes to that language which says "participate in the movement of" those foreign forces. If we are refueling their planes en route to bombing the Houthis, we are participating in the movement of their military forces. A plane, a bomber, is a part of a military force.

Second, we are providing intelligence and thus very directly supporting this war of the Saudis.

Third, we are selling the weapons to them that they are using in this war on the Houthis.

Fourth, we are providing targeting assistance. We have even established a

joint combined planning cell, an operation center, to conduct military intelligence activities in partnership with Saudi Arabia.

Here is why this matters so much: It has a huge impact on the lives of the people in Yemen. It is very possible the planes we refueled are responsible for conducting a series of three airstrikes in Saada last month, killing 5 civilians and wounding 14 more, including 4 children, as well as paramedics trying to pull survivors out of the rubble after that first strike, or that the planes we refueled played a role in striking a hotel last August that turned the building's ceiling black with the charred blood of 50 farmers who were staying in that building. We know that the bombs we have sold to the Saudis are killing many civilians. It is time for us here to reckon with that fact.

A lot of Americans may not even know we are involved in this war. It has not been widely discussed. There are so many things going on across the planet at this time—so much going on in Syria, for example, that perhaps Americans in general are not paying attention. But we should be paying attention because of the carnage that is occurring: 10,000 civilians have been killed since this conflict began. The great, vast bulk of those civilians are dying from air strikes conducted by Saudi Arabia that we are supporting through intelligence and target assistance and refueling. Then there are the consequences of that bombardment. The result is just a tremendous humanitarian crisis.

The Saudis have been involved in blockading the ability to get humanitarian supplies into Yemen—food and medicine and fuel. This has resulted in what the United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Mark Lowcock, has warned could become “the largest famine the world has seen for many decades.” Seven million Yemenis are on the verge of starvation because of this war that we are involved in and the related Saudi blockade of food and medicine.

About every day, 130 Yemeni children die from extreme hunger and disease—130 a day. One of the factors that is killing people is cholera. Since October of 2016—so roughly a little less than a year and a half ago—1 million Yemenis have contracted cholera. More than 2,000 have died from it. It is the largest cholera outbreak in recorded history. Let me say that again: 1 million Yemenis have contracted cholera, and it is the largest cholera outbreak in recorded history. So 7 million Yemenis are on the verge of starvation, 1 million have contracted cholera, and so many are dying because of this war we are involved in.

The death and destruction in Yemen is unimaginable, and the United States needs to take a hard look at the role we are playing—a role we are playing in violation of our Constitution and in violation of the War Powers Act of

1973. That is the issue we are going to be discussing here on the floor.

I know there is some popularity in saying: Let's not look at that humanitarian crisis and our role in it; let's just look at the relationship we have with Saudi Arabia and know that they have helped us in other cases—for example, the war on ISIS. Let's know that they are a good customer for many of our products and for many of our military products. But I say to my colleagues: This issue is bigger than simply a good marketplace or a good relationship with Saudi Arabia. This goes to our involvement, our culpability in the deaths of thousands of Yemenis and 130 children a day through bombs falling on them, through hunger, starvation, through cholera.

It is hard for me to think about this young child in this picture, this young Yemeni, who clearly is the victim either of cholera or starvation or some other consequence of this conflict. But imagine 130 of these children dying every day.

It is our responsibility to honor the Constitution, and it is our responsibility as humans on this planet to wrestle with the fact that our involvement is contributing to this vast humanitarian disaster. Let us not abdicate our responsibility on the basis of friendship with another nation based on the fact that they are a good market for our products or that we think they may be future partners in some other agenda. We have a direct responsibility in war and peace that we have not fulfilled, and this week, with this coming resolution tomorrow, is a point that we must wrestle with this. Let us wrestle with it and honor the Constitution and give some integrity to the 1973 War Powers Resolution.

Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that cloture on the motion to proceed to H.R. 1865 be vitiated, and that at a time to be determined by the majority leader in consultation with the Democratic leader, on Wednesday, March 21, the Senate proceed to the consideration of H.R. 1865; further, that the only amendments in order be Wyden amendments Nos. 2212 and 2213; finally, that there be up to 4 hours of debate concurrently on the amendments, and that following the use or yielding back of that time, the Senate vote in relation to the amendments in the order listed, with a 60-vote affirmative threshold required for adoption of each amendment, the bill be read a third time, and the Senate vote on passage of the bill, as amended, if amended, with no further intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—S.J. RES. 54

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that following

the resumption of the motion to proceed to H.R. 1865, on Tuesday, March 20, Senator SANDERS, or his designee, be recognized to offer a motion to discharge S.J. Res. 54; further, that there be up to 4 hours of debate, equally divided between the opponents and the proponents of the resolution, and that following the use or yielding back of that time the Senate vote in relation to the motion to discharge.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

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#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

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#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 471.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Nazakhtar Nikakhtar, of Maryland, to be an Assistant Secretary of Commerce.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the nomination.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate vote on the nomination with no intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action; that no further motions be in order; and that any statements relating to the nomination be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Nikakhtar nomination?

The nomination was confirmed.

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#### LEGISLATIVE SESSION

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#### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate resume legislative session for a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

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#### 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE VERMONT STATE HOUSING AUTHORITY

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, for 50 years, the Vermont State Housing Authority, VSHA, has helped make available secure, safe, and affordable housing in my home State of Vermont.

Founded in 1968, the Vermont State Housing Authority provides thousands of Vermonters with the resources they need to find housing that works for them. As the first statewide housing authority in the Nation, VSHA was a pioneer in the field, as they built a successful program from the ground up without existing State models or best practices to replicate.

Not only does VSHA help Vermonters of all ages and backgrounds find a home through Federal or State programs, they also provide critical support to those who need it most. The VSHA offers a variety of assistance and resources to the refugee population that has settled in Vermont, including free interpreter services and the promise of a friendly face ready to help navigate a new beginning in an unfamiliar culture. Further, VSHA staff make what can be a frightening transition more tailored, personal, and comfortable—helping new citizens acclimate and assimilate into their new communities.

From connecting families in need with resources from the Department of Housing and Urban Development to developing innovative programs that inspire self-sufficiency and long-term independence, to promoting affordable housing for veterans, VSHA is involved in every community in Vermont. VSHA, through the Family Self-Sufficiency Program, helps families achieve economic stability and independence. As of the fall of last year, the program has graduated 194 people and has assisted a total of 153 Vermonters in becoming first-time homeowners through the homeownership program. While homeownership is a critical piece of building wealth and a hallmark of the American dream, it is often a far off dream for many families who struggle just to find a stable and affordable place to call home.

As more and more families struggle to make ends meet, especially when affordable units are few and far in between and housing prices continue to rise, the team at VSHA, led by their executive director of more than 30 years, Richard Williams, has worked hard to ensure that we work to meet the needs of our community. Though support for our most vulnerable populations is first and foremost in the minds of the VSHA team, it is clear that civic engagement and involvement plays a large role as well. The VSHA is involved in partnerships with dozens of Vermont nonprofit organizations, State and Federal agencies, and private sector businesses. Through their work rehabilitating and managing buildings, VSHA has revitalized our communities and downtowns one by one.

The Vermont State Housing Authority has made a lasting difference in the lives of Vermonters across our great State. For that, I thank them. On behalf of all Vermonters, congratulations on 50 years of hard work, dedication, and outstanding commitment to those you serve.

#### 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE WAYSIDE RESTAURANT

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, my wife, Marcelle, and I thoroughly enjoyed reading about the Wayside's 100th anniversary.

I remember when my sister, Mary, brother, John, and I would go with my parents, Howard and Alba Leahy, for a special treat: Sunday after church, we would go to the Wayside for lunch.

I remember my mother speaking Italian with some of the people there, but it was particularly special because of the fact that we would see everybody we knew from Montpelier and Barre, where my father was born.

Even today, I hold those memories from when I was a child, and I have thought of them every time Marcelle and I have brought our children, and now our grandchildren, for lunch at the Wayside. This is one of the institutions that makes Vermont the most special place in our country.

I ask unanimous consent that a press release commemorating the 100th anniversary of the Wayside Restaurant be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[Feb. 16, 2018]

#### 2018 MARKS VERMONT'S WAYSIDE RESTAURANT'S 100TH ANNIVERSARY

MONTPELIER.—In 1918, the Allies declared victory in World War 1, Babe Ruth pitched 29½ scoreless innings for the Red Sox in the World Series, Woodrow Wilson was President, color movies were invented, and Effie Ballou opened the Wayside on the Barre-Montpelier Road.

Originally just a roadside eatery, the Wayside Restaurant has withstood the test of time and is ready to celebrate its 100th Anniversary this year! In an industry where 70 percent of all restaurants fail after 10 years, the Wayside has defied the odds.

Throughout the year, there will be meal and dessert specials. In July, the actual month the Wayside opened; there will be a Customer Appreciation Party on July 29th from 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. The Wayside Creamery will host a free Ice Cream Social and at sundown all guests will be treated to a special fireworks display! Be sure to save the date.

For those who want to learn more about the Wayside and its long history go to [www.WaysideRestaurant.com](http://www.WaysideRestaurant.com). There is also a new book on sale at the restaurant commemorating their 100th Anniversary titled, *It's Worth The Ride To The Wayside: Celebrating 100 Years with Anniversary Ale, Yankee Cooking and Ice Cream*. And yes, the book includes several of the Wayside's delicious comfort food recipes!

#### VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. HEINRICH. Mr. President, I was unavoidably absent due to a death in my family for rollcall votes Nos. 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, and 55. Had I been present I would have voted nay on all the rollcall votes in relation to S. 2155, the Economic Growth, Regulatory Relief, and Consumer Protection Act. I would have also voted nay on the motion to invoke cloture on the nomination of Kevin McAleenan to be Commissioner

of U.S. Customs and Border Protection, rollcall vote No. 55; PNI373.

#### HOUSING OPPORTUNITY MORTGAGE EXPANSION ACT

Mr. SCOTT. Mr. President, as chairman of the Senate Banking Subcommittee on Housing, Transportation, and Community Development, today I wish to engage in a colloquy to discuss legislation that I introduced, the Housing Opportunity Mortgage Expansion, HOME, Act, with several of my colleagues to address an issue involving the Federal Home Loan Bank, FHLB, system. The FHLB system is a cooperative organization of 11 banks that support a mission of "helping American families realize the dream of home ownership, stimulate the creation of affordable housing, and improve the local business environment." FHLBs are privately capitalized by their 7,300 members and are subject to strict oversight by the Federal Housing Finance Agency, FHFA. The HOME Act is designed to correct the FHFA's perceived statutory limitation in the FHL Bank Act that does not permit captive insurers to be considered a class of the eligible insurance companies for membership in FHLBs.

In 2016, the FHFA determined that captive insurance firms were not insurance firms for purposes of the FHLB Act. In making this determination, the FHFA abruptly terminated the membership of approximately four dozen captive insurance entities, including mortgage real estate investment trusts, REITs, that were active and responsible members of the FHLB system. These insurance captives greatly contributed to the affordable housing mission of FHLBs through the use of private capital versus taxpayer dollars, something that we should always encourage. I thank Senators DUCKWORTH, JOHNSON, and BALDWIN for their support of this legislation, which I am hopeful will receive favorable consideration by this body in the future.

I yield to my friend from Illinois.

Ms. DUCKWORTH. Mr. President, thank you. I thank the chairman and my colleagues from Wisconsin for their support of this bipartisan legislation, which I introduced in January and filed as an amendment to S. 2155. As the chairman stated, as a result of the 2016 regulation, many of the FHLB system's captive insurance members have had or will soon have their membership terminated. Our legislation seeks to ensure that captive insurer affiliates of institutions that are active providers of private capital in the mortgage market are eligible to restore or continue their membership.

Their membership is crucial to reliable access to low-cost funding for home mortgages and affordable housing initiatives in Illinois. For the Federal Home Loan Bank of Chicago, these members serve as an important source of private capital in the mortgage market. Their membership broadens access

to credit to financial institutions that would otherwise not be able to access credit through their local markets and creates a reliable source of liquidity for affordable housing initiatives.

Our bipartisan bill only seeks to release those captives that were previously granted FHLB membership prior to February 19, 2016. By allowing captive insurers to continue to invest in mortgages and mortgage-related securities through the FHLB system, they can continue to provide both credit and liquidity to the market. Such sources of private capital are critical to the long-term financing of the FHLB system, and therefore, eligibility in the system should be preserved. Our legislation will achieve this purpose. I wish to turn to my friend from Wisconsin, Senator JOHNSON.

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I agree with the comments of my colleagues on the need to pass S. 2361 during the 115th Congress. The legislation is narrowly tailored such that it would provide the opportunity for reapplication or continuation of FHLB membership only for those captive entities that meet a series of criteria pertaining to the mission of their parent companies to serve the residential mortgage market. These captive members have proven track records of responsible membership, have contributed to the system, and have invested their capital in the respective FHLBs. Moreover, each and every captive that would be affected by our bill are subsidiaries of financial institutions that are aligned with the overall mission of the FHLBs.

I yield to my colleague from Wisconsin, Senator BALDWIN.

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. President, unfortunately, including this legislation in the recently passed S. 2155 was not possible due to a number of procedural objections that could not be overcome. However, it is our understanding that the substance of our bill has the support of several FHLBs, and we intend to work with our colleagues, the administration, and FHFA to find sustainable ways for housing-focused entities such as relevant captive insurance companies to participate in the FHLB system.

#### WOMEN'S HEALTH

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, today I wish to speak on the important topic of women's health, which has been under attack by the Trump administration.

Through its policies and the actions of its officials, the Trump administration has undermined women's health at every opportunity.

In the first year of the Trump administration, we have seen attempts to block access to Planned Parenthood, restrict women's access to birth control, legislation to ban certain medical procedures, the creation of new government offices to undermine women's healthcare, and judges nominated who openly oppose women's privacy rights.

Scott Lloyd, the Director of the Office of Refugee Resettlement, ORR, is the perfect illustration of this deeply disturbing trend.

Federal court documents and extensive media reports show that Mr. Lloyd has used his official office to prevent unaccompanied minors at ORR shelters from accessing legally available reproductive healthcare.

In one case, a 17-year-old young woman, referred to as Jane Doe, was transferred to an ORR shelter after crossing the U.S.-Mexico border. While in government custody, Jane Doe discovered she was pregnant and sought access to an abortion. She satisfied all requirements under Texas law and secured her own funds to pay for the procedure. In spite of this, ORR officials repeatedly blocked her from accessing care. Jane Doe went to court and was granted approval to obtain the procedure. Nevertheless, the Trump administration's Department of Justice cruelly appealed the decision, alleging that the government has an interest in blocking her personal decision.

Since Jane Doe's case, it has been uncovered that Trump administration officials have directly intervened in other similar cases. There are reports that Mr. Lloyd has denied young women access to their lawyers. Additionally, he has implemented policies that violate young women's medical privacy rights. It is also concerning that, as someone with no medical expertise or training, Mr. Lloyd has personally pressured young women about their medical options. In court documents, Mr. Lloyd acknowledged that he has never approved a request for the procedure and even admitted that he has denied such requests in the cases of rape victims. This is shocking, particularly considering that many of the young women who come into ORR custody have fled sexual and gender-based violence in their home countries.

On top of that, some of these young women go through harrowing experiences along their journey to the United States, during which they are at risk of being trafficked, kidnapped, and raped. Blocking them from making their own determinations about their health and bodies only adds to the trauma they have already experienced.

In light of Mr. Lloyd's shocking actions, I have called on him to resign.

I find it appalling that the Trump administration believes women—undocumented or otherwise—do not have the right to control their own bodies and make their own healthcare decisions. Young women do not lose their right to make their own healthcare decisions just because they are in government custody.

ORR is responsible for protecting the well-being of the most vulnerable people: those who have been tortured, children who arrive in the country alone and without a parent, and individuals fleeing persecution.

It is imperative that the leader of this office uphold this mission, rather

than advancing his own personal, political agenda. We have an obligation to treat young women in government custody with the dignity and respect they deserve.

The Trump administration needs to stop attacking women and start recognizing their right to control their own bodies, medical decisions, and destiny.

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

##### TRIBUTE TO VICTORIA HOENINGHAUSEN

● Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I would like to take the opportunity to express my appreciation to Tori for her hard work as an intern in my Washington, DC, office. I recognize her efforts and contributions to my office as well as to the State of Wyoming.

Tori is a native of Yellowstone National Park. She is a graduate of the University of Wyoming, where she studied international studies and criminal justice. She has demonstrated a strong work ethic, which has made her an invaluable asset to our office. The quality of her work is reflected in her great efforts over the last several months.

I want to thank Tori for the dedication she has shown while working for me and my staff. It was a pleasure to have her as part of our team. I know she will have continued success with all of her future endeavors. I wish her all my best on her next journey.●

##### RECOGNIZING VALLEY VIEW CHAROLAIS RANCH

● Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, I would like to offer my congratulations to Valley View Charolais Ranch on their 50th Annual Bull Sale and cowherd. Valley View Charolais have some of the most proven and popular bloodlines available. They have been bred for ease of calving, fertility, milk, and mothering ability, as well as performance. Valley View Charolais Ranch's efforts to produce animals that will make money for all that are involved, including the producer, the cowman, and the packer, have been proven. Their commitment to producing quality 2-year-old bulls despite trends, drought, blizzards, fighting grasshoppers, irrigation water, and cattle price cycles, is remarkable and demonstrates their true dedication.

I commend the Westphal Family for all the dedication and passion they have poured into the industry to be one of the Nation's leading breeders of purebred Charolais cattle and for selling 2-year-old Charolais bulls for 50 years.●

##### TRIBUTE TO MS. CAROL RIVARD

● Ms. HASSAN. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize and extend my sincerest congratulations and happy

birthday wishes to Ms. Carol Rivard who celebrated her 100th birthday on March 17, 2018.

Carol has lived in New Hampshire since she moved to Salem with her family in 1959. She worked in a textile mill and later as an office clerk for Kmart. After her retirement, Carol dedicated her time to helping a local food pantry where she volunteered every week for nearly 10 years.

To this day, Carol lives independently in her New Hampshire home. Her most cherished moments are spent with loved ones at family gatherings, where they enjoy listening to Frank Sinatra and cheering on the Boston Celtics. Carol has three sons and a daughter, as well as three grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

I join with Carol's friends and family, as well as many people in the town of Salem and across the Granite State, in wishing her a very happy 100th birthday.●

#### MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

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

#### EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

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

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

#### PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGES

REPORT RELATIVE TO THE ISSUANCE OF AN EXECUTIVE ORDER WITH RESPECT TO VENEZUELA THAT TAKES ADDITIONAL STEPS WITH RESPECT TO THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY DECLARED IN EXECUTIVE ORDER 13692 ON MARCH 8, 2015—PM 30

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report, which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs:

*To the Congress of the United States:*

Pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA) (50 U.S.C. 1701 *et seq.*), I hereby report that I have signed an Executive Order with respect to Venezuela that takes additional steps with respect to the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13692 of March 8, 2015, and relied upon for additional steps taken in Executive Order 13808 of August 24, 2017. The Executive Order prohibits, as of its

effective date, all transactions related to, provision of financing for, and other dealings in, by a United States person or within the United States, any digital currency, digital coin, or digital token, that was issued by, for, or on behalf of the Government of Venezuela on or after January 9, 2018.

I have authorized the Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of State, to take such actions, including promulgating rules and regulations and to employ all powers granted to the President by IEEPA as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of the Executive Order.

I am enclosing a copy of the Executive Order I have issued.

DONALD J. TRUMP.  
THE WHITE HOUSE, March 19, 2018.

SOCIAL SECURITY TOTALIZATION AGREEMENT WITH URUGUAY, TITLED "AGREEMENT ON SOCIAL SECURITY BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND THE ORIENTAL REPUBLIC OF URUGUAY," AND AN ACCOMPANYING LEGALLY BINDING ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENT TITLED "ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENT BETWEEN THE COMPETENT AUTHORITIES OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND THE ORIENTAL REPUBLIC OF URUGUAY FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGREEMENT ON SOCIAL SECURITY"—PM 31

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Finance:

*To the Congress of the United States:*

Pursuant to section 233(e)(1) of the Social Security Act, as amended by the Social Security Amendments of 1977 (Public Law 95-216, 42 U.S.C. 433(e)(1)), I transmit herewith a social security totalization agreement with Uruguay, titled "Agreement on Social Security between the United States of America and the Oriental Republic of Uruguay," and the accompanying legally binding administrative arrangement, titled "Administrative Arrangement between the Competent Authorities of the United States of America and the Oriental Republic of Uruguay for the Implementation of the Agreement on Social Security between the United States of America and the Oriental Republic of Uruguay" (collectively the "Agreements"). The Agreements were signed at Montevideo, Uruguay, on January 10, 2017.

The Agreements are similar in objective and content to the social security totalization agreements already in force with most European Union countries, Australia, Canada, Chile, Japan, Norway, the Republic of Korea, and Switzerland. Such bilateral agreements provide for limited coordination be-

tween the United States and foreign social security systems to eliminate dual social security coverage and taxation, and to help prevent the lost benefit protection that can occur when workers divide their careers between two countries.

The Agreements contain all provisions mandated by section 233 of the Social Security Act and, pursuant to section 233(c)(4), other provisions which I deem appropriate to carry out the purposes of section 233.

I also transmit for the information of the Congress a report required by section 233(e)(1) of the Social Security Act on the estimated number of individuals who will be affected by the Agreements and the Agreements' estimated cost effect. Also included are a summary of the main provisions and an annotated version of the Agreements with descriptions of each article. The Department of State and the Social Security Administration have recommended the Agreements to me.

I commend to the Congress the Agreement on Social Security between the United States of America and the Oriental Republic of Uruguay and the Administrative Arrangement between the United States of America and the Oriental Republic of Uruguay for the Implementation of the Agreement on Social Security between the United States of America and the Oriental Republic of Uruguay.

DONALD J. TRUMP.  
THE WHITE HOUSE, March 19, 2018.

#### MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE RECEIVED DURING ADJOURNMENT

##### ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

Under the authority of the order of the Senate of January 3, 2017, the Secretary of the Senate, on March 16, 2018, during the adjournment of the Senate, received a message from the House of Representatives announcing that the Speaker had signed the following enrolled bills:

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.

#### MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 3:02 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 4263. An act to amend the Securities Act of 1933 with respect to small company capital formation, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4545. An act to amend the Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council Act of 1978 to improve the examination of depository institutions, and for other purposes.

##### ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

The President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH) announced that on today,

March 19, 2018, he has signed the following enrolled bills, which were previously signed by the Speaker of the House:

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.

#### MEASURES REFERRED

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

H.R. 4263. An act to amend the Securities Act of 1933 with respect to small company capital formation, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

H.R. 4545. An act to amend the Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council Act of 1978 to improve the examination of depository institutions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

#### ENROLLED BILLS PRESENTED

The Secretary of the Senate reported that on today, March 19, 2018, she had presented to the President of the United States the following enrolled bills:

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.

#### 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-4599. A communication from the Acting Congressional Review Coordinator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Importation of *Campanula* spp. Plants for Planting in Approved Growing Media From Denmark into the United States" (RIN0579-AE31) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 16, 2018; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4600. A communication from the Acting Congressional Review Coordinator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Viruses, Serums, Toxins, and Analogous Products; Expiration Date Required for Serial and Subserials and Determination of Expiration Date of Product" (RIN0579-AD06) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 16, 2018; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4601. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Aluminum tris (O-ethylphosphonate);

Pesticide Tolerances" (40 CFR Part 180) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 16, 2018; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4602. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Flutianil; Pesticide Tolerances" (40 CFR Part 180) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 16, 2018; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4603. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "S-Metolachlor; Pesticide Tolerances" (40 CFR Part 180) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 16, 2018; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4604. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Manpower and Reserve Affairs), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on the mobilizations of selected reserve units, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 16, 2018; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4605. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition and Sustainment), transmitting, pursuant to law, a notice of additional time required to complete a report relative to core depot-level maintenance and repair capability and sustaining workloads; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4606. 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 2010 Sulfur Dioxide National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS); Final Rule" (FRL No. 9975-78-Region 7) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 16, 2018; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4607. 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 Missouri; Elements of the Infrastructure State Implementation Plan Requirements for the 2008 Ozone, 2010 Nitrogen Dioxide, 2010 Sulfur Dioxide, and 2012 Fine Particulate Matter National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS)" (FRL No. 9975-71-Region 7) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 16, 2018; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4608. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Loss Safe Harbor/RP-119318-17" (Rev. Proc. 2018-08) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 16, 2018; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4609. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Hurricanes Harvey & Irma Cost Index Sec. 165/RP-128547-17" (Rev. Proc. 2018-09) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 16, 2018; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4610. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Modified 2018 Cost-of-Living Adjustments to the Internal Revenue Code Tax Tables and Other Items" (Rev. Proc. 2018-18) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 16, 2018; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4611. A communication from the Chair of the Medicaid and CHIP Payment and Access Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Report to Congress on Medicaid and CHIP"; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4612. A communication from the Director of Regulations and Policy Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Clarification of When Products Made or Derived From Tobacco Are Regulated as Drugs, Devices, or Combination Products; Amendments to Regulations Regarding 'Intended Uses'; Partial Delay of Effective Date" ((RIN0910-AH94) (Docket No. FDA-2015-N-2002)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 16, 2018; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4613. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Federal Activities Related to Stillbirth, Sudden Unexpected Infant Death, and Sudden Unexplained Death in Childhood"; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4614. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Fiscal Year 2017 Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program Parts A and B Supplemental Awards Report to Congress"; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4615. A communication from the Board of Trustees, National Railroad Retirement Investment Trust, transmitting, pursuant to law, the annual management report relative to its operations and financial condition for fiscal year 2017; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4616. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs of the Department of Homeland Security, transmitting a legislative proposal relative to the President of the United States' Fiscal Year 2019 budget request for the Department of Homeland Security; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-4617. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Consolidated Cruise Ship Security Regulations" ((RIN1625-AB30) (Docket No. USCG-2006-23846)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 16, 2018; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4618. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Marine Casualty Reporting Property damage Thresholds" ((RIN1625-AC33) (Docket No. USCG-2016-0748)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 16, 2018; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.



## PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS

The following petitions and memorials were laid before the Senate and were referred or ordered to lie on the table as indicated:

POM-184. A concurrent resolution adopted by the Legislative Assembly of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico requesting the United States Congress to extend the unemployment and the Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) benefits for an additional twenty-six (26) weeks, due to the catastrophic impact of Hurricanes Maria and Irma on Puerto Rico; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

## CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 50

## STATEMENT OF MOTIVES

Only two weeks after Hurricane Irma hit the Island, on September 20th, 2017, Hurricane Maria struck Puerto Rico. The eye of this Category 4 hurricane made landfall in the municipality of Yabucoa.

Puerto Rico suffered damages estimated in at least ninety billion dollars (\$90,000,000,000), and a never-before-seen devastation. The power grid as well as the telecommunications and drinking water systems were down. One month after landfall, a mere eighteen percent (18%) of the population had power service, fifty-nine percent (59%) had telecommunications service, and seventy-three percent (73%) had drinking water service.

Many businesses have been unable to operate due to the lack of these services. Consequently, a significant number of employees have lost their jobs or their work hours have been reduced considerably.

Through a contribution based on a percentage of payroll expenses, employers participate in a program where job-seeking unemployed persons are able to receive financial assistance and labor advisory from the Government.

Workers who have been wrongfully discharged may receive the following benefits:

Unemployment compensation equivalent to a percentage of the salary earned up to one hundred thirty-three dollars (\$133.00) a week. Such compensation may be extended for an additional twenty-six (26) weeks, if eligible.

Job search assistance through their job center locations.

Furthermore, the Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) is available for employed and self-employed persons who have been determined not otherwise eligible for regular unemployment insurance benefits. This program provides unemployment benefits to individuals who have become unemployed as a direct result of a major disaster. Just as the unemployment benefit, this assistance is available for twenty-six (26) weeks.

Hurricanes Irma and Maria have had a major impact on the economy. Countless Puerto Ricans have lost their jobs, either temporarily or permanently. The lines at the regional offices of the Department of Labor are endless.

Moreover, it has been estimated that more than sixty thousand (60,000) Puerto Ricans have left the Island over the thirty (30) days following Hurricane Maria, forty thousand (40,000) of which have relocated to Florida.

If the U.S. Congress approves the unemployment benefit extension it will greatly contribute to the recovery of the People of Puerto Rico and prevent many others from making the difficult decision of moving from Puerto Rico.

This is not the first time that such a request is made. The U.S. Congress approved a similar extension in 2006 after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita struck Louisiana and Texas, respectively.

For all of the foregoing, this Legislative Assembly of Puerto Rico deems it meritorious to request the Congress of the United States of America to extend the unemployment and the Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) benefits for an additional twenty-six (26) weeks, due to the catastrophic impact of Hurricanes Maria and Irma on Puerto Rico.

*Be it Resolved by the Legislative Assembly of Puerto Rico:*

Section 1.—To request the Congress of the United States of America to extend the unemployment and the Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) benefits for an additional twenty-six (26) weeks, due to the catastrophic impact of Hurricanes Maria and Irma on Puerto Rico.

Section 2.—It is hereby directed that a copy of this Concurrent Resolution, translated into English, be delivered to the leadership of the Congress of the United States of America, including the Resident Commissioner of Puerto Rico in Washington, D.C., the President of the United States of America, and the U.S. Secretary of Labor.

Section 3.—This Concurrent Resolution shall take effect upon its approval.

POM-185. A concurrent resolution adopted by the Legislative Assembly of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico urging the United States Government to prioritize, increase, and accelerate the recovery, restoration, and reconstruction efforts of Puerto Rico in the wake of Hurricane Maria; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

## CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 53

## STATEMENT OF MOTIVES

On September 20, 2017, the people of Puerto Rico experienced one of the most catastrophic events in its history. The onslaught of Hurricane Maria and the devastation it caused not only resulted in the loss of dozens of lives, but also had a disastrous effect on the basic infrastructure, thus disrupting the economic stability and fraying the social fabric of the Island.

Thousands of families deprived of their homes, the loss of industries and jobs, the lack of access to essential medical services, and the lack of reliable means of communication, the difficult access to roadways and communities, and the alarming rate of migration to the mainland are just some of the adverse consequences with which the Island is dealing, while experiencing a serious economic recession that has lasted for over a decade. Almost one and a half months later, thousands of students have been unable to return to their classrooms, hundreds of communities continue without water service, and more than half of the Island still has no power. In short, the Island has essentially fallen into a humanitarian crisis.

Furthermore, the issue caused by the large accumulation of debris that has yet to be removed from the streets and the communities is specifically worth noting. Such debris adversely affects the quality of life of the residents of Puerto Rico. This situation not only constitutes a public safety hazard, but also affects the health of Puerto Ricans, because it promotes the proliferation of pests and mosquito breeding sites due to standing water. According to several experts, as well as the State epidemiologist, we have experienced an increase in the number of Leptospirosis cases and other diseases in many municipalities. In addition, debris affects vehicle traffic, limits accesses, and interferes with recovery efforts.

At this critical time, we are compelled to find effective solutions to protect life and property.

Even though the Government of Puerto Rico, its agencies, instrumentalities, and

municipalities have made a massive effort in an attempt to solve these issues at the state and local level, it is clear that the restoration and reconstruction of Puerto Rico is a Herculean task that we could not undertake without the intervention of the Federal Government. Now more than ever, the U.S. citizens of Puerto Rico require Federal assistance to set in motion their recovery.

We recognize that the concerned agencies and the different federal officials have expressed their unwavering commitment to the recovery and reconstruction of Puerto Rico. The truth is, however, that the pace at which works are being carried out is at odds with the needs of the People of Puerto Rico.

Indeed, on many occasions, local authorities have been compelled to raise a red flag about the adverse effects that the slow pace at which the works contracted with federal entities are being carried out could have. Several mayors of both political parties have resorted to the Executive Branch to increase the resources allocated to debris recovery and the overall reconstruction and recovery efforts being carried out in Puerto Rico. In some instances, the municipal executives have taken on the task to petition the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers directly and have been successful in arriving at agreements for the recovery of demolition and vegetative debris. However, some of these municipal executives have expressed that despite entering into these agreements, the demolition and vegetative debris recovery efforts have yet to begin. Likewise, it was reported that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has been slow to contract the resources necessary to restore the power grid of the Island as well as to install reinforced blue plastic sheeting to protect the property of those residents who have lost their roofs.

Once again, we stress that allocating resources, establishing long-term plans, and claiming that essential services shall be restored eventually is not enough. The U.S. citizens residing in Puerto Rico deserve and warrant that their needs be addressed with the same promptness and urgency with which the needs of our fellow citizens have been addressed under similar circumstances. It is not out of sheer convenience that we make this claim, but rather it is based on the most basic rights that the residents of Puerto Rico are entitled to enjoy.

In light of the foregoing, and with the utmost sense of urgency given the critical time that the U.S. citizens of Puerto Rico are living in, we deemed it necessary to emphatically demand from the Government of the United States of America that the pace with which the recovery and reconstruction works are being carried out in Puerto Rico is increased and accelerated. Time is of the essence.

*Be it resolved by the Legislative Assembly of Puerto Rico:*

Section 1.—To demand from the Government of the United States of America that they prioritize, increase, and accelerate the recovery, restoration, and reconstruction efforts of Puerto Rico in the wake of Hurricane Maria.

Section 2.—As part of the efforts, the President shall direct the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to expedite the debris removal efforts in the municipalities of Puerto Rico and reestablish the power grid of the Island, among other matters, including specific instructions on the recovery works that Puerto Rico needs and a work schedule.

Section 3.—A copy of this Concurrent Resolution, translated into English, shall be delivered to the President of the United States, Donald Trump; the Vice President of the United States and President of the United States Senate, Michael Pence; the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, Paul Ryan; and the Senate Majority Leader, Mitch McConnell.

Section 4.—This Concurrent Resolution shall take effect upon its approval.

### REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. RISCH, from the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 526. A bill to amend the Small Business Act to provide for expanded participation in the microloan program, and for other purposes.

By Mr. RISCH, from the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, without amendment:

S. 791. A bill to amend the Small Business Act to expand intellectual property education and training for small businesses, and for other purposes.

By Mr. RISCH, from the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 1538. A bill to amend the Small Business Act to establish awareness of, and technical assistance for, the creation of employee stock ownership plans, and for other purposes.

S. 1961. A bill to amend the Small Business Act to temporarily reauthorize certain pilot programs under the Small Business Innovation Research Program and the Small Business Technology Transfer Program, and for other purposes.

By Mr. RISCH, from the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, with an amendment:

S. 1995. A bill to amend the Small Business Investment Act of 1958 to improve the number of small business investment companies in underlicensed States, and for other purposes.

By Mr. RISCH, from the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 2283. A bill to amend the Small Business Act to strengthen the Office of Credit Risk Management within the Small Business Administration, and for other purposes.

S. 2419. A bill to amend the Small Business Act to improve the technical and business assistance services under the SBIR and STTR programs.

By Mr. RISCH, from the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, without amendment:

S. 2527. A bill to amend the Small Business Investment Act of 1958 to increase the amount of leverage made available to small business investment companies.

### 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. BROWN:

S. 2567. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to enhance the national strategy for combating and eliminating tuberculosis, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. BROWN (for himself and Mr. PORTMAN):

S. 2568. A bill to amend section 5000A of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide an additional religious exemption from the individual health coverage mandate, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. WARNER (for himself, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. MANCHIN, and Mr. WICKER):

S. 2569. A bill to amend the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act to authorize the Secretary of Agriculture to award grants to benefit the Appalachia region, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. MARKEY (for himself and Ms. WARREN):

S. 2570. A bill to repeal the funding authorization sunset and the total funding cap for the Essex National Heritage Area; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. LEAHY (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, and Ms. HEITKAMP):

S. 2571. A bill to reauthorize the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

### SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. BROWN (for himself and Mr. SULLIVAN):

S. Res. 437. A resolution supporting the goals of World Tuberculosis Day to raise awareness about tuberculosis; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself and Ms. HARRIS):

S. Res. 438. A resolution commemorating the 150th anniversary of the University of California; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CASEY (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. COONS, Mr. BROWN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, and Mr. MORAN):

S. Res. 439. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

### ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 109

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 109, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for coverage under the Medicare program of pharmacist services.

S. 281

At the request of Mr. LEE, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 281, a bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to eliminate the per-country numerical limitation for employment-based immigrants, to increase the per-country numerical limitation for family-sponsored immigrants, and for other purposes.

S. 292

At the request of Mr. REED, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) 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. 382

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 382, a bill to require the

Secretary of Health and Human Services to develop a voluntary registry to collect data on cancer incidence among firefighters.

S. 487

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 487, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for an exclusion for assistance provided to participants in certain veterinary student loan repayment or forgiveness programs.

S. 497

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. SMITH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 497, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for Medicare coverage of certain lymphedema compression treatment items as items of durable medical equipment.

S. 526

At the request of Mrs. FISCHER, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 526, a bill to amend the Small Business Act to provide for expanded participation in the microloan program, and for other purposes.

S. 528

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 528, a bill to amend the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 to provide leave because of the death of a son or daughter.

S. 781

At the request of Mr. CASSIDY, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 781, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to limit the liability of health care professionals who volunteer to provide health care services in response to a disaster.

S. 1016

At the request of Mr. SCHATZ, the names of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) and the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) were added as cosponsors of S. 1016, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to expand access to telehealth services, and for other purposes.

S. 1022

At the request of Mr. ISAKSON, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1022, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to facilitate assignment of military trauma care providers to civilian trauma centers in order to maintain military trauma readiness and to support such centers, and for other purposes.

S. 1091

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1091, a bill to establish a Federal Task Force to Support Grandparents Raising Grandchildren.

S. 1112

At the request of Ms. HEITKAMP, the names of the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1112, a bill to support States in their work to save and sustain the health of mothers during pregnancy, childbirth, and in the postpartum period, to eliminate disparities in maternal health outcomes for pregnancy-related and pregnancy-associated deaths, to identify solutions to improve health care quality and health outcomes for mothers, and for other purposes.

S. 1152

At the request of Mr. MERKLEY, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1152, a bill to create protections for depository institutions that provide financial services to cannabis-related businesses, and for other purposes.

S. 1158

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1158, a bill to help prevent acts of genocide and other atrocity crimes, which threaten national and international security, by enhancing United States Government capacities to prevent, mitigate, and respond to such crises.

S. 1161

At the request of Ms. DUCKWORTH, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1161, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to eliminate copayments by the Department of Veterans Affairs for medicines relating to preventative health services, and for other purposes.

S. 1276

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1276, a bill to require the Attorney General to make a determination as to whether cannabidiol should be a controlled substance and listed in a schedule under the Controlled Substances Act and to expand research on the potential medical benefits of cannabidiol and other marijuana components.

S. 1520

At the request of Mr. WICKER, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1520, a bill to expand recreational fishing opportunities through enhanced marine fishery conservation and management, and for other purposes.

S. 1613

At the request of Mr. RISCH, the name of the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1613, a bill to amend the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act to modernize the funding of wildlife conservation, and for other purposes.

S. 1693

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the name of the Senator from Michigan

(Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1693, a bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to clarify that section 230 of that Act does not prohibit the enforcement against providers and users of interactive computer services of Federal and State criminal and civil law relating to sex trafficking.

S. 2006

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2006, a bill to require breast density reporting to physicians and patients by facilities that perform mammograms, and for other purposes.

S. 2076

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO) 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 New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2135, a bill to enforce current law regarding the National Instant Criminal Background Check System.

S. 2155

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 2155, a bill to promote economic growth, provide tailored regulatory relief, and enhance consumer protections, and for other purposes.

S. 2208

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2208, a bill to provide for the issuance of an Alzheimer's Disease Research Semipostal Stamp.

S. 2245

At the request of Ms. HIRONO, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2245, a bill to include New Zealand in the list of foreign states whose nationals are eligible for admission into the United States as E-1 and E-2 non-immigrants if United States nationals are treated similarly by the Government of New Zealand.

S. 2271

At the request of Mr. REED, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2271, a bill to reauthorize the Museum and Library Services Act.

S. 2283

At the request of Mr. RISCH, the names of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI) and the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH) were added as cosponsors of S. 2283, a bill to amend the Small Business Act to strengthen the Office of Credit Risk Management within the Small Business Administration, and for other purposes.

S. 2334

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the names of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) and the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) were added as cosponsors of S. 2334, a bill to amend title 17, United States Code, to provide clarity with respect to, and to modernize, the licensing system for musical works under section 115 of that title, to ensure fairness in the establishment of certain rates and fees under sections 114 and 115 of that title, and for other purposes.

S. 2383

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2383, a bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to improve law enforcement access to data stored across borders, and for other purposes.

S. 2416

At the request of Mr. WICKER, the names of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO), the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) and the Senator from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2416, a bill to amend titles 5, 10, and 37, United States Code, to ensure that an order to serve on active duty under section 12304b of title 10, United States Code, is treated the same as other orders to serve on active duty for determining the eligibility of members of the uniformed services for certain benefits.

S. 2421

At the request of Mrs. FISCHER, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2421, a bill to amend the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 to provide an exemption from certain notice requirements and penalties for releases of hazardous substances from animal waste at farms.

S. 2495

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the names of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT), the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. LANKFORD) and the Senator from Indiana (Mr. DONNELLY) were added as cosponsors of S. 2495, a bill to reauthorize the grant program for school security in the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968.

S. 2524

At the request of Mr. DONNELLY, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2524, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to authorize a loan repayment program for substance use disorder treatment employees, and for other purposes.

S. 2529

At the request of Ms. BALDWIN, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2529, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reduce the applicable percentage under the premium assistance tax credit for households with young adults.

S. 2553

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the names of the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL) and the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2553, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to prohibit health plans and pharmacy benefit managers from restricting pharmacies from informing individuals regarding the prices for certain drugs and biologicals.

S. 2556

At the request of Mr. KENNEDY, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of 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.

S. 2564

At the request of Mr. TILLIS, the name of the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH) was added as a cosponsor of 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.

S. 2565

At the request of Ms. DUCKWORTH, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN) was added as a cosponsor of 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.

S.J. RES. 54

At the request of Mr. SANDERS, the names of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) and the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) were added as cosponsors of S.J. Res. 54, a joint resolution to direct the removal of United States Armed Forces from hostilities in the Republic of Yemen that have not been authorized by Congress.

S. RES. 424

At the request of Ms. BALDWIN, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 424, a resolution honoring the 25th anniversary of the National Guard Youth Challenge Program.

S. RES. 432

At the request of Mr. JOHNSON, the names of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE), the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS), the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) and the Senator from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 432, a resolution congratulating the Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania on the

100th anniversary of their declarations of independence.

#### STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. LEAHY (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, and Ms. HEITKAMP):

S. 2571. A bill to reauthorize the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, today, I am proud to once again join with Senator COLLINS to introduce the bipartisan Runaway and Homeless Youth and Trafficking Prevention Act. Senator COLLINS and I have championed this effort together for years now, and I thank her for her thoughtful and steadfast advocacy and constructive contribution throughout our efforts. Our bill will extend for five years key programs authorized by the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, and expand and improve the programs and services that are vital—and sometimes life-saving—resources and safe havens for at risk youth in our home states and across the country.

Runaway and homeless youth are significantly more likely to become victims of sexual abuse and trafficking. Our bill ensures that service providers, who are the bedrock of the support system for runaway and homeless youth, have the information, training, and resources they need to identify and serve youth that have been victims of trauma. This includes connecting the youth with appropriate additional services to ensure their physical and mental health and safety.

The bill reauthorizes and expands programs and guidance that help providers reunify youth with their families and loved ones, or, if not possible, provide a tailored and comprehensive support system to help them get back on their feet or on a path to self-sufficiency. The spectrum of support services include emergency and transitional housing—because the first step is having a safe place to stay. They also include training and counseling relating to physical and mental health care, financial literacy, and workforce training. Runaway and Homeless Youth providers are there for the youth every step of the way, supporting them and connecting them to their community and to available resources. Our reauthorization adds completion of the Free Application for Financial Student Aid (FAFSA) form to the available assistance to help youth who wish to pursue advanced educational opportunities realize their goals.

Finally, our bill ensures that no child can be discriminated against in trying to gain access to access services or housing through Runaway and Homeless Youth programs. It is unconscionable to turn away any child in need—gay, straight, black or white. These are our Nation's most vulnerable youth and they must all feel welcome. In

many cases, Runaway and Homeless Youth programs can be a last resort. We cannot let one child fall through the cracks in our support system.

In Vermont alone, the Vermont Coalition of Runaway and Homeless Youth Programs served 500 young people in need of housing supports in Fiscal Year 2017. Vermont is the seventh most expensive State to live in for rural areas, and ranks within the top five States for the largest shortfall between housing wage and renter wage. As youth and families struggle to make ends meet in Vermont and across the Nation, these programs and support systems are more important than ever. We must invest the resources to ensure our youth have a safe place to go and the resources they need to become self-sufficient.

Senator COLLINS and I know just how dangerous and unpredictable the weather can be in the Northeast. In fact, we are getting hit with yet another nor'easter complete with fresh snow this week. No child in either of our states, or anywhere in the United States, should have to call the street home. The bill we are introducing today will help ensure our nation's children have a safe place to stay and have the support they need to grow, learn, and thrive.

#### SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

##### SENATE RESOLUTION 437—SUPPORTING THE GOALS OF WORLD TUBERCULOSIS DAY TO RAISE AWARENESS ABOUT TUBERCULOSIS

Mr. BROWN (for himself and Mr. SULLIVAN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 437

Whereas  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the population of the world is infected with the tuberculosis bacterium (commonly referred to as "TB");

Whereas the World Health Organization (commonly referred to as the "WHO") estimates that 10,400,000 people were newly infected with TB in 2016, 10 percent of whom were also infected with the human immunodeficiency virus (commonly referred to as "HIV");

Whereas, in 2016, TB killed an estimated 1,700,000 people, causing more deaths worldwide than any other single infectious agent;

Whereas more than 80 percent of TB deaths among HIV-negative people in 2016 occurred in Africa and Southeast Asia, and India accounted for 33 percent of global HIV-negative TB deaths;

Whereas TB is a leading killer of people infected with HIV, and 400,000 people with HIV died of TB in 2016;

Whereas additional vulnerable populations at high risk for developing TB include pregnant women and newborns;

Whereas TB is 1 of the 5 leading causes of death among adult women between the ages of 20 and 59 in low-income countries, and women with TB can face stigma, discrimination, and in some settings ostracization by their families and communities;

Whereas the global TB epidemic and the spread of drug-resistant TB present a persistent public health threat to the United

States because the disease does not recognize borders;

Whereas antibiotic-resistant pathogens are a growing problem worldwide, and drug-resistant TB can occur when the drugs used to treat TB are misused or mismanaged;

Whereas studies have demonstrated direct person-to-person transmission of drug-resistant TB;

Whereas multi-drug resistant TB (commonly referred to as “MDR-TB”) is caused by bacteria with resistance to rifampin and isoniazid, the 2 most potent treatments for TB infection;

Whereas, according to the 2017 WHO Global Tuberculosis Report, in 2016 an estimated 4.1 percent of all new TB cases and 19 percent of previously treated cases were MDR-TB or rifampin-resistant TB;

Whereas, in 2016, an estimated 600,000 people around the world developed MDR-TB or rifampin-resistant TB and those drug-resistant strains caused approximately 240,000 deaths worldwide;

Whereas extensively drug-resistant TB (commonly referred to as “XDR-TB”) is a rare type of TB that is resistant to nearly all medicines, and therefore can be very difficult and expensive to treat, especially among patients with HIV and acquired immune deficiency syndrome (commonly referred to as “AIDS”);

Whereas, according to the 2017 WHO Global Tuberculosis Report, in 2015, 123 countries reported at least 1 case of XDR-TB;

Whereas, in 2016, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimated that the cost of treating a single patient with MDR-TB in the United States averaged \$160,000, and the average cost of treating a patient with XDR-TB was even higher at \$513,000, compared with \$18,000 to treat a patient with drug-susceptible TB;

Whereas MDR-TB and XDR-TB cases in the United States between 2005 and 2007 collectively cost the health care system an estimated \$53,000,000, according to an analysis by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention;

Whereas, in a 2000 report, the Institute of Medicine found that a decrease in TB control funding and the spread of HIV and AIDS caused a resurgence of TB in the late 1980s and early 1990s;

Whereas a total of 9,272 TB cases were reported in the United States in 2016, representing all 50 States and the District of Columbia, and up to 13,000,000 people in the United States may be living with latent TB infection;

Whereas 75 percent of States have reported an increase in the proportion of complex cases of TB in recent years due to factors such as homelessness, HIV infection, drug resistance, substance abuse, refugee status, and other factors;

Whereas the rate of TB disease in African Americans is 8 times higher than the rate in white non-Hispanic Americans, and significant disparities exist among other minorities in the United States, including Native Americans and Alaska Natives, Asian Americans, and Hispanic Americans, with 86 percent of all reported TB cases in the United States in 2016 occurring in racial or ethnic minorities;

Whereas, globally in 2016, an estimated 1,000,000 children developed TB and 250,000 children died of TB;

Whereas smoking greatly increases the risk of death from TB, and more than 20 percent of TB cases worldwide may be attributable to smoking;

Whereas diabetes is a major risk factor for TB, and people with diabetes are more likely to develop TB and have a higher risk of death due to TB;

Whereas bedaquiline is an antibiotic that boosts an MDR-TB patient’s chance of survival from approximately 50 percent to as much as 80 percent, and through a public-private partnership, the United States Agency for International Development (commonly referred to as “USAID”) assists more than 8,000 patients in almost 40 countries in accessing this new medication;

Whereas Bacillus Calmette-Guerin, a TB vaccine that is known as “BCG”, provides some protection to children but has had little epidemiologic impact on TB worldwide;

Whereas there is a critical need for new drugs, diagnostics, and vaccines for controlling the global TB epidemic;

Whereas the WHO has called for “global solidarity and action” to support a 20-year strategy to end the global TB epidemic;

Whereas the enactment of the Tom Lantos and Henry J. Hyde United States Global Leadership Against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria Reauthorization Act of 2008 (Public Law 110-293; 122 Stat. 2918), and the Comprehensive Tuberculosis Elimination Act of 2008 (Public Law 110-392; 122 Stat. 4195) provided a historic United States commitment to the global eradication of TB, including a commitment to treat 4,500,000 TB patients and 90,000 MDR-TB patients between 2009 and 2013 and to provide additional treatment through coordinated multilateral efforts;

Whereas USAID provides financial and technical assistance to 23 countries highly burdened by TB, helps to support the development of new diagnostic and treatment tools, and is authorized to support research to develop new vaccines to combat TB;

Whereas TB incidence in the countries that receive bilateral TB funding from the United States through USAID has decreased by nearly ½ since 2000;

Whereas the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, partnering with other entities of the United States and individual States and territories, directs the national TB elimination program, coordinates TB surveillance, technical assistance, and prevention activities, and helps to support the development of new diagnostic, treatment, and prevention tools to combat TB;

Whereas the National Institutes of Health, through its many institutes and centers, plays the leading role in basic and clinical research on the identification, treatment, and prevention of TB;

Whereas the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria (commonly referred to as the “Global Fund”), to which the United States is a top financial donor, provides more than 65 percent of all international financing for TB programs;

Whereas, to date, Global Fund-supported programs have detected and treated 17,400,000 cases of TB; and

Whereas March 24, 2018, is World Tuberculosis Day, a day that commemorates the date in 1882 on which Dr. Robert Koch announced his discovery of Mycobacterium tuberculosis, the bacteria that causes TB: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) supports the goals of World Tuberculosis Day to raise awareness about tuberculosis;

(2) commends the progress of tuberculosis bacteria elimination efforts by entities that include the Interagency Working Group on U.S. Government-Sponsored International Exchanges and Training, the United States Agency for International Development, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Institutes of Health, the World Health Organization, and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria; and

(3) reaffirms the commitment to strengthen the United States leadership and effec-

tiveness of the global response to tuberculosis.

SENATE RESOLUTION 438—COMMEMORATING THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself and Ms. HARRIS) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 438

Whereas Congress enacted the Act of July 2, 1862 (commonly known as the “First Morrill Act”) (12 Stat. 503, chapter 130; 7 U.S.C. 301 et seq.), to allow for the establishment of land-grant colleges offering programs teaching agriculture and the mechanic arts;

Whereas on March 23, 1868, the State of California enacted the Organic Act, which—

(1) established the University of California (referred to in this preamble as the “University”); and

(2) entrusted the organization and government of the University to a corporate body entitled the Regents of the University;

Whereas in 1869 the University opened in Oakland, California, and had an inaugural class of 40 students and 10 faculty members;

Whereas, since 1869, the University has grown to include a total of 10 campuses in the following cities: San Francisco; Berkeley; Davis; Los Angeles; Santa Barbara; Riverside; San Diego; Santa Cruz; Irvine; and Merced;

Whereas, as of 2018, the University has more than 273,000 enrolled students and employs more than 223,300 faculty, staff, and other academics;

Whereas the University has graduated more than 2,000,000 living alumni;

Whereas in 1870 the University decreed that the University would admit women and men equally;

Whereas the University has 5 academic medical centers, which include 6 medical schools, 12 public hospitals, and 18 health professional schools;

Whereas the University is affiliated with—

(1) Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, since 1931;

(2) Los Alamos National Laboratory, since 1943; and

(3) Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, since 1952;

Whereas these 3 national laboratories are—

(1) working to create advanced new tools for scientific discovery;

(2) enabling transformational solutions for health and the environment;

(3) enhancing the defense of the United States while reducing the global threat from terrorism; and

(4) addressing other emerging national security and energy challenges;

Whereas, due to the commitment of the University to diversity and to providing access to higher education to all qualified students in the State of California, the University currently enrolls the highest number of resident undergraduates in the history of the University;

Whereas the faculty of the University is internationally renowned for scholarly and scientific achievements, and has helped maintain the prestige and quality of education of the University during decades of social and technological change;

Whereas in 1939 University professor E. O. Lawrence received the first Nobel Prize of the University for inventing the cyclotron;

Whereas 61 faculty members associated with the University have won Nobel Prizes;

Whereas the faculty and alumni of the University include hundreds of MacArthur “Genius” grant winners, Pulitzer Prize winners,

Fulbright Award recipients, National Medal of Science winners, prominent policy makers, athletes, and thespians;

Whereas the University established the fields of nuclear physics and biotechnology, revolutionized agriculture, and helped the movie industry mature;

Whereas the University, through faculty and alumni, continues to drive technological innovation and actively partners with private industry; and

Whereas the University continues to address the most pressing issues in the world: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved, That the Senate—*

(1) congratulates the University of California (referred to in this resolving clause as the “University”) on the 150th anniversary of the founding of the University;

(2) recognizes and celebrates the 150 years of history, legacy, and achievements of the University;

(3) recognizes the achievements of all of the administrators, professors, students, and staff members who have contributed to the success of the University;

(4) reaffirms the commitment of the Senate to ensuring access to a quality and affordable higher education across the United States; and

(5) respectfully requests that the Secretary of the Senate transmit an enrolled copy of this resolution to—

(A) the President of the University; and

(B) the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs of the University.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce a resolution that honors one of the most venerable institutions in our State: the University of California.

The resolution before us commemorates the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the University of California, a noteworthy milestone that must be celebrated by recognizing all of the achievements. I would like to thank my dear friend, Senator HARRIS, for joining me and supporting this endeavor.

Throughout its history, the University of California has become a foundation, and a beacon of hope, for the State of California and the Nation as a whole. It embraces the same spirit and tenacity that defines our great State.

The University of California has grown from one campus in Berkeley to a system of 10 top-ranked universities, five notable and top-notch academic medical centers, and three affiliated National Laboratories, all impacting far reaches of the State.

We should recognize the University of California for what it is: the finest and most accessible public university system in this country. It was established on the premise that college is for everyone and designed with every Californian in mind. That is why the University of California’s Board of Regents in 1870 decreed that women be admitted equally with men, 50 years before the adoption of the Nineteenth Amendment, which granted women the right to vote.

Diversity has always been a cornerstone of the University of California. Because of its progressive and forward-thinking ways, notable alumni include Jackie Robinson, who shattered the Major League Baseball’s color barrier;

Sally Ride, the first American woman in space; and the countless number of students and faculty members who are the first generation in their families to attend college.

Today, the University of California has more than 273,000 enrolled students and employs more than 223,300 faculty, staff, and other academics. It has graduated more than two million living alumni.

The University of California is also a national leader in scientific discovery and medical advancement, enabling transformational solutions for healthcare and the environment, enhancing our Nation’s defense while reducing the global threat from terrorism, and addressing other emerging national security and energy challenges. It established itself in the fields of nuclear physics and biotechnology, revolutionized agriculture, and helped the movie industry mature, all of which are now multi-billion-dollar industries. Through its faculty and alumni, the University continues to drive technological innovation and actively partner with the private sector.

Mr. President, before I yield the floor, I would like to end with a small anecdote. Every year in our household, we always look forward to the “Big Game.” For the uninitiated, this is the biggest college football game of the year: the Stanford Cardinal versus the California Golden Bears. This is the oldest college football rivalry in the West, which began in 1892, and still continues to this day. I do not hold it against those who attended Berkeley, but I will be happy to gloat when my Cardinal beat the Bears. I am not one to boast, but it must be noted that Stanford has won more “Big Games” than Berkeley.

All quips aside, as we commemorate this momentous occasion in the storied history that is the University of California, we must remember the past and present, with an eye towards the future. The challenges before it are great, but the potential that lies within itself is even greater. I know and believe that the University of California will continue to push boundaries, explore the great unknown, stand up for American values, and continue to solve the world’s most complex problems. Here is to another exceptional 150 years.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

#### SENATE RESOLUTION 439—SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS AWARENESS WEEK

Mr. CASEY (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. COONS, Mr. BROWN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, and Mr. MORAN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions:

S. RES. 439

Whereas multiple sclerosis (referred to in this preamble as “MS”) can impact individ-

uals of all ages, races, and ethnicities, but MS is at least 2 to 3 times more common in women than in men;

Whereas there are approximately 2,300,000 individuals worldwide who have been diagnosed with MS;

Whereas MS is typically diagnosed in individuals between the ages of 20 and 50, but it is estimated that between 8,000 and 10,000 children and adolescents are living with MS in the United States;

Whereas MS is an unpredictable, often disabling disease of the central nervous system that disrupts the flow of information within the brain and between the brain and the body;

Whereas symptoms of MS range from numbness and tingling to vision problems and paralysis, and the progress, severity, and specific symptoms of MS in any 1 person cannot yet be predicted;

Whereas, while there is no evidence that MS is directly inherited, studies show that there are genetic and environmental factors that give certain individuals a higher risk of developing MS;

Whereas the exact cause of MS is unknown, and there is no cure for MS;

Whereas the Multiple Sclerosis Coalition, a national network of independent MS organizations dedicated to the enhancement of the quality of life of individuals affected by MS, recognizes and supports Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week;

Whereas the mission of the Multiple Sclerosis Coalition is to increase opportunities for cooperation and to provide greater opportunity to leverage the effective use of resources for the benefit of the MS community;

Whereas the United States plays a critical role in coordinating MS research globally and amplifies the impact of research in the United States through which results are delivered to MS patients;

Whereas, in 2012, the National Multiple Sclerosis Society was a founding member of the International Progressive MS Alliance, which coordinates research to accelerate the development of treatments for progressive MS by removing international scientific and technological barriers and, as of 2018, includes 17 MS organizations from 17 countries, 9 foundation and trust members, and 7 pharmaceutical partners;

Whereas the Multiple Sclerosis Coalition recognizes and supports Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week during March each year;

Whereas the goals of Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week are—

(1) to invite people to join the movement to end MS;

(2) to encourage everyone to do something to demonstrate a commitment to moving toward a world free of MS; and

(3) to acknowledge those who have dedicated time and talent to help promote MS research and programs; and

Whereas, in 2018, Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week is recognized during the week of March 11 through March 17: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved, That the Senate—*

(1) supports the goals and ideals of Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week;

(2) encourages States, localities, and the territories and possessions of the United States to support the goals and ideals of Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week by issuing proclamations designating Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week;

(3) encourages media organizations—

(A) to participate in Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week; and

(B) to help provide education to the public about multiple sclerosis;

(4) commends the efforts of States, localities, and the territories and possessions of

the United States to support the goals and ideals of Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week;

(5) recognizes and reaffirms the commitment of the United States to ending multiple sclerosis by—

(A) promoting awareness about individuals that are affected by multiple sclerosis; and

(B) supporting multiple sclerosis research and education programs;

(6) recognizes all individuals in the United States living with multiple sclerosis;

(7) expresses gratitude to the family members and friends of individuals living with multiple sclerosis, who are a source of love and encouragement for those individuals; and

(8) salutes the health care professionals and medical researchers who—

(A) provide assistance to individuals affected by multiple sclerosis; and

(B) continue to work to find ways—

(i) to stop multiple sclerosis;

(ii) to restore what has been lost due to multiple sclerosis; and

(iii) to end multiple sclerosis forever.

#### AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 2212. Mr. WYDEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill 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, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2213. Mr. WYDEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1865, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2214. Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. GRASSLEY) proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 3731, to provide overtime pay for employees of the United States Secret Service, and for other purposes.

#### TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 2212. Mr. WYDEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill 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, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

**SEC. \_\_\_\_ . EFFECT ON LIABILITY OF EFFORTS TO IDENTIFY, RESTRICT ACCESS TO, OR REMOVE OBJECTIONABLE MATERIAL.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 230(c) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 230(c)) is amended by adding at the end the following: “(3) EFFECT OF EFFORTS TO IDENTIFY, RESTRICT ACCESS TO, OR REMOVE OBJECTIONABLE MATERIAL.—

“(A) EFFECT ON CRIMINAL AND CIVIL LIABILITY GENERALLY.—The fact that a provider or user of an interactive computer service has undertaken any efforts (including monitoring and filtering) to identify, restrict access to, or remove material the provider or user considers objectionable shall not be con-

sidered in determining the criminal or civil liability of the provider or user for any material that the provider or user has not removed or restricted access to.

“(B) EFFECT ON PROTECTIONS.—The protections under paragraphs (1) and (2) are not limited by or contingent upon an interactive computer service provider’s—

“(i) moderation of content; or

“(ii) use of particular content moderation practices.”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall—

(1) take effect on the date of enactment of this Act; and

(2) apply regardless of whether the conduct alleged occurred, or is alleged to have occurred, before, on, or after such date of enactment.

SA 2213. Mr. WYDEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill 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, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

**SEC. \_\_\_\_ . PROTECTING SEX TRAFFICKING VICTIMS FROM CRIMINAL WEBSITES.**

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the “Protecting Sex Trafficking Victims from Criminal Websites Act”.

(b) APPROPRIATION OF FUNDS.—Out of funds of the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, there are appropriated to the Attorney General, for use in consultation with the Secretary of Homeland Security and the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, \$20,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2018 through 2022 to investigate and prosecute website operators that criminally facilitate sex trafficking or the sexual exploitation of children.

(c) AVAILABLE UNTIL EXPENDED.—Amounts appropriated under subsection (b) shall remain available until expended.

(d) BUDGETARY EFFECTS.—

(1) PAYGO SCORECARD.—The budgetary effects of this section shall not be entered on either PAYGO scorecard maintained pursuant to section 4(d) of the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010 (2 U.S.C. 933(d)).

(2) SENATE PAYGO SCORECARD.—The budgetary effects of this section shall not be entered on any PAYGO scorecard maintained for purposes of section 4106 of H. Con. Res. 71 (115th Congress), the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2018.

SA 2214. Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. GRASSLEY) proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 3731, to provide overtime pay for employees of the United States Secret Service, 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 “Secret Service Recruitment and Retention Act of 2018”.

**SEC. 2. EXTENSION OF OVERTIME PAY EXCEPTION THROUGH 2018 FOR PROTECTIVE SERVICES.**

(a) AMENDMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 2 of the Overtime Pay for Protective Services Act of 2016 (5 U.S.C. 5547 note) is amended—

(A) in the section heading, by striking “IN 2016” and inserting “DURING 2016 THROUGH 2018”;

(B) in subsection (a), by striking “2016” and inserting “2016, 2017, or 2018”; and

(C) in subsection (b), by striking paragraph (1) and inserting the following:

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, including section 5547(a) of title 5, United States Code, and only to the extent that an appropriation is provided specifically in an appropriations Act for premium pay in excess of the annual equivalent of the limitation on the rate of pay contained in section 5547(a), any covered employee may receive premium pay during 2016, 2017, and 2018, to the extent provided under section 118 of the Treasury and General Government Appropriations Act, 2001 (5 U.S.C. 5547 note).”.

(2) CLARIFYING PROVISION.—Section 118 of the Treasury and General Government Appropriations Act, 2001 (5 U.S.C. 5547 note) is amended, in the first sentence, by inserting “or 3056A” after “section 3056(a)”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by subsection (a) shall take effect as if enacted on December 31, 2016.

(c) REPORT ON EXTENSIONS.—Not later than January 30, 2018, and January 30, 2019, the Director of the Secret Service shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security and the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate a report on the effects of the amendment made by subsection (a)(2). The report shall include, with respect to the previous calendar year—

(1) the total number of United States Secret Service personnel receiving premium pay above the premium pay limitation in subsection (a) of section 5547 of title 5, United States Code;

(2) the total amount of premium pay for that calendar year paid to United States Secret Service personnel above the premium pay limitation in such subsection;

(3) the mean and median amount of premium pay paid to United States Secret Service personnel above the premium pay limitation in such subsection;

(4) the greatest amount paid to United States Secret Service personnel above the premium pay limitation in such subsection and the number of employees who received that amount;

(5) notwithstanding the amendments made by subsection (a), the total number of United States Secret Service personnel who were not fully compensated for service because of the premium pay earnings limitation in section 118 of the Treasury and General Government Appropriations Act, 2001 (5 U.S.C. 5547 note);

(6) the total amount of premium pay United States Secret Service personnel would have been paid but for the premium pay earnings limitation in such section; and

(7) a list of United States Secret Service personnel who, within the calendar year, received premium pay above the premium pay limitation in subsection (a) of section 5547 of title 5, United States Code, and separated from the agency, including the type of separation in each case.

**SEC. 3. REPORT OF THE COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES.**

Not later than 1 year after the effective date of this section, the Comptroller General of the United States shall complete a study and submit to the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives, the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate,

the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives, and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate a report on the extent of the progress made by the United States Secret Service in implementing the recommendations of the United States Secret Service Protective Mission Panel, including in particular those items pertaining to training and personnel enumerated in the Executive Summary to Report from the United States Secret Service Protective Mission Panel to the Secretary of Homeland Security dated December 15, 2014.

#### APPOINTMENTS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair, on behalf of the President pro tempore, pursuant to Public Law 96-388, as amended by Public Law 97-84, and Public Law 106-292, appoints the following Senator to the United States Holocaust Memorial Council: the Honorable BENJAMIN L. CARDIN of Maryland.

The Chair, on behalf of the Vice President, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 4355(a), appoints the following Senator to the Board of Visitors of the U.S. Military Academy: the Honorable JOE MANCHIN III of West Virginia, from the Committee on Appropriations.

#### SECRET SERVICE RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION ACT OF 2017

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 3731 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

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

The clerk will report the bill by title. The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 3731) to provide overtime pay for employees of the United States Secret Service, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Grassley substitute 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 amendment (No. 2214) 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 "Secret Service Recruitment and Retention Act of 2018".

#### SEC. 2. EXTENSION OF OVERTIME PAY EXCEPTION THROUGH 2018 FOR PROTECTIVE SERVICES.

(a) AMENDMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 2 of the Overtime Pay for Protective Services Act of 2016 (5 U.S.C. 5547 note) is amended—

(A) in the section heading, by striking "IN 2016" and inserting "DURING 2016 THROUGH 2018";

(B) in subsection (a), by striking "2016" and inserting "2016, 2017, or 2018"; and

(C) in subsection (b), by striking paragraph (1) and inserting the following:

"(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, including section 5547(a) of title 5, United States Code, and only to the extent that an appropriation is provided specifically in an appropriations Act for premium pay in excess of the annual equivalent of the limitation on the rate of pay contained in section 5547(a), any covered employee may receive premium pay during 2016, 2017, and 2018, to the extent provided under section 118 of the Treasury and General Government Appropriations Act, 2001 (5 U.S.C. 5547 note)."

(2) CLARIFYING PROVISION.—Section 118 of the Treasury and General Government Appropriations Act, 2001 (5 U.S.C. 5547 note) is amended, in the first sentence, by inserting "or 3056A" after "section 3056(a)".

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by subsection (a) shall take effect as if enacted on December 31, 2016.

(c) REPORT ON EXTENSIONS.—Not later than January 30, 2018, and January 30, 2019, the Director of the Secret Service shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security and the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate a report on the effects of the amendment made by subsection (a)(2). The report shall include, with respect to the previous calendar year—

(1) the total number of United States Secret Service personnel receiving premium pay above the premium pay limitation in subsection (a) of section 5547 of title 5, United States Code;

(2) the total amount of premium pay for that calendar year paid to United States Secret Service personnel above the premium pay limitation in such subsection;

(3) the mean and median amount of premium pay paid to United States Secret Service personnel above the premium pay limitation in such subsection;

(4) the greatest amount paid to United States Secret Service personnel above the premium pay limitation in such subsection and the number of employees who received that amount;

(5) notwithstanding the amendments made by subsection (a), the total number of United States Secret Service personnel who were not fully compensated for service because of the premium pay earnings limitation in section 118 of the Treasury and General Government Appropriations Act, 2001 (5 U.S.C. 5547 note);

(6) the total amount of premium pay United States Secret Service personnel would have been paid but for the premium pay earnings limitation in such section; and

(7) a list of United States Secret Service personnel who, within the calendar year, received premium pay above the premium pay limitation in subsection (a) of section 5547 of title 5, United States Code, and separated from the agency, including the type of separation in each case.

#### SEC. 3. REPORT OF THE COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES.

Not later than 1 year after the effective date of this section, the Comptroller General of the United States shall complete a study and submit to the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives, the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate, the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives, and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate a report on the extent of the progress made by the United States Secret Service in im-

plementing the recommendations of the United States Secret Service Protective Mission Panel, including in particular those items pertaining to training and personnel enumerated in the Executive Summary to Report from the United States Secret Service Protective Mission Panel to the Secretary of Homeland Security dated December 15, 2014.

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. 3731), as amended, was passed.

#### ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, MARCH 20, 2018

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m., Tuesday, March 20; 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. I further ask that following leader remarks, the Senate resume consideration of the motion to proceed to H.R. 1865. Finally, I ask that the Senate recess from 12:30 p.m. until 2:15 p.m. to allow for the weekly conference meetings.

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

#### ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 7:18 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, March 20, 2018, at 10 a.m.

#### NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

##### ADVISORY COUNCIL ON HISTORIC PRESERVATION

AIMEE KATHRYN JORJANI, OF WISCONSIN, TO BE CHAIRMAN OF THE ADVISORY COUNCIL ON HISTORIC PRESERVATION FOR A TERM EXPIRING JANUARY 19, 2021, VICE MILFORD WAYNE DONALDSON, TERM EXPIRED.

##### DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

ELIZABETH DARLING, OF TEXAS, TO BE COMMISSIONER ON CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILIES, DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, VICE RAFAEL J. LOPEZ.

##### DEPARTMENT OF STATE

JOSEPH N. MONDELLO, OF NEW YORK, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO.

##### DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

MARK SCHULTZ, OF NEBRASKA, TO BE COMMISSIONER OF THE REHABILITATION SERVICES ADMINISTRATION, DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, VICE JANET LORRAINE LABRECK.

##### PRIVACY AND CIVIL LIBERTIES OVERSIGHT BOARD

EDWARD W. FELTEN, OF NEW JERSEY, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE PRIVACY AND CIVIL LIBERTIES OVERSIGHT BOARD FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE TERM EXPIRING JANUARY 29, 2019, VICE PATRICIA M. WARD, RETIRED. JANE NITZE, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE PRIVACY AND CIVIL LIBERTIES OVERSIGHT BOARD FOR A TERM EXPIRING JANUARY 29, 2023, VICE RACHEL L. BRAND, TERM EXPIRED.



IN THE ARMY

*To be colonel*

*To be colonel*

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY MEDICAL SERVICE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624 AND 3064:

KEVIN R. EMBRY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

JOHN M. WILLIAMS

*To be lieutenant colonel*

*To be colonel*

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate March 19, 2018:

TIA W. CAPHART

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY MEDICAL CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624 AND 3064:

ANDREW J. FURJANIC

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

NAZAKHTAR NIKAKHTAR, OF MARYLAND, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF COMMERCE.

*To be lieutenant colonel*

*To be colonel*

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

KEVIN K. MCALEENAN, OF HAWAII, TO BE COMMISSIONER OF U.S. CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION, DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY.

NAPOLEON A. CAMPOS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

DANIEL L. LEE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624: