

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

VIETNAM VETERANS DAY

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 471, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 471) designating March 29, 2018, as "Vietnam Veterans Day."

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

Mr. McCONNELL. I know of no further debate on the measure.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the resolution.

The resolution (S. Res. 471) was agreed to.

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the preamble be agreed to.

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

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

GOLD STAR WIVES DAY

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 472, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 472) designating April 5, 2018, as "Gold Star Wives Day."

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

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 472) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY, APRIL 18, 2018

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the

Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 9:30 a.m., Wednesday, April 18; 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 S.J. Res. 57, with the time until 12 noon equally divided between the managers or their designees; further, I ask that at 12 noon tomorrow, the Senate vote on passage of S.J. Res. 57, and that if passed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table; finally, notwithstanding the provisions of rule XXII, the cloture vote with respect to the House message to accompany S. 140 occur following disposition of S.J. Res. 57.

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

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. McCONNELL. If there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order, following the remarks of Senator THUNE.

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

The Senator from South Dakota.

COAST GUARD AUTHORIZATION BILL

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I want to speak today to the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2017, of which I am a cosponsor. As chairman of the Commerce Committee, which has jurisdiction over the Coast Guard, I am proud that we were able to bring this important bipartisan legislation, which was originally introduced by Senator SULLIVAN, to the floor today for consideration. The bill that we are debating will increase our national security, protect our maritime industry, increase safety for the boating public, and provide consistency for those who depend on the water for their daily work.

As anyone impacted by the 2017 hurricane season will tell you, the Coast Guard plays a vitally important role in our Nation's first response efforts. Equally critical is the Coast Guard's role as a member of our U.S. military. Coast Guard women and men protect our waterways, defend our shores, interdict contraband, arrest human traffickers, guarantee the free movement of commerce, and ensure the stewardship of our national resources.

On any given day, the Coast Guard responds to an average of 45 search and rescue missions, seizes 1,500 pounds of drugs, interdicts 17 illegal migrants, conducts 16 security boardings, and facilitates the movement of \$12.6 billion worth of goods. These professionals do their job without seeking recognition

or acknowledgement. It often goes overlooked that our coastguardsmen are serving across every ocean and on every continent, including Antarctica. They serve across the Middle East, including in both Iraq and Afghanistan. They help protect our Navy's ships, defend against pirates, and ensure our strategic ports remain open.

This legislation provides the Coast Guard the authority to better carry out those missions, including defending our critical ballistic submarines when they are surfaced and at their most vulnerable. In one way or another, the Coast Guard affects every American, even in my home State of South Dakota. We may not have a coastline, but the work of the Coast Guard helps facilitate the export of agricultural products that drive our State's economy. The Coast Guard also provides boating safety classes and outreach to tens of thousands of my fellow South Dakotans. This outreach saves lives every single day.

This past year was the deadliest for boaters in the past 5 years, with a 12-percent increase in deaths. Many of those deaths could have been prevented, and this legislation seeks to make improvements to boater safety, such as requiring the use of an engine cutoff switch for certain recreational boats. Maybe you have seen the videos of boaters falling overboard and their boat continuing in circles and hitting them, often seriously injuring or even killing them. This change, supported by the recreational boating community, will prevent these types of incidents in the future.

This legislation also provides certainty to our mariners. It streamlines regulations, reduces burdens, and clarifies ambiguous rules that harm our commerce and our environment. We also reauthorize the hydrographic services at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, which are necessary for shoreline mapping and accurate nautical charts, and we reauthorize the Federal Maritime Commission.

Finally, this bill fixes a broken patchwork of regulations that prevents efficiency in moving goods along our waterways. The Vessel Incidental Discharge Act, or VIDA, is important bipartisan legislation—sponsored by Senators WICKER, CASEY, and more than 20 cosponsors from both sides of the aisle—that creates a uniform set of rules to protect the environment while providing consistent regulations for all ports and waterways.

You will hear from some of my colleagues that this act reduces environmental controls and is being jammed down their throats. This is simply not true. We have negotiated in good faith for hundreds of hours, over the past few Congresses, to make this a strong piece of bipartisan legislation. We need strict, science-based, and achievable environmental standards, and that is what this VIDA title will yield.

The new standards must be based on the best available technology that is