

When I met with Maduro and others in his regime in Caracas last month, I pointed out that Republicans and Democrats don't agree on much in Washington these days, but they do agree on Venezuela. The Trump administration is correct this week in urging a suspension of this election under such absurd conditions.

Let me give you just one example, that of leading opposition figure and former mayor of a district of Caracas Leopoldo Lopez who remains under house arrest and disqualified from competing in the upcoming election. I was able to meet with his brave wife, Lilian Tintori, in Venezuela—whose passport has been taken by the government—and speak with him by phone. We were not allowed to visit him in person.

Why was Lopez jailed, kept in solitary confinement, and now put under house arrest? Because, according to the government, he was using subliminal messages to direct protesters to act unlawfully.

That is right. One of the country's leading opposition candidates is in jail for sending "subliminal messages."

One of the prosecutors who led the case against Lopez later fled the country and said the trial was a farce based on false evidence and that Lopez is innocent. This tells you the nature of the outrageous political disgrace at play in Venezuela.

Senator MENENDEZ, I, and 10 other Democrats made the same point as the Trump administration in a resolution introduced earlier this year, specifically that the results of this rushed election will not be considered legitimate if basic conditions are not met.

Let me repeat them here as they are so obvious: All political prisoners and jailed candidates, including Leopoldo Lopez, should be immediately released and free to participate in the election process; all parties should be free to peacefully participate in the election; the discredited election commission must be reformed into a credible non-partisan body to administer the election; there must be no linking of government food to one's political participation or support of the ruling party, a particularly cruel tactic when many are suffering from severe malnutrition; local and international election monitors must be allowed, accredited, and given genuine access in the pre and actual election periods; and there must be at least 6 months to allow for a legitimate campaign under these conditions.

I believe the Venezuelan Government provided me a visa to visit because it was looking for a way out of its increasing and deserved international isolation.

Well, the path forward is actually quite clear and entirely in the Venezuelan Government's control, and it begins with running a clean and fair election as just described. Quite simply, have the courage and decency to allow the Venezuelan people the same

fair and open process afforded Hugo Chavez when he first won at the ballot box. Have the courage to allow the world, including the American people, to help your people who are suffering and fleeing in desperation.

In terms of the relationship with the United States, also let Josh Holt and his Venezuelan wife come home. Don't continue down the path of a hostage-taker.

#### NATIONAL CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS WEEK

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, on May 5, 1984, former President Ronald Reagan issued a proclamation designating the first week in May as National Correctional Officers Week. He did so "in recognition of the contributions of correctional officers to our Nation." I believe it is important to continue to recognize the contributions and critical work that correctional officers engage in on a daily basis, often risking their own safety in the course of carrying out their duties.

Correctional officers are tasked with keeping inmates safe, as well as the thousands of staff supporting the operation of correctional facilities. Our Nation's correctional officers are not only an integral part of the criminal justice system, but they play a key role in helping maintain public safety.

Correctional officers are also placed in a unique position to have meaningful interactions with incarcerated individuals. It is not uncommon for correctional officers to provide the prisoner population with the support and resources they need to succeed after their release so that inmates are able to become productive members of society.

During National Correctional Officers Week, we are reminded of the service and sacrifice of correctional officers. I wish to take this opportunity to thank the over 400,000 correctional officers in the United States for the often thankless job that they do. I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring these key public servants.

#### DISCHARGE PETITION—S.J. RES. 52

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, hereby direct that the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be discharged from further consideration of S.J. Res. 52, a joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Federal Communications Commission relating to "Restoring Internet Freedom," and further, that the resolution be immediately placed upon the Legislative Calendar under General Orders.

Edward J. Markey, Ron Wyden, Amy Klobuchar, Jeanne Shaheen, Maria Cantwell, Brian Schatz, Kirsten E. Gillibrand, Tim Kaine, Sherrod Brown, Richard Blumenthal, Jack Reed, Charles E. Schumer, Elizabeth Warren, Martin Heinrich, Benjamin L. Cardin, Tammy Duckworth, Tammy Baldwin, Patrick J. Leahy, Michael F. Bennet,

Richard J. Durbin, Debbie Stabenow, Mazie Hirono, Cory A. Booker, Chris Van Hollen, Angus S. King, Tina Smith, Dianne Feinstein, Claire McCaskill, Robert Menendez, Tom Udall, Gary C. Peters, Jon Tester, Christopher A. Coons, Patty Murray, Robert P. Casey, Doug Jones, Bernard Sanders, Kamala D. Harris, Christopher Murphy, Jeff Merkley, Margaret Wood Hassan, Heidi Heitkamp, Sheldon Whitehouse, Mark R. Warner, Joe Manchin, Thomas R. Carper, Bill Nelson, Catherine Cortez Masto, Joe Donnelly.

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

##### TRIBUTE TO CHARLES HALL

• Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, today I wish to honor a lifelong champion of the American labor movement, Mr. Charles Hall, director of the United Auto Workers Region 1, on the occasion of his retirement from the UAW. As a member of the U.S. Senate, it is both my privilege and honor to recognize Mr. Hall for his lifetime of service and contributions that have strengthened our community and State.

Chuck Hall has been a tireless advocate for his UAW brothers and sisters throughout his career. He joined the UAW as a member of Local 3 when he began working at Chrysler's Winfield Foundry in Detroit, MI, in 1972. There, he worked in the inspections and heat-treat departments. In 1977, Chuck accepted a job in timekeeping at Huber Foundry in amalgamated UAW Local 889. He continued to work both there and at Chrysler's Dodge main plant until it closed in 1980. He then returned to work at the Winfield Foundry, where he worked until 1983 and was also recalled to the timekeeping position.

In 1987, Chuck accepted a position at Chrysler corporate payroll and in 1991 was elected as chief steward of his unit. Seven years later, he was voted unit financial secretary and appointed civil rights chairperson for his local. Shortly thereafter in 2001, Chuck was elected as financial secretary for Local 889. He was voted to serve as a delegate to the UAW constitutional convention in 2002 and served on the credentials committee.

In February 2005, Chuck was appointed to the UAW international staff and assigned to Region 1. In the beginning of 2010, he was named the Region 1 assistant director on the recommendation of then—Region 1 director Joseph Peters. Chuck was elected director of UAW Region 1 at the UAW's 35th constitutional convention on June 16, 2010, in Detroit, MI. During his term, Chuck has served Region 1 and all of organized labor with honor, integrity, and selflessness.

Chuck has spent his career and life in support of his community, organized labor, and civil rights. He currently serves on the boards of the Economic Alliance of Michigan, United Way for Southeastern Michigan, Community

Caring, Delta Dental of Michigan, Care House, and is a member of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists and a lifelong member of the NAACP.

Chuck has spent his career in service to others, his UAW brothers and sisters, his community, and his always growing family. I ask my colleagues to join me today in honoring Mr. Charles Hall for his many contributions to Michigan, the organized labor movement, and his leadership at the United Auto Workers Union. I wish Chuck and his family health and happiness in the years ahead.●

#### MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message from the President of the United States was communicated to the Senate by Ms. Cuccia, one of his secretaries.

#### PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE

REPORT ON THE CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY THAT WAS ORIGINALLY DECLARED IN EXECUTIVE ORDER 13338 OF MAY 11, 2004, WITH RESPECT TO THE BLOCKING OF PROPERTY OF CERTAIN PERSONS AND PROHIBITION OF EXPORTATION AND RE-EXPORTATION OF CERTAIN GOODS TO SYRIA—PM 36

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:*

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1622(d), provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days before the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency with respect to the actions of the Government of Syria declared in Executive Order 13338 of May 11, 2004—as modified in scope and relied upon for additional steps taken in Executive Order 13399 of April 25, 2006, Executive Order 13460 of February 13, 2008, Executive Order 13572 of April 29, 2011, Executive Order 13573 of May 18, 2011, Executive Order 13582 of August 17, 2011, Executive Order 13606 of April 22, 2012, and Executive Order 13608 of May 1, 2012—is to continue in effect beyond May 11, 2018.

The regime's brutal war on the Syrian people, who have been calling for freedom and a representative government, not only endangers the Syrian

people themselves, but also generates instability throughout the region. The Syrian regime's actions and policies, including pursuing and using chemical weapons, supporting terrorist organizations, and obstructing the Lebanese government's ability to function effectively, continue to foster the rise of extremism and sectarianism and pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to continue in effect the national emergency declared with respect to this threat and to maintain in force the sanctions to address this national emergency.

In addition, the United States condemns the Assad regime's use of brutal violence and human rights abuses, and calls on the Assad regime to stop its violent war, uphold the Cessation of Hostilities, enable the delivery of humanitarian assistance, and negotiate a political transition in Syria that will forge a credible path to a future of greater freedom, democracy, opportunity, and justice.

The United States will consider changes in the composition, policies, and actions of the Government of Syria in determining whether to continue or terminate this national emergency in the future.

DONALD J. TRUMP.  
THE WHITE HOUSE, May 9, 2018.

#### MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:03 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 1680. An act to amend the Small Business Act to improve the women's business center program, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1702. An act to amend the Small Business Act to improve the small business development centers program, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3170. An act to amend the Small Business Act to require cyber certification for small business development center counselors, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4111. An act 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.

H.R. 4743. An act to amend the Small Business Act to strengthen the Office of Credit Risk Management within the Small Business Administration, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4754. An act to amend the Small Business Act to provide prospective construction contractors with information about an agency's policies on the administration of change orders to allow such contractors to make informed business decisions regarding the pricing of bids or proposals, and for other purposes.

H.R. 5236. An act to expand opportunities available to employee-owned business concerns through Small Business Administration loan programs, and for other purposes.

#### MEASURES REFERRED

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

H.R. 1680. An act to amend the Small Business Act to improve the women's business center program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

H.R. 1702. An act to amend the Small Business Act to improve the small business development centers program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

H.R. 3170. An act to amend the Small Business Act to require cyber certification for small business development center counselors, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

H.R. 4754. An act to amend the Small Business Act to provide prospective construction contractors with information about an agency's policies on the administration of change orders to allow such contractors to make informed business decisions regarding the pricing of bids or proposals, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

H.R. 5236. An act to expand opportunities available to employee-owned business concerns through Small Business Administration loan programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

#### MEASURES DISCHARGED

The following joint resolution was discharged from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation by petition, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 802(c), and placed on the calendar:

S.J. Res. 52. Joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Federal Communications Commission relating to "Restoring Internet Freedom".

#### MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bills were read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and placed on the calendar:

H.R. 4111. An act 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.

H.R. 4743. An act to amend the Small Business Act to strengthen the Office of Credit Risk Management within the Small Business Administration, and for other purposes.

#### EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

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

EC-5145. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Konjac glucomannan; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance" (FRL No. 9976-60) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 3, 2018; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.