

and retirement benefits. James caught the mistake. He did the honorable thing. He notified the VA it was overpaying him, but the VA continued to overpay him. Then it charged him twice to recoup the overpayments, and they garnished his benefits.

The staff in my office worked with the VA to resolve James's issues, but this should never have happened in the first place. It is fixed now. He had to go through that. To his credit, to James's credit, he wanted to make sure his experience, which was uncomfortable—or worse at times—would change policy and affect future veterans so they wouldn't have to go through this, which is why I admire him so much.

This story is too common. In 2016, the VA issued some 200,000 overpayment notices to veterans. When this happens, the agency often tries to get its money back by withholding some or all of the monthly disability payments our veterans have earned. Our veterans deal with enough stress already. They shouldn't be forced to pay for the VA's accounting mistakes.

Our bill would ban the VA from charging veterans for its own mistake in overpayments. It should protect veterans' payments who depend on their benefits by capping the amount the VA can deduct from a veteran's monthly payment at 25 percent. It would ban the VA from collecting debts that are more than 5 years old.

Our veterans sacrifice so much already to serve our country. I am the first Ohioan to ever serve a full term. I have been on this committee now for 12 years, the Veterans' Affairs Committee. I am on that committee because we should serve those who serve us. We should protect those who protect us. The veterans shouldn't be paying for the mistakes of the agency that is supposed to serve them.

Unfortunately, our bill was not included in the National Defense Authorization Act last week. Instead, we have an amendment to the MILCON-VA bill to require the VA to track down these overpayments and report to Congress on the scope of VA debt. We will continue to push for the Tester-Boozman bill, but I hope all of my colleagues will join me in supporting this bipartisan, commonsense step toward fixing VA overpayment and debt for America's veterans.

I yield the floor.

Ms. HASSAN. Mr. President, I have submitted amendment No. 2955 to H.R. 5895 on behalf of Senator JEANNE SHAHEEN. I strongly support the provision's intent to ensure that veterans in New Hampshire receive the best possible care.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TILLIS). The majority leader.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk for amendment No. 2910.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the Senate amendment No. 2910 to Calendar No. 449, H.R. 5895, an act making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes.

John Thune, Todd Young, Lamar Alexander, John Boozman, Ben Sasse, Johnny Isakson, Thom Tillis, Cindy Hyde-Smith, David Perdue, John Cornyn, Patrick J. Toomey, Pat Roberts, Jeff Flake, Mike Rounds, Mike Crapo, Tim Scott, Mitch McConnell.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk for the bill H.R. 5895.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on Calendar No. 449, H.R. 5895, an act making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes.

John Thune, Todd Young, Lamar Alexander, John Boozman, Ben Sasse, Johnny Isakson, Thom Tillis, Cindy Hyde-Smith, David Perdue, John Cornyn, Patrick J. Toomey, Pat Roberts, Jeff Flake, Mike Rounds, Mike Crapo, Tim Scott, Mitch McConnell.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum calls be waived.

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

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, here is where we are. I filed cloture, but we anticipate that will not actually be necessary and we will be able to vitiate the cloture motions tomorrow because we anticipate being able to process additional amendments throughout the day and wrap the bill up sometime tomorrow afternoon. But there will be an opportunity during the day to continue to process amendments, and we should be able to finish the bill this week without resorting to cloture.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I was necessarily absent for the June 19, 2018, vote on Senate amendment 2914 to Sen-

ate amendment 2910 to H.R. 5895, Energy and Water, Legislative Branch, and Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Act, 2019. I would have voted yea.

Mr. President, I was necessarily absent for the June 19, 2018, vote on Senate amendment 2920 to Senate amendment 2910 to H.R. 5895, Energy and Water, Legislative Branch, and Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Act, 2019. I would have voted yea.

WORLD REFUGEE DAY

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I rise today in honor of World Refugee Day and to express my deep concern over the Trump administration's systematic assault on refugees, asylum seekers, and the United States' refugee resettlement program.

Manmade conflict, natural disasters, poverty, and violence have left the world in the midst of the largest refugee crisis in recorded history with over 25 million refugees worldwide. Tragically, less than 1 percent of these individuals will ever be resettled to a third country.

The United States was built on the hopes and dreams of those fleeing persecution and oppression, those seeking better lives for themselves and their families. The values and moral compass that embraced these individuals and shone as a beacon of freedom have made this country great. In times of crisis, the United States traditionally asserted global leadership through these values that have made this country so successful. That leadership served as an important uniting and motivating voice in the face of tremendous international challenges.

Unfortunately, instead of asserting moral and strategic leadership, the Trump administration has chosen to retreat. The President has traded in our proud tradition of lifting up the most vulnerable for an agenda of degrading and insulting those who seek our support. Starting with his assertion that Mexicans are "rapists" and "drug dealers," this President has spent his tenure as our Nation's leader attacking America's immigrant and refugee communities. The President said he wanted to protect Dreamers; yet he abruptly ended the DACA program throwing the lives of 800,000 people into great uncertainty. He imposed a slap-dash Muslim ban that has been repeatedly struck down by the courts. He has slowed refugee admissions to a trickle, closing America's doors to some of the most vulnerable people on the planet, reducing America's global leadership standing.

Driven by vitriolic voices, the President and the Attorney General together have worked to effectively destroy the refugee resettlement program, which traditionally received broad bipartisan support. Last September, the President decreed that the number of refugees to be admitted in