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House of Representatives

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 5957

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to be removed as a cosponsor of H.R. 5957.

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

There was no objection.

EXTENDING DEADLINE FOR PROMULGATION OF REGULATIONS UNDER TRIBAL TRANSPORTATION SELF-GOVERNANCE PROGRAM

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 6414) to amend title 23, United States Code, to extend the deadline for promulgation of regulations under the tribal transportation self-governance program.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 6414

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. EXTENSION OF DEADLINE FOR PROMULGATION OF REGULATIONS UNDER TRIBAL TRANSPORTATION SELF-GOVERNANCE PROGRAM.

Section 207(n)(1) of title 23, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (B) by striking ''21 months'' and inserting ''42 months''; and

(2) in subparagraph (C) by striking ''30 months'' and inserting ''48 months''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG) and the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Alaska.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 6414.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 6414.

I thank Chairman SHUSTER and Ranking Member DEFAZIO for including the Tribal Transportation Self-Governance Program in the FAST Act.

The FAST Act requires the Department of Transportation to use a negotiated rulemaking process to establish the regulations to implement the program. It also set deadlines for the issuance of the regulations.

H.R. 6414 would extend these deadlines. This bill would ensure that there is an opportunity for a true negotiated rulemaking process that is not one-sided and that respects Tribal self-determination.

Without this extension, I am concerned that the Department will move forward with implementing the program in a way that is not helpful to the Tribes of America. This would undermine the intent of the previous FAST Act and would lead to a lack of Tribal participation in the program.

I thank the Sitka Tribe of Alaska for their leadership and work on this program and issue, and I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 6414.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, if you look at how transportation funds are administered to the Tribes, first off, it is a pathetic and inadequate amount of money, given the infrastructure problems that the Tribes have. But then, that is true of infrastructure, writ large, across the United States of America.

Secondly, we think it was 1860 or 1870, the Tribes do not directly receive these funds. There are various Federal agencies involved, and sometimes State agencies involved, in the disbursal of those funds and the approval of the projects under those funds.

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This legislation was part of the FAST Act, which would give Tribal self-governance. They would be able to administer their own funds without anybody taking off administrative costs, without bureaucratic delay, and set their own priorities on their own lands. I sponsored this into the FAST Act. It was unanimously accepted at the time.

Now, we thought, when we passed the FAST Act that 3 years would be long enough for the Department of Transportation to consult with the Tribes. We set up a committee to come to consensus on the rules for self-governance. Well, unfortunately, it was slowed down because of the Presidential election. After the Presidential election, this committee did not meet for the entire year of 2017. And then, this year, essentially, DOT had some meetings, but then presented sort of a take-it-or-leave-it to the Tribes, which the Tribes find unacceptable.

Now, unfortunately, the Tribes can't prolong the negotiations unless we change the law, because the law set a deadline of December 2018. And because of the way that bureaucratic rulemaking process works, DOT would have to put out their rule in August while we are out of town and without having reached any consensus or having had any meaningful conversation with the Tribes under the rules for which they should be able to administer their own funds for their own projects.

So this bill is quite simple. It extends the deadline so that DOT won't rush out a rule that is opposed by the Tribes, which, obviously, destroys the entire intent of this legislation. This

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would provide an additional year. And, hopefully, with some prodding, and maybe a different Congress next year, we can get DOT's attention and get them to meaningfully consult with the sovereign nations, with the Tribes, to come up with a bill that is agreed to both by the Department of Transportation and the Tribes.

Mr. Speaker, this is quite simple. It has broad bipartisan support. I am not aware of any opposition. I urge my colleagues to vote ''aye'' on this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I have no other speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 6414.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

SAVE OUR SEAS ACT OF 2018

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 756) to reauthorize and amend the Marine Debris Act to promote international action to reduce marine debris, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 756

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

TITLE I—MARINE DEBRIS

SEC. 101. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''Save Our Seas Act of 2018''.

SEC. 102. NOAA MARINE DEBRIS PROGRAM.

Section 3 of the Marine Debris Act (33 U.S.C. 1952) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (4), by striking ''; and'' and inserting a semicolon;

(B) in paragraph (5)(C), by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

''(6) work to develop outreach and education strategies with other Federal agencies to address sources of marine debris;

''(7) except for discharges of marine debris from vessels, in consultation with the Department of State and other Federal agencies, promote international action, as appropriate, to reduce the incidence of marine debris, including providing technical assistance to expand waste management systems internationally; and

''(8) in the case of an event determined to be a severe marine debris event under subsection (c)—

''(A) assist in the cleanup and response required by the severe marine debris event; or

''(B) conduct such other activity as the Administrator determines is appropriate in response to the severe marine debris event.'';

(2) by redesignating subsection (c) as subsection (d);

(3) by inserting after subsection (b) the following:

''(c) DETERMINATION OF SEVERE MARINE DEBRIS EVENTS.—At the discretion of the Administrator or at the request of the Governor of an affected State, the Administrator shall determine whether there is a severe marine debris event.''; and

(4) in subsection (d), as so redesignated—

(A) in paragraph (2)(A), by striking ''subparagraph (B)'' and inserting ''subparagraphs (B) and (C)'';

(B) in paragraph (2)(B), by striking ''may waive all or part of the matching requirement under subparagraph (A)'' and inserting ''may reduce the non-Federal share of project costs under subparagraph (A) by up to 50 percent''; and

(C) by adding at the end of paragraph (2) the following:

''(C) SEVERE MARINE DEBRIS EVENTS.—Notwithstanding subparagraph (A), the Federal share of the cost of an activity carried out under a determination made under subsection (c) shall be—

''(i) 100 percent of the cost of the activity, for an activity funded wholly by funds made available by a person, including the government of a foreign country, to the Federal Government for the purpose of responding to a severe marine debris event; or

''(ii) 75 percent of the cost of the activity, for any activity other than an activity funded as described in clause (i).''.

SEC. 103. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT TO RESPOND TO MARINE DEBRIS.

It is the sense of Congress that the President should—

(1) support research and development on systems and materials that reduce—

(A) derelict fishing gear; and

(B) the amount of solid waste that is generated from land-based sources and the amount of such waste that enters the marine environment;

(2) work with representatives of foreign countries that discharge the largest amounts of solid waste from land-based sources into the marine environment, to develop mechanisms to reduce such discharges;

(3) carry out studies to determine—

(A) the primary means of discharges referred to in paragraph (2);

(B) the manner in which waste management infrastructure can be most effective in preventing such discharges; and

(C) the long-term impacts of marine debris on the national economies of the countries with which work is undertaken under paragraph (2) and on the global economy, including the impacts of reducing the discharge of such debris;

(4) work with representatives of the countries with which work is undertaken in paragraph (2) to conclude one or more new international agreements that include provisions—

(A) to mitigate the discharge of land-based solid waste into the marine environment; and

(B) to provide technical assistance and investment in waste management infrastructure to reduce such discharges, if the President determines such assistance or investment is appropriate; and

(5) encourage the United States Trade Representative to consider the impact of discharges of land-based solid waste from the countries with which work is conducted under paragraph (2) in relevant future trade agreements.

SEC. 104. MEMBERSHIP OF THE INTERAGENCY MARINE DEBRIS COORDINATING COMMITTEE.

Section 5(b) of the Marine Debris Act (33 U.S.C. 1954(b)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (4), by striking ''; and'' and inserting a semicolon;

(2) by redesignating paragraph (5) as paragraph (7); and

(3) by inserting after paragraph (4) the following:

''(5) the Department of State;

''(6) the Department of the Interior; and''.

SEC. 105. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

Section 9 of the Marine Debris Act (33 U.S.C. 1958) is amended to read as follows:

''SEC. 9. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Administrator $10,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2018 through 2022 for carrying out sections 3, 5, and 6, of which not more than 5 percent is authorized for each fiscal year for administrative costs.

''(b) AMOUNTS AUTHORIZED FOR COAST GUARD.—Of the amounts authorized for each fiscal year under section 2702(1) of title 14, United States Code, up to $2,000,000 is authorized for the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating for use by the Commandant of the Coast Guard to carry out section 4 of this Act, of which not more than 5 percent is authorized for each fiscal year for administrative costs.''.

TITLE II—MARITIME SAFETY

SEC. 201. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''Maritime Safety Act of 2018''.

SEC. 202. DEFINITIONS.

In this title:

(1) COMMANDANT.—The term ''Commandant'' means the Commandant of the Coast Guard.

(2) RECOGNIZED ORGANIZATION.—The term ''recognized organization'' has the meaning given that term in section 2.45–1 of title 46, Code of Federal Regulations, as in effect on the date of the enactment of this Act.

(3) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating.

SEC. 203. DOMESTIC VESSEL COMPLIANCE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60 days after the date on which the President submits to the Congress a budget each year pursuant to section 1105 of title 31, United States Code, the Commandant shall publish on a publicly accessible Website information documenting domestic vessel compliance with the requirements of subtitle II of title 46, United States Code.

(b) CONTENT.—The information required under subsection (a) shall—

(1) include flag-State detention rates for each type of inspected vessel; and

(2) identify any recognized organization that inspected or surveyed a vessel that was later subject to a Coast Guard-issued control action attributable to a major nonconformity that the recognized organization failed to identify in such inspection or survey.

SEC. 204. SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct an audit regarding the implementation and effectiveness of safety management plans required under chapter 32 of title 46, United States Code.

(b) SCOPE.—The audit conducted under subsection (a) shall include a representative sample of safety management plans, including such plans for—

(1) a range of vessel types and sizes; and

(2) vessels that operate in a cross-section of regional operating areas.

(c) REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit to Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and

Transportation of the Senate a report detailing the results of the audit and providing recommendations related to such results, including ways to streamline and focus such plans on ship safety.

(2) MARINE SAFETY ALERT.—Not later than 60 days after the date the report is submitted under paragraph (1), the Commandant shall publish a Marine Safety Alert providing notification of the completion of the report and including a link to the report on a publicly accessible website.

SEC. 205. EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS.

(a) REGULATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 3306 of title 46, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(l)(1) The Secretary shall require that a freight vessel inspected under this chapter be outfitted with distress signaling and location technology for the higher of—

''(A) the minimum complement of officers and crew specified on the certificate of inspection for such vessel; or

''(B) the number of persons onboard the vessel; and

''(2) the requirement described in paragraph (1) shall not apply to vessels operating within the baseline from which the territorial sea of the United States is measured.

''(m)(1) The Secretary shall promulgate regulations requiring companies to maintain records of all incremental weight changes made to freight vessels inspected under this chapter, and to track weight changes over time to facilitate rapid determination of the aggregate total.

''(2) Records maintained under paragraph (1) shall be stored, in paper or electronic form, onboard such vessels for not less than 3 years and shoreside for the life of the vessel.''.

(2) DEADLINES.—The Secretary shall—

(A) begin implementing the requirement under section 3306(l) of title 46, United States Code, as amended by this subsection, by not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act; and

(B) promulgate the regulations required under section 3306(m) of title 46, United States Code, as amended by this subsection, by not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(b) ENGAGEMENT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall seek to enter into negotiations through the International Maritime Organization to amend regulation 25 of chapter II–1 of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea to require a high-water alarm sensor in each cargo hold of a freight vessel (as that term is defined in section 2101(13) of title 46, United States Code), that connects with audible and visual alarms on the navigation bridge of the vessel.

SEC. 206. VOYAGE DATA RECORDER; ACCESS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 63 of title 46, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''§ 6309. Voyage data recorder access

''Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Coast Guard shall have full and timely access to and ability to use voyage data recorder data and audio held by any Federal agency in all marine casualty investigations, regardless of which agency is the investigative lead.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The analysis for such chapter is amended by adding at the end the following:

''6309. Voyage data recorder access.''.

SEC. 207. VOYAGE DATA RECORDER; REQUIREMENTS.

(a) FLOAT-FREE AND BEACON REQUIREMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall seek to enter into negotiations through the International Maritime Organization to amend regulation 20 of chapter V of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea to require that all voyage data recorders are installed in a float-free arrangement and contain an integrated emergency position indicating radio beacon.

(2) PROGRESS UPDATE.—Not later than 3 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall submit to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate an update on the progress of the engagement required under paragraph (1).

(b) COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS.—Not later than 2 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall submit to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a cost-benefit analysis of requiring that voyage data recorders installed on commercial vessels documented under chapter 121 of title 46, United States Code, capture communications on the internal telephone systems of such vessels, including requiring the capture of both sides of all communications with the bridge onboard such vessels.

SEC. 208. SURVIVAL AND LOCATING EQUIPMENT.

Not later than 2 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall, subject to the availability of appropriations, identify and procure equipment that will provide search-and-rescue units the ability to attach a radio or Automated Identification System strobe or beacon to an object that is not immediately retrievable.

SEC. 209. TRAINING OF COAST GUARD PERSONNEL.

(a) PROSPECTIVE SECTOR COMMANDER TRAINING.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall implement an Officer in Charge, Marine Inspections segment to the sector commander indoctrination course for prospective sector commanders without a Coast Guard prevention ashore officer specialty code.

(b) STEAMSHIP INSPECTIONS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall implement steam plant inspection training for Coast Guard marine inspectors and, subject to availability, recognized organizations to which authority is delegated under section 3316 of title 46, United States Code.

(c) ADVANCED JOURNEYMAN INSPECTOR TRAINING.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall establish advanced training to provide instruction on the oversight of recognized organizations to which authority is delegated under section 3316 of title 46, United States Code, auditing responsibilities, and the inspection of unique vessel types.

(2) RECIPIENTS.—The Commandant shall—

(A) require that such training be completed by senior Coast Guard marine inspectors; and

(B) subject to availability of training capacity, make such training available to recognized organization surveyors authorized by the Coast Guard to conduct inspections.

(d) COAST GUARD INSPECTIONS STAFF; BRIEFING.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall provide to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a briefing detailing—

(1) the estimated time and funding necessary to triple the current size of the Coast Guard's traveling inspector staff; and

(2) other options available to the Coast Guard to enhance and maintain marine safety knowledge, including discussion of increased reliance on—

(A) civilian marine inspectors;

(B) experienced licensed mariners;

(C) retired members of the Coast Guard;

(D) arranging for Coast Guard inspectors to ride onboard commercial oceangoing vessels documented under chapter 121 of title 46, United States Code, to gain experience and insight; and

(E) extending tour-lengths for Coast Guard marine safety officers assigned to inspection billets.

(e) AUDITS; COAST GUARD ATTENDANCE AND PERFORMANCE.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall—

(1) update Coast Guard policy to utilize risk analysis to target the attendance of Coast Guard personnel during external safety management certificate and document of compliance audits; and

(2) perform a quality assurance audit of recognized organization representation and performance regarding United States-flagged vessels.

SEC. 210. MAJOR MARINE CASUALTY PROPERTY DAMAGE THRESHOLD.

Section 6101(i)(3) of title 46, United States Code, is amended by striking ''$500,000'' and inserting ''$2,000,000''.

SEC. 211. REVIEWS, BRIEFINGS, AND REPORTS.

(a) MAJOR CONVERSION DETERMINATIONS.—

(1) REVIEW OF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES.—The Commandant shall conduct a review of policies and procedures for making and documenting major conversion determinations, including an examination of the deference given to precedent.

(2) BRIEFING.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall provide to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a briefing on the findings of the review required by paragraph (1).

(b) VENTILATORS, OPENINGS AND STABILITY STANDARDS.—

(1) REVIEW.—Note later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall complete a review of the effectiveness of United States regulations, international conventions, recognized organizations' class rules, and Coast Guard technical policy regarding—

(A) ventilators and other hull openings;

(B) fire dampers and other closures protecting openings normally open during operations; and

(C) intact and damage stability standards under subchapter S of chapter I of title 46, Code of Federal Regulations.

(2) BRIEFING.—Not later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall provide to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a briefing on the effectiveness of the regulations, international conventions, recognized organizations' class rules, and Coast Guard technical policy reviewed under paragraph (1).

(c) SELF-LOCATING DATUM MARKER BUOYS.—Not later than 6 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall provide to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee

on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a briefing on the reliability of self-locating datum marker buoys and other similar technology used during Coast Guard search-and-rescue operations. The briefing shall include a description of reasonable steps the Commandant could take to increase the reliability of such buoys, including the potential to leverage technology used by the Navy, and how protocols could be developed to conduct testing of such buoys before using them for operations.

(d) OVERSIGHT PROGRAM; EFFECTIVENESS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall commission an assessment of the effectiveness of the Coast Guard's oversight of recognized organizations and its impact on compliance by and safety of vessels inspected by such organizations.

(2) EXPERIENCE.—The assessment commissioned under paragraph (1) shall be conducted by a research organization with significant experience in maritime operations and marine safety.

(3) SUBMISSION TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 180 days after the date that the assessment required under paragraph (1) is completed, the Commandant shall submit to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate the results of such assessment.

SEC. 212. FLAG-STATE GUIDANCE AND SUPPLEMENTS.

(a) FREIGHT VESSELS; DAMAGE CONTROL INFORMATION.—Within 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall issue flag-State guidance for all freight vessels documented under chapter 121 of title 46, United States Code, built before January 1, 1992, regarding the inclusion of comprehensive damage control information in safety management plans required under chapter 32 of title 46, United States Code.

(b) RECOGNIZED ORGANIZATIONS; UNITED STATES SUPPLEMENT.—The Commandant shall—

(1) work with recognized organizations to create a single United States Supplement to rules of such organizations for classification of vessels; and

(2) by not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, provide to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a briefing on whether it is necessary to revise part 8 of title 46, Code of Federal Regulations, to authorize only one United States Supplement to such rules.

SEC. 213. MARINE SAFETY STRATEGY.

Section 2116 of title 46, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking ''each year of an annual'' and inserting ''of a triennial'';

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) in the subsection heading, by striking ''ANNUAL'' and inserting ''TRIENNIAL''; and

(B) by striking ''annual'' each place it appears and inserting ''triennial'';

(3) in subsection (c)—

(A) by striking ''fiscal year 2011 and each fiscal year'' and inserting ''fiscal year 2020 and triennially''; and

(B) by striking ''annual plan'' and inserting ''triennial plan''; and

(4) in subsection (d)(2), by striking ''annually'' and inserting ''triennially''.

SEC. 214. RECOGNIZED ORGANIZATIONS; OVERSIGHT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 3316 of title 46, United States Code, is amended by redesignating subsection (g) as subsection (h), and by inserting after subsection (f) the following:

''(g)(1) There shall be within the Coast Guard an office that conducts comprehensive and targeted oversight of all recognized organizations that act on behalf of the Coast Guard.

''(2) The staff of the office shall include subject matter experts, including inspectors, investigators, and auditors, who possess the capability and authority to audit all aspects of such recognized organizations.

''(3) In this subsection the term 'recognized organization' has the meaning given that term in section 2.45–1 of title 46, Code of Federal Regulations, as in effect on the date of the enactment of the Maritime Safety Act of 2018.''.

(b) DEADLINE FOR ESTABLISHMENT.—The Commandant of the Coast Guard shall establish the office required by the amendment made by subsection (a) by not later than 2 years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 215. TIMELY WEATHER FORECASTS.

Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall seek to enter into negotiations through the International Maritime Organization to amend the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea to require that vessels subject to the requirements of such Convention receive timely synoptic and graphical chart weather forecasts.

SEC. 216. MARINE SAFETY IMPLEMENTATION STATUS.

Not later than December 19 of 2018, and of each of the 2 subsequent years thereafter, the Commandant shall provide to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a briefing on the status of implementation of each action outlined in the Commandant's final action memo dated December 19, 2017, regarding the sinking and loss of the vessel El Faro.

SEC. 217. DELEGATED AUTHORITIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall review the authorities that have been delegated to recognized organizations for the alternative compliance program as described in subpart D of part 8 of title 46, Code of Federal Regulations, and, if necessary, revise or establish policies and procedures to ensure those delegated authorities are being conducted in a manner to ensure safe maritime transportation.

(b) BRIEFING.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall provide to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a briefing on the implementation of subsection (a).

TITLE III—CENTER OF EXPERTISE

SEC. 301. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''Coast Guard Blue Technology Center of Expertise Act''.

SEC. 302. COAST GUARD BLUE TECHNOLOGY CENTER OF EXPERTISE.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act and subject to the availability of appropriations, the Commandant shall establish under section 58 of title 14, United States Code, a Blue Technology center of expertise.

(b) MISSIONS.—In addition to the missions listed in section 58(b) of title 14, United States Code, the Center—

(1) shall—

(A) promote awareness within the Coast Guard of the range and diversity of Blue Technologies and their potential to enhance Coast Guard mission readiness, operational performance, and regulation of such technologies;

(B) function as an interactive conduit to enable the sharing and dissemination of Blue Technology information between the Coast Guard and representatives from the private sector, academia, nonprofit organizations, and other Federal agencies;

(C) increase awareness among Blue Technology manufacturers, entrepreneurs, and vendors of Coast Guard acquisition policies, procedures, and business practices; and

(D) provide technical support, coordination, and assistance to Coast Guard districts and the Coast Guard Research and Development Center, as appropriate; and

(2) subject to the requirements of the Coast Guard Academy, may coordinate with the Academy to develop appropriate curricula regarding Blue Technology to be offered in professional courses of study to give Coast Guard cadets and officer candidates a greater background and understanding of Blue Technologies.

(c) BLUE TECHNOLOGY EXPOSITION; BRIEFING.—Not later than 6 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall provide to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a briefing on the costs and benefits of hosting a biennial Coast Guard Blue Technology exposition to further interactions between representatives from the private sector, academia, and nonprofit organizations, and the Coast Guard and examine emerging technologies and Coast Guard mission demands.

(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) CENTER.—The term ''Center'' means the Blue Technology center of expertise established under this section.

(2) COMMANDANT.—The term ''Commandant'' means the Commandant of the Coast Guard.

(3) BLUE TECHNOLOGY.—The term ''Blue Technology'' means any technology, system, or platform that—

(A) is designed for use or application above, on, or below the sea surface or that is otherwise applicable to Coast Guard operational needs, including such a technology, system, or platform that provides continuous or persistent coverage; and

(B) supports or facilitates—

(i) maritime domain awareness, including—

(I) surveillance and monitoring;

(II) observation, measurement, and modeling: or

(III) information technology and communications;

(ii) search and rescue;

(iii) emergency response;

(iv) maritime law enforcement;

(v) marine inspections and investigations; or

(vi) protection and conservation of the marine environment.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG) and the gentleman from California (Mr. GARAMENDI) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Alaska.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on S. 756.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER), and I ask unanimous consent that he may control that time to manage the bill.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, S. 756, the Save Our Seas Act, promotes continued national and international efforts to address the growing amount of marine debris entering the ocean environment.

The dean of the House, the gentleman who yielded to me, Mr. DON YOUNG, our esteemed colleague from Alaska, sponsored the House companion bill. I thank our longstanding colleague for all of his efforts to move this legislation through committee and to the House floor.

Marine debris is pervasive and persistent, remaining in the ocean for years and negatively impacting the ocean environment.

S. 756 urges the administration to support research and development on systems and materials that would reduce the amount of waste that enters the ocean and work with nations that discharge large amounts of solid waste into the ocean by sharing technologies and infrastructure to prevent, reduce, or mitigate those land-based sources from entering the marine environment.

The bill also allows the Administrator of NOAA to designate, respond to, and assist in the cleanup of severe marine debris events.

Title II of the bill is the Maritime Safety Act. The text came from H.R. 6175, a bill ordered reported from the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. I sponsored this bill with the ranking member of the Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Committee, Mr. GARAMENDI, my esteemed colleague from California, as a cosponsor.

The bill addresses maritime safety issues that were raised in the Commandant of the Coast Guard's final action memo in response to the tragic sinking of the El Faro. A few of the required actions include: timely weather forecasts, not too complicated; emergency safety gear with locator beacons, so we can find the crew after the vessel has sunk; and float-free voyage data recorders with integrated emergency position indicating beacons.

The measures included in this title should promote safer vessel transit and, if needed, would assist the Coast Guard in its rescue operations.

Sadly, we were reminded again last week, by the events in Missouri, the dangers of going out in the open water, even in a relatively protected environment. Our thoughts and prayers go out to the families of the loved ones who lost their lives in the tragic incident.

Tragedies like this and, sadly, others in recent history remind us that we must remain vigilant and committed to improving maritime safety to protect those who go out on the water for their livelihood or for recreation.

Title III of the bill allows the Coast Guard to establish a Blue Technology center of expertise. This title is the text of H.R. 6206, as reported by the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. Mr. GARAMENDI sponsored the legislation, and I am an original cosponsor of the bill.

The ranking member and I have a strong interest in Blue Technology and how it can assist the Coast Guard in performing its multitude of missions better and more cost effectively. The center created by this legislation will provide a venue for the Coast Guard to interface with industry on existing and up-and-coming technologies that could be used by the service in conducting its missions. It is an important component in bringing the Coast Guard into the modern technological world.

I thank the chairman of the committee, Mr. SHUSTER, for this leadership, and Mr. DEFAZIO and, especially, Mr. GARAMENDI for their leadership and cooperation in getting these bills out of committee and to the floor today.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, first, let me thank Chairman HUNTER for his work on this bill and on the other work we have been able to do with the Coast Guard and the legislation. It has been a great pleasure to work with him.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 756, the Save Our Seas Act of 2018, as amended, to include other important bills addressing maritime safety and ocean technologies.

As explained by the majority's manager of the bill, marine debris, especially plastics, is a persistent and growing threat to the global marine environment. Many countries, including the United States, contribute to the plastic pollution, and it does add up.

For example, in 2010 alone, according to a University of Georgia study, a total of 8 million metric tons of plastic entered the world's oceans. Worse yet, the study predicts that number will grow 10 times—tenfold—as large by 2025.

Not only are floating plastic bags, straws, Styrofoam cups, and plastic bottles harmful to the health and welfare of marine life, but marine debris also threatens the food supply of millions of people around the world who rely on seafood as their primary source of protein.

The impacts affect people everywhere, and the problem is not going to go away and won't be solved by itself. The legislation we put forth today is an important step in the right direction.

Title I would authorize existing funding levels in the Marine Debris Act to enable the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the United States Coast Guard to identify and remove sources of marine debris and to coordinate response activities on the national and regional levels to assess and reduce the volume of the debris entering our oceans.

The title also contains important amendments, including new authority to allow the Federal Government to provide assistance to mitigate severe marine debris events, such as the recurrence of the flood of debris that drifted from Japan across the Pacific Ocean in the aftermath of the 2011 Fukushima earthquake and tsunami.

I also want to express my strong support for two other bills recently passed and reported by the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee that were added as separate titles to S. 756: First, H.R. 6175, the Maritime Safety Act of 2018, as title II; and my legislation, H.R. 6206, the Coast Guard Blue Technology Center of Expertise Act, as title III.

The 2015 sinking of the U.S.-flagged commercial vessel, *El Faro*, and the tragic loss of all 33 crew members was the worst U.S. maritime disaster in 35 years. The subsequent Marine Board of Investigation, convened by the Coast Guard and joined by the National Transportation Safety Board, found numerous faults in the ship's safety management system, bridge management, and safety apparatus, as well as other critical oversights or failures.

Title II enacts several important recommendations contained in the action memo released by then-Commandant of the Coast Guard, Admiral Paul Zukunft.

I want to particularly note the chairman's work in bringing together a couple of hearings on this, both formal and informal, that led to these investigations and recommendations.

Together, these provisions that are in this bill will improve ship communication and safety management. They will also improve our ability to identify and recover voyage data recorders and locate and retrieve seafarers who may be adrift at sea.

Additionally, the investigation revealed gaps or insufficient oversight in the inspection regime, and the bill deals with those.

Title II also includes several new requirements to shore up the oversight and investigation of third-party inspectors, who should be reviewing the safety of these ships.

I also strongly support title III, which contains my legislation—I know you are surprised with that support, but nonetheless—H.R. 6026, to authorize the Coast Guard to establish a Blue Technology center of expertise.

Unlike the Navy, ocean industry sectors, and ocean science community, the Coast Guard has not embraced the

adoption and use of a wide assortment of advanced ocean technologies, systems, sensors, and platforms. This is unfortunate because I suspect that several such technologies have the potential to dramatically improve the Coast Guard's operational capability.

Therefore, title III simply draws upon the existing authority to direct the Coast Guard to establish a Blue Technology center of expertise. The overarching goal is to improve from within the Coast Guard's awareness of blue technologies that apply or align with Coast Guard mission needs.

In addition, this new Blue Technology center will facilitate a dialogue and sharing of information between the Coast Guard and the growing number of Blue Tech stakeholders in the private sector, academia, and ocean research community.

A 2015 study by NOAA identified over 400 Blue Technology firms across the United States who generate some $7 billion in annual revenue. These firms, along with our academic and research institutions, stand ready to put their innovations to work in the service of the American people, using the Coast Guard as a mechanism to accomplish that.

I am confident that this Blue Technology center will open doors of opportunity for the Coast Guard to better protect and patrol the vast oceans and complex waterways.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues on both sides to join with me in support of this noncontroversial maritime legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1445

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG), dean of the House, a gentleman that has been working maritime issues because he represents all of Alaska. Whether it is fisheries, energy exploration, to pollution, Mr. DON YOUNG from Alaska knows what he is talking about probably more than anybody in this body.

(Mr. YOUNG of Alaska asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman HUNTER and Ranking Member GARAMENDI and, of course, PETER DEFAZIO.

This is a good piece of legislation. I had a House bill similar in fact, too. This came over from the Senate side, but I am not really interested in whose bill it is but, more likely, getting things done. So this is a good bill.

And debris is what I am interested in as one of our biggest issues; it has been well explained by both speakers prior to me. It is getting bigger, like I say. What is it? Tenfold more. And the tonnage is already there.

We have to look at preventing the debris, but also what do we do once it is in the ocean. I have some ideas. And, hopefully, later on, we can explore those ideas, how we will recover and utilize that debris, because it does harm our maritime lives, and it makes the ocean really a garbage dump, and we don't want that.

So this is a good piece of legislation. I thank each person that has been involved in it, and I urge my colleagues to vote ''yes.''

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire as to how much time I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from California (Mr. GARAMENDI) has 13½ minutes remaining.

Mr. GARAMENDI. That should be enough for Mr. DEFAZIO, the ranking member of the committee, to share his views on this legislation.

I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO).

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague, both for his leadership on these issues, and for the time. And I also would congratulate Chairman YOUNG and others, particularly SUZANNE BONAMICI, from my State, who has taken a real leadership role on the issue of marine debris.

We are choking the oceans to death. The lifeblood of our planet, the lungs of our planet, it is becoming a giant garbage dump. The Pacific Gyre can be seen from space. It is a massive gyre in the middle of the Pacific Ocean and we have to begin to deal seriously with these issues.

It was just this week in the New York Times, photographs of the Dominican Republic, known for its pristine beaches, which had giant bulldozers on the beach trying to eat through about an 8-foot tall pile of plastic debris on the beaches. So this threatens the marine environment and all that which is dependent upon it, the creatures that live there, and those of us who harvest from that. And it is threatening tourism and recreation. Obviously, this has to be dealt with.

I will say, this is good legislation, but it is a pathetic amount of money. The amount of money that Congress is putting out to deal with something that is threatening the very oceans that surround us probably isn't adequate to clean up the little—I live on a boat down there inside Hains Point—probably that little section of water inside Hains Point down by Fort McNair. I don't even think $10 million could clean that up, let alone the oceans. So we need to get a little more serious about this and really put up additional funds.

So that is very important legislation. Title II is something about which I am very passionate. The worst maritime disaster since 1983, and obviously, there is a lot of blame to go around on that disaster. But one of the factors was that ship was not fit. It had been certified by an independent party which is called, under the law, a recognized organization, as fit to go to sea.

Now, why would that happen? Well, because the recognized organizations get paid by the shipping companies. Now, I am not going to hire you if you tell me my ship isn't fit to go to sea, which is what they should have been telling TOTE. They didn't tell them because, hey, we want more of your business. We will go out and certify some more of your unfit ships and kill more people. This has got to end.

The Coast Guard is also at fault. They were not providing enough oversight to these recognized organizations, and had let their own marine safety division, under this privatization scheme, deteriorate to the point where they couldn't even keep up with the paperwork.

So this bill is going to begin to rectify those issues and revitalize the Coast Guard maritime safety organization, and also, bring new scrutiny on these recognized organizations so they don't kill any more people and send unfit ships to sea.

Finally, the legislation, the third part of this is, I think, a tremendous accomplishment by the Ranking Member, JOHN GARAMENDI, which is his Blue Tech center and Blue Oceans. The Coast Guard has, unfortunately—again, we have underfunded the Coast Guard, so Congress is at fault for many of these things; maritime safety and the lack of initiative of the Coast Guard in terms of adopting new 21st century technologies to better perform their mission and make the sea-lane safer and better understand what is going on in the oceans around us.

So, maybe we will get, someday, to name the Blue Tech Center after Mr. GARAMENDI, but not until he is long gone, so he is not in a hurry for that.

So anyway, I want to congratulate him, and congratulate others who have been involved, and thank Chairman SHUSTER for moving this legislation.

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

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the honorable gentlewoman from the State of Oregon (Ms. BONAMICI).

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague from California for yielding time, and also for his commitment to this important issue.

I am honored to co-chair the Oceans Caucus with Representative YOUNG, and I thank him for his leadership on this important issue.

I also thank my Oregon colleague, Mr. DEFAZIO, for his commitment and for his passion about the importance of marine debris and addressing it.

I rise in support of the Save our Seas Act, a bill to clean up and reduce marine debris. This bill would reauthorize the NOAA Marine Debris Program through fiscal year 2022 and provide resources to help States respond to severe marine debris events. The health of our oceans reflects the health of our planet, and we must do more to keep garbage out the ocean and off of our shores.

Every minute, the equivalent of a garbage truck full of plastic is dumped into our oceans. According to the

United Nations, that is more than 8 million tons a year. Plastic bottles, straws, grocery bags, cigarette butts, fishing gear, and abandoned vessels litter the ocean.

Currents and atmospheric winds carry floatable marine debris. These movements trap items in debris accumulation zones, also known as garbage patches. A study published in the journal, Scientific Reports, estimated that the Pacific garbage patch is comprised of about 1.8 trillion pieces of debris.

We still don't know how long it takes for plastic to biodegrade. Estimates range from 450 years to never.

Marine debris harms our coastal economies, endangers marine life, destroys important marine habitats, propagates invasive species, and creates hazardous conditions for the maritime industry. Tiny pieces of plastic, fiber, fragments, and microbeads also make their way into marine life, blocking digestive tracts, altering growth and, in some cases, killing animals and marine organisms.

Healthy beaches and waterways are critical to the marine ecosystems that thousands of people rely on to earn a living in Oregon and other coastal communities. After the tsunami hit the coast of Japan in 2011, large materials like docks and boats that carried invasive species ended up on the shores of the Pacific Northwest.

But it is not just tsunami debris that is a problem. According to NOAA, a majority of the debris that covers our beaches come from storm drains and sewers, demonstrating that this is not just a problem resulting from those along our Nation's shorelines.

Marine debris is entirely preventable, but we must support responsible disposal practices and provide coastal communities with the resources they need. The NOAA Marine Debris Program has partnered with Oregon Sea Grant, Oregon State University, Oregon Coast Aquarium, and Lincoln County School District to create a curriculum to teach middle and high school students about the effects of marine debris and to promote stewardship activities.

There has been growing momentum on this issue, as many companies and cities and jurisdictions across this country stop the use of plastic straws and bags.

The ocean is resilient and we can help it heal, but we cannot afford to wait. I urge my colleagues to support this bill to strengthen the Federal response to marine debris.

I want to close, again, by thanking all of the bipartisan sponsors and cosponsors of this legislation, but also, especially, the co-chair of the Oceans Caucus, again, Representative DON YOUNG, for his leadership.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to close. I will take my few seconds that remain then and simply say this is a good piece of legislation. I want to thank the chair of the Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Subcommittee for his work on this, and for working across the aisle to solve problems, some very real, serious problems in this legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

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

First off, thanks to Mr. GARAMENDI. If there are two more folks in this Congress from opposite sides of the aisle that disagree on some things sometimes, but agree as much as possible and as much as we do on the things that we are working on, I would be surprised. And I would like to just thank him so much for his work and for coming up with great legislation, great ideas, and pushing this forward.

There is an old military saying that if you control the ocean, you control the world. And just as serious of a sense, if you destroy the ocean, you destroy the world. I think that is one reason this bill is so important.

S. 756 promotes action to address the marine debris, catastrophic issues that we face now that will only get worse. It increases maritime vessel safety so you will not have another tragic incident like you had with the El Faro. And it establishes a Blue Technology center of expertise so we can help the Coast Guard work smarter and not harder with their limited funds. I urge all Members to support it.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 756, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

EXPRESSING SENSE OF HOUSE THAT THE LACK OF TIMELY AND PREDICTABLE FUNDING UNNECESSARILY UNDERMINES MISSION OF THE UNITED STATES SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND

Ms. CHENEY. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 1009) expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the lack of timely and predictable funding unnecessarily undermines the mission of the United States Special Operations Command and jeopardizes the security of the United States.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 1009

Whereas the ability of the United States Special Operations Command to successfully conduct operations relies on adequate resourcing;

Whereas Special Operations Forces must prepare for a wide array of missions to support and defend the United States in various capacities around the world;

Whereas the training and development of Special Operations Forces takes multiple years and cannot be created overnight;

Whereas the success of the United States Special Operations Command requires close coordination between each branch of the Armed Forces;

Whereas training shortfalls have been identified as posing an unnecessary risk to Special Forces soldiers;

Whereas the lack of full, on-time funding undermines the ability of the United States Special Operations Command to work by, with, and through our partner nations;

Whereas the smaller operating footprint of Special Operations Forces poses unique operational needs not found in conventional forces;

Whereas the deployment cycle of Special Operations Forces requires additional attention and resources be provided for family and support programs before, during, and after deployments; and

Whereas the United States Special Operations Command must maintain a constant level of readiness that is significantly undermined by budget uncertainty: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) finds that not providing the Department of Defense with stable, predictable, and on-time funding unnecessarily jeopardizes the safety and security of the United States;

(2) expresses a sense of gratitude for the incredible sacrifices made by both Special Operators and their families; and

(3) commits to meeting the needs of the United States Special Operations Command as part of its efforts to restore military readiness.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Wyoming (Ms. CHENEY) and the gentleman from California (Mr. GARAMENDI) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Wyoming.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. CHENEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Wyoming?

There was no objection.

Ms. CHENEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HUDSON) to discuss his resolution.

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of my resolution, H. Res. 1009, which expresses the sense of the House of Representatives that lack of timely and predictable funding unnecessarily undermines the mission of the United States Special Operations Command and jeopardizes the security of the United States.

□ 1500

Mr. Speaker, one of the greatest honors of my life is representing Fort Bragg, the epicenter of the universe and home of the Airborne and Special Operations Forces. The units stationed here represent the best of the best and have a vast footprint.

As our Nation continues to fight terrorism around the world while simultaneously preparing for the threats of near-peer adversaries, our requirements increase and diversify.

For too long, we have asked our military to do more with less. Now, we have made great progress with our fiscal year 2018 and fiscal year 2019 DOD appropriations, but every time we fail to pass a Defense Appropriations bill on time, we do irreparable harm to our Nation's military. This is especially apparent in our special operations community.

The men and women at USSOCOM cannot afford another year of CRs. Their missions require an advanced level of training and preparation as they operate in some of the most austere conditions in the world.

When USSOCOM is not funded on time, training cannot be conducted, essential equipment cannot be ordered, and long-term responsibilities are not met. The effects of 9 years of continuing resolutions have severely undermined our forces and led to a waste of taxpayer dollars as we flood the Department of Defense with cash near the end of the fiscal year and force them to spend it all within a matter of a few months.

We must never underestimate the most important asset our military has, and that is the individual. Green Berets cannot be built overnight. We cannot flip a switch and magically produce Navy SEALs or Air Force combat controllers or Marine Raiders. The elite units of USSOCOM are built over multiple years and cannot be stopped and started.

This resolution would affirm our commitment to stand behind each and every one of these incredible servicemembers and their families.

Make no mistake, when this body chooses not to appropriately fund these warriors, we are putting their lives at greater risk. I refuse to go home and look in the eye of a Gold Star wife of a Green Beret and say: ''Sorry, your husband didn't get the training he needed, because we were too busy playing games in Washington.'' That, Mr. Speaker, is unacceptable.

The time is now for us to come together as a Nation and fund our military. I urge every one of my colleagues to recognize what is at stake and put the needs of our Nation before politics.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Representative CHENEY for her efforts on these issues, as well as Chairman THORNBERRY and Chairwoman GRANGER for their unwavering support and commitment to our military and our special operators.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I might consume, but I will try to be brief.

Mr. Speaker, we are in total support of this piece of legislation. We think this is a very, very good thing to do, to adequately fund all of our military, whether it is SOCOM or any other part of it. It is essential for our national security.

However, I would like to note that, having served on the Armed Services Committee for the last several years and endured unending discussions about the horrible sequestration issues, which were totally under the control of the majority party to change should they decide to do so, that it is a little incongruous to put forth a resolution that would call for adequate funding for SOCOM, and we should do so.

At the same time, when we have created a trillion-dollar deficit with a piece of legislation that passed last December with no Democratic votes—because we like to think of ourselves as deficit hawks, and we think it is difficult to put this Congress into a situation where we have to choose between the health of seniors who are on Medicare or young children who depend upon the Medicaid program or maybe the education systems.

So this resolution, it is a good thing. It is something we ought to do. Certainly, we ought to support SOCOM. Certainly, we ought to pass appropriations bills on time. Let me commend the House for having done so, and we can always blame the enemy on the other side of the building, the Senate, but the reality is that the Treasury was gutted by a tax bill of which more than 80 percent of the benefit went to the top income earners of America and corporations. And a deficit has been created that will be a trillion dollars next year. That is the period of time in which this resolution calls for full funding for our Special Operations Forces.

So my discussion today is really about the very difficult choices that are going to have to be made because this Congress, without Democratic support, decided that the first choice was the superwealthy and the corporations of America, not the children, not the sick, not those in need of education, not the infrastructure, but rather those who have much already.

Now, I notice that I don't have many colleagues here on our side, although I would assure all the Congress that we are 100 percent in support of our Special Operations Forces, and we look forward to a continuing debate on the choices that must be made.

Mr. Speaker, I urge an ''aye'' vote, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. CHENEY. Mr. Speaker, I welcome my colleague from California's support for this resolution.

As my colleague knows very well, we have done far more in this body, and, as he mentioned, we have done far more in this body than these resolutions of support. These resolutions of support are crucially important, but we have, in this House, completed our work. We have completed our work on the Defense Appropriations bill.

Last year, the Senate also completed its work, and we were able to take the very first crucially important steps to begin to rebuild our military with the $700 billion we were able to appropriate for fiscal year 2018.

We have also done our work for this fiscal year, and we will be in a position, hopefully in the next day or so, to be able to pass the National Defense Authorization Act as well for fiscal year 2019.

So we in this House understand how crucially important it is that we get the work done, that we pass this legislation. We need the Senate to do the same.

We also, I think, need to recognize we have fundamental disagreements and disputes about the impact of the tax cuts we passed. In fact, on this side of the aisle, we believe that allowing Americans to keep more of their money is really the secret to getting the kind of economic growth we need to fundamentally deal with the deficit, that the answer is not to raise people's taxes to have more money coming into the Treasury. We need to actually let people keep more of what they have got. We need to let people invest more of their own money.

We have seen jobs come back, and we have seen economic growth come back. We have seen people at all income levels able to keep more money, and they see the difference in their paychecks.

So we are very proud of that, and we do not believe that we should ever be in a situation where we think that somehow we have to choose expensive domestic spending if we want to fund the military.

I agree with my colleague's views on sequestration. Sequestration was extremely damaging. The Budget Control Act is damaging, and we ought to be in a position where we are repealing that as well.

So I am pleased that there will be support for this resolution on behalf of our Special Operations Forces.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to thank very much my friend and colleague from North Carolina for introducing this important bill highlighting the crucial role our special operators play.

Mr. Speaker, they, more than any other segment of our forces, operate in secret and undertake missions that keep us safe and that serve to protect and defend us. We will not ever know most of the stories of the service that they carry out for all of us.

They really are the watchmen on the walls of freedom. They stand guard for all of us day and night, undertaking missions that are incredibly complex, incredibly dangerous. And too often, they pay the ultimate sacrifice, but they are willing to do that for our freedom.

It is crucially important, Mr. Speaker, that we don't in this House and in this Congress continue to force them and all of our men and women in uniform to pay the price for our dysfunction, and that is a price that comes with funding delays and uncertainty.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I urge the adoption of this resolution, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee). The question is

on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Wyoming (Ms. CHENEY) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 1009.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

EXPRESSING SENSE OF HOUSE THAT THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE FACES SIGNIFICANT READINESS CHALLENGES AFFECTED BY BUDGETARY UNCERTAINTY

Ms. CHENEY. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 1010) expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the United States Air Force faces significant readiness challenges due to insufficient personnel levels, a shrinking and depleted aircraft fleet, and maintenance deferrals, all of which are affected by budgetary uncertainty and impede the Air Force's ability to meet ongoing and unexpected national security threats, putting United States national security at risk.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 1010

Whereas according to Air Force Chief of Staff General David Goldfein, the United States Air Force is ''the smallest we've ever been'';

Whereas according to an April 2018 report from the Government Accountability Office, more than a quarter of fighter pilot positions are unfilled;

Whereas the Air Force has just 18,000 of the roughly 20,000 pilots it needs to crew its 5,500 fighters, bombers, airlifters, cargo planes, and rescue helicopters;

Whereas this 10 percent gap in its air crew requirement could, as Secretary of the Air Force Heather Wilson said in November of 2017, ''break the force'';

Whereas almost ⅓ of the Air Force's aircraft were not flyable, or mission-capable, at any given time in fiscal year 2017;

Whereas over the last decade, the total number of aircraft in the Air Force has been on a downward slope;

Whereas the total number of aircraft in the Air Force will drop again from fiscal year 2017 to fiscal year 2018;

Whereas the average age of an aircraft, forcewide, increased from 24 years in fiscal year 2010 to 27.6 years in fiscal year 2017; and

Whereas between fiscal years 2013 and 2017, accidents involving all Defense Department warplanes rose nearly 40 percent: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the House of Representatives that—

(1) the United States Air Force faces significant readiness challenges due to aging aircraft and depleted personnel;

(2) Congress must provide the Air Force regular and sufficient funding to address procurement, maintenance, and staffing shortfalls; and

(3) without this funding, United States national security is at risk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Wyoming (Ms. CHENEY) and the gentleman from California (Mr. GARAMENDI) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Wyoming.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. CHENEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Wyoming?

There was no objection.

Ms. CHENEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARRINGTON), my friend and colleague, to discuss his resolution.

Mr. ARRINGTON. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my friend, the gentlewoman from the Cowboy State (Ms. CHENEY), for yielding me time, but mainly for her leadership on this issue to ensure that we as a country and as the leaders of this great Nation fulfill our most important responsibility to provide for a common defense, our constitutional first job, to provide for the common defense, and, I would add, to secure our liberty and the liberty of our posterity, because there is no freedom without liberty. So God bless the gentlewoman, and I thank her for leading the charge here.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to strongly encourage my colleagues to support this resolution, H. Res. 1010, expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the United States Air Force faces tremendous readiness challenges, reflected in a shrinking and dilapidated aircraft fleet, insufficient personnel, and dangerous levels of deferred maintenance, all of which are due, I think, in large part, I would say, to budgetary uncertainty, which impedes the Air Force's ability to meet our national security threats.

Mr. Speaker, there is nothing more important than the safety of the American people and the security of our country. To do this, it is real simple. We have to have a strong military. To do that, we would need to include a strong Air Force.

For the past 70 years, our Air Force has ensured that America's military prowess is unmatched in the skies, protecting our people, our allies, and our interests around the world.

I am honored to have Dyess Air Force Base in my backyard, the largest B–1 bomber base in this country, and I am proud to represent the brave airmen of the 7th Bomb Wing and the 317th Airlift Group, and all those in the Key City and in the Big Country area who support them.

I know that these men and women, along with all of our men and women in the armed services around the world, are doing all they can every day for our Nation's defense, and we as Congress ought to do all we can to support them.

I think it is a moral imperative to ensure that our sons and daughters, that our brothers and sisters who we ask to risk their families, to risk their very lives, I think we should, at a minimum, make sure they have the tools and resources necessary to be safe and successful.

But recently, because of our continued reliance on temporary funding measures known as CRs, or continuing resolutions, and the budget uncertainty and disruption that those create, we have hurt the Air Force's readiness and our combat capabilities.

We have failed, it is hard to believe, for almost 10 years in a row to fund our military on time. Temporary spending measures, coupled with continual defense cuts—I think it is about $200 billion over the last decade—often delay procurement of important assets. Every contract, whether it is to buy a plane, repair a plane, fuel a plane, or arm a plane, is adversely affected by this funding start and stop.

But I think we could put it another way. This broken funding process, or budget and appropriations process that I have been describing, weakens our defense and plays directly into the hands of our adversaries.

□ 1515

Throughout our Nation's history, our airmen and airwomen have always answered the call of duty. They should not pay the price because Congress has failed to fulfill our duty, which is to fully fund our military and to do it on time. That is going to send the right message to our troops. That will affirm our support for our troops. And I think it sends the right message to our enemies as well, just as importantly.

Congress, though, has continued to fail to do this, and it has caused significant damage to our entire defense community, including the U.S. Air Force.

The Air Force has a 70-year history. This is the smallest and oldest Air Force—the smallest and oldest—we have ever had.

The Heritage Foundation's ''2018 Index of U.S. Military Strength'' rates our Air Force readiness as being merely marginal. With marginal processes, marginal inputs and resources, you get marginal results.

I think both sides of the aisle, my colleagues and my Democrat colleagues, would agree that our troops deserve better than marginal support. More than a quarter of our fighter pilot positions are unfilled, and there is a 10 percent gap between the pilots that the Air Force has and what they need to crew their aircraft, a gap that the Air Force Secretary Heather Wilson said could ''break the force.'' That is from our Secretary of the Air Force.

Last year, almost one-third of the Air Force's planes were not flyable, and the average age of our aircraft is almost 30 years old.

Here is the worst part: Not only are we compromising our capabilities, but

aviation accidents, including fatal accidents, are on the rise. We now have four times as many servicemembers dying in training-related accidents than in combat.

Mr. Speaker, by June of this year, we already matched the number of noncombat crashes in the Air Force than we had all last year. Between the years 2013 and 2017, we had 133 military accidents leading to deaths. That is a 40 percent increase over that timeframe.

While our Nation's Air Force fleet continues to diminish in size and effectiveness, our adversaries, like China, are modernizing and expanding. The way I think of it, Mr. Speaker, is with respect to our investment in national security and our military strength. We are retreating while some of our adversaries are advancing. That is scary, and that is unacceptable.

As President Reagan said, weakness invites aggression. He also said that peace is achieved through American strength.

Our first President said that our military readiness is ''the most effectual means of preserving peace.''

If we don't reverse this trend, we as a Nation will leave ourselves vulnerable at a time of escalating threats and increasing instability around the world.

That is why we need to give the Air Force the quantity and the certainty of resources that match the caliber of our airmen and their enormous commitment of that sacred duty of protecting our fellow Americans. If we do this, our Air Force can continue safeguarding the skies, remaining the greatest fighting force in the world.

Mr. Speaker, America is still the leader of the free world, and the world is safer when America leads and when America's military is strong. The world is counting on us. The American people and our allies are counting on us. Most importantly, our brothers and sisters in uniform are counting on us.

Politicians too often make the important seem insignificant and the insignificant important. There is nothing more important for the American people and the future of this Republic than what we are talking about here today.

Let's be leaders. Let's do the right thing, and let's support our troops.

Again, I want to thank Representative CHENEY, along with my fellow Texans, Chairman THORNBERRY and Chairman GRANGER, for their efforts.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, as long as it does not exceed 20 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from Texas spoke boldly and correctly. If I could get a copy of his speech, as I will, I think I will use it myself.

He covered all the issues that I would want to cover in talking about the United States Air Force as a representative of two very important Air Force bases, Travis Air Force Base in Fairfield-Vacaville, California, and Beale Air Force Base just outside of Marysville, California.

I found myself not only in sympathy and empathy, but also marching right alongside the gentleman from Texas as he eloquently spoke about the role of the Air Force and the necessity of Congress to provide the adequate funding for not only repairing and maintaining the existing aircraft and bases, but also to expand and improve.

Certainly, I am looking forward to the arrival of the KC–46s to Travis Air Force Base. If Boeing will get that done, we will get on with it.

However, I want to remind my colleagues on the other side of the aisle that funding for the military is ultimately dependent upon the revenues of the Federal Government, which are dependent upon the health of the economy. Those things go together.

My esteemed colleague from Wyoming, in her remarks on the previous bill, addressed the issue of how we tax and who we tax or whether we tax. An interesting point was raised about this and whether it is possible to tax too low.

A situation has arisen in the State of Oklahoma, where they thought they could cut taxes continually and everything would grow, and there would be great opportunities. Well, the opportunity turned out for the highway patrolmen to buy their own gas, and for schools to go to 4- and even 3-day sessions, because there was no money.

So my point is this, that we have to balance things here. I raise this issue in the context of the appropriate desire of my colleagues to adequately fund the military, because I read in the newspaper yesterday and again today that my colleagues intend to go to tax cut 2.0. Very interesting.

In the face of a trillion-dollar deficit in the 2018–2019 fiscal year, we would do another massive tax cut in hopes that the situation would be such for the revenues of the Federal Government that we could fund everything that the military wants and whatever other needs we decide must be funded.

Well, let's see. We just borrowed, or are about to borrow, $12 billion from China to pay American farmers for their losses resulting from a trade war with China in which China was supposed to somehow grow our economy by not shipping as much to America.

That is convoluted, but it is what we are going to have to do if we cut taxes again. We are going to have to grow the Chinese economy, so we can borrow money from China, and then import from them.

I guess this makes sense to some, but I think we best be very careful here.

Mr. Speaker, I guess some people would say that I am off subject matter here, because we are really talking about fully funding the needs, in this piece of legislation, of the United States Air Force, and we should do so. However, at the same time, we must consider the revenue sources for the Federal Government, and we did.

In December 2017, the 435 of us who are selected by the 350 million Americans to represent them, a decision was made amongst us to slash the revenue of the Federal Government by more than $1.5 trillion over the next decade.

Now, my colleagues on the Democratic side didn't vote for that, but, apparently, the deficit hawks migrate out of Washington, D.C., in the winter. I suspect they are coming back—not ''suspect,'' they are actually back. The Speaker of the House tells us that we must cut Medicaid, Medicare, and Social Security in order to deal with the deficit that was created by the tax bill. Well, we shall see.

How are we going to adequately fund the military in the face of last December's tax cut, which I will remind folks, if they care to be reminded, that the beneficiaries were principally the great American corporations that were doing quite well, profitably, prior to the tax cut, and that somehow promised that they would bring jobs home, which they have not. Well, we shall see.

It takes $1.5 trillion out of the Treasury, and my esteemed colleague from Wyoming said: Look how successful Oklahoma was.

Well, I don't think she said that. But as she was talking about tax cuts, it came to mind that we ought to think about Oklahoma and what happens when the government doesn't have the revenue it needs to do the things that it must do.

Now, maybe you want to argue that the government must not provide funding for Social Security. Maybe you would want to argue that the government must not provide money for Medicaid, of which some 60 to 70 percent of the recipients are elderly people in nursing homes. Maybe we ought not do that. Or maybe you would want to argue that the Medicare program for seniors should be slashed and cut.

Those are all suggestions that the Speaker of the House of Representatives has made. I disagree.

How do we fund the programs that Americans need? Surely, they want a strong Air Force, as I do. And I suspect they would also want to see that those seniors in nursing homes are cared for, and those who are on Medicare are able to get their drugs and their care, and that the Social Security checks not be slashed and reduced. We shall see.

In any case, I support the resolution, and I think we ought to fully fund the Air Force.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I just want to insert some facts into the debate about the tax cuts. According to CBO estimates, the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act is going to result in an increase in GDP of $1.7 trillion. We are going to see 900,000 new jobs. Wages will increase by $1.2 trillion. Investments will increase by $600 billion. The tax cuts that we passed in this House—and my colleague is right, none of the Democrats voted for it. In fact, the minority leader has said that

she thinks we ought to reverse those tax cuts, which would be devastating to the economy.

We lived through the stagnation of the Obama years, and we passed a tax cuts bill that fundamentally changed the trajectory of this economy. We have seen 1.3 million jobs added. We have minority unemployment at the lowest rates, I believe, in history.

So the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act is working, and it is helping to bring jobs back. I am really pleased that we are looking at ways that we can make those cuts permanent, that we can make sure that we are helping the middle class, and that we are helping small businesses across this country on a permanent basis.

We can spend all of the time my colleague from California would like debating the tax cuts, debating the impact on our economy, but the facts are clear, that those tax cuts, despite the politics and the rhetoric, have had the kind of impact that, frankly, we knew they would have.

So I am really proud of what we have done with respect to the tax cuts, and now we need to make sure that we fund the military. If we don't fund the military, it doesn't matter much what else we do if we don't provide for the security of this Nation.

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

□ 1530

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire how much time I have remaining.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from California has 12 minutes remaining.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, if you are a person who wants to cut taxes and borrow money from China, then you can keep the economy going. In fact, the job growth has been basically steady for the last 8 years. It has been in the last year, also, and most of this year, and we are thankful for that.

Nonetheless, we have a very serious deficit. The CBO estimate that was quoted a moment ago actually took place prior to the tax cut. More recent estimates indicate that the deficit is larger than anticipated and that the growth rate has not expanded to the point that was anticipated and that the deficits that are going to be there are very real. All of that is true.

While there have been increases in wages, some 2 percent over the last year, almost 18 months now—and we are grateful for that—those wages are less than the inflation rate; and, therefore, for those working men and women across the Nation who have received an average of 2 percent or so of wage growth, it has been eaten up by inflation.

The point here is one of this resolution reminding us that we have a very important obligation to adequately fund, in this case, the Air Force; in the previous piece of legislation, special operations. Indeed, we do have that obligation. But at the same time, we need to have a fiscally sound government.

Unfortunately, what happened last December was to pull the foundation of fiscal soundness out from beneath the government's revenue stream.

Now, there is a necessity for some adjustment in the taxes, and you will get no debate on our side of the aisle about the necessity to do that. It would have been our choice, had we the majority, to reduce taxes far more than the tax bill did for the working men and women and for the smaller businesses in America, and not for the wealthy corporations that were doing quite well, and certainly not to create an international Tax Code that continues to encourage the offshoring of American jobs.

That simply happened because the reduction in the corporate tax rate for America went to 20 percent, while those American corporations operating offshore could get a 10 percent tax, providing a very significant benefit to corporations to offshore jobs. I don't think we would have done that. Maybe that is why many of us voted against the legislation.

There is much more to be said about it, but the fundamental point at this moment is this resolution that says fully fund the Air Force. We are 100 percent for that.

The question we ask is: How are we to do that in the face of the massive deficit and, to hear from our Republican leadership, tax cut 2.0? What does that mean, on tax cut 1.0? We don't know. But I would draw the attention of all of us to what happens when you do not have the revenues necessary to fund the government—Oklahoma.

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

Ms. CHENEY. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire as to how much time I have remaining.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from Wyoming has 10½ minutes remaining.

Ms. CHENEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL).

Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Wyoming.

Mr. Speaker, I didn't realize that this was going to be a defend Oklahoma debate. I invite my colleague, Mr. GARAMENDI, to come and look at our thriving economy, our sustained economic growth of nearly 6 percent since 2008 when my colleague's State has been on the wane.

This thing about deficits and deficit spending, we have a balanced budget amendment, unlike my colleague's State. And further, we don't borrow from the Federal Government to bail out our State; instead, we pay the bills ourselves.

Now, I thought that this was a measure to support our military and to support the United States Air Force, and in that we will wholeheartedly agree. But, Mr. Speaker, I take great pride in the people of Oklahoma. With one-tenth of the population, we can do everything that my colleague on the other side of the aisle's State does itself, and I take great pride in that.

Ms. CHENEY. Mr. Speaker, in closing, I want to thank my colleague from Oklahoma for his remarks. I also want to thank my colleague from Texas for this important resolution.

I am honored, Mr. Speaker, to represent F.E. Warren Air Force Base, located in Cheyenne. The missileers of the Mighty Ninety Missile Wing are responsible for maintaining, protecting, and manning ICBMs that are deployed throughout Wyoming, Nebraska, and Colorado. These missiles remain on alert 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. They are one of our most important deterrents against attack from our adversaries.

But these Minuteman 3 missiles, Mr. Speaker, were developed in the 1960s and deployed in the 1970s. We have made modernization and modifications since then, but we desperately need additional modernization to these ICBMs and to our force in general to keep pace with adversaries like the Russians who have made significant investments in their ICBM force. We cannot do that, Mr. Speaker, without predictable and reliable funding that is required to complete such a complicated and complex multiyear project.

The ICBM replacement program, known as the Ground-Based Strategic Deterrent, is slated to receive the necessary increased funding in fiscal year 2019 so that we can accelerate that program. But for these resources to be effective, Mr. Speaker, we must make sure we get the additional funding to the Air Force on time.

As my colleague from Texas talked about, Mr. Speaker, the Air Force faces readiness and modernization challenges, and the ICBM replacement is just one of those.

Once again, Mr. Speaker, we have to stop allowing our dysfunction and we have got to stop allowing the demands, frankly, by some on the other side of the aisle to hold our defense funding hostage. We have got to stop allowing those political debates to put our men and women in uniform at greater risk and, frankly, the long-term national security of this Nation at risk.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the adoption of this resolution, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Wyoming (Ms. CHENEY) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 1010.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

EXPRESSING SENSE OF HOUSE THAT NOT FULLY RESOURCING THE UNITED STATES ARMY IN A TIMELY MANNER ERODES THE ARMY'S ABILITY TO MAINTAIN READINESS

Ms. CHENEY. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 1007) expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that not fully resourcing the United States Army in a timely manner erodes the Army's ability to maintain readiness and poses risk to the Army's ability to conduct military operations.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 1007

Whereas, in previous years, the United States Army delayed supply transactions, and later had to order parts from sources outside the Department of Defense supply system and pay more to get parts fabricated or shipped quickly to keep up with maintenance timelines;

Whereas, in previous years, the Army was forced to restrict to home station training due to not having enough resources;

Whereas the Army, if not fully resourced, will postpone all noncritical maintenance work orders until later in the year when resourced correctly;

Whereas the Army is attempting to add military personnel to meet critical skill gaps, and if not fully resourced, will delay the recruitment of new personnel which will result in units continuing to lack the full complement of personnel needed to be 100-percent effective;

Whereas, if not fully resourced, noncritical travel, which includes relocating soldiers' families (change of duty station) will be postponed and may result in missed school year timing for dependent spouses and their children;

Whereas United States Army Forces Command is responsible for the training, mobilization, deployment, sustainment, and transformation of conventional forces to provide relevant and ready land power to combatant commanders;

Whereas global threats require the Army to prepare to fight both terrorist organizations as well as possible near-peer adversaries; and

Whereas it takes both significant time and resources to build a professional Army: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) finds that not resourcing the Department of the Army in a timely manner erodes readiness and puts the United States Army at a disadvantage; and

(2) affirms that Congress should resource all our warfighters prior to the beginning of a new fiscal year.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Wyoming (Ms. CHENEY) and the gentleman from California (Mr. GARAMENDI) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Wyoming.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. CHENEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Wyoming?

There was no objection.

Ms. CHENEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL), who is my colleague from the Armed Services Committee, to discuss his resolution.

Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Wyoming for her important leadership in the strengthening of our military and my colleagues on the other side of the aisle that I work with well on the Armed Services Committee.

Mr. Speaker, nothing is too good for the troops, and nothing is what they get—at least on time, year after year, by this Congress. Our lack of diligence and commitment to provide timely funds in Congress erodes military readiness and weakens our Nation. H. Res. 1007 helps fix that for the United States Army.

For me, these are not academic or political issues but, rather, experiential. Having served as a combat infantryman in more than two decades of uniformed service prior to coming to Congress, these are not issues that I take lightly. I have lived the hardships created when Congress is derelict in its duty.

When supply transactions are delayed, the Army is forced to order parts outside the Department of Defense supply system, pay for more parts, and risk getting any spare parts at all. Soldiers are severely hampered in their training, being forced to stay at home stations with limitations on equipment, fuel, and ammunition. Consequently, the readiness of units diminishes, and their morale flags.

Even if the Army were to somehow make the best of those circumstances and attempt to send their warriors to school in the time that is created because they can't train to maybe increase their vital skills, they can't. Their funds are delayed, so their schools get canceled, and the time is gone forever.

Adding insult to injury, many people who were promised schools to make important promotions have those schools taken from their grasp, and, disillusioned, they exit the force, affecting recruitment and the trained warriors who had invested years up to that point.

Another insult to injury is the relocation of families. It gets postponed, and it causes undue family hardship on those in uniform, missed school for their children, and stresses on the warrior at home which not only affect his performance, but what is sad is that it was all preventable, while we in this Congress who are responsible for this and the timely delivery of funds fly home to our families weekend after weekend without interruption.

Our founding documents state that we should promote the general welfare and provide for the common defense. Both sides of the aisle need to be mindful that these founding documents do not say provide the general welfare and promote, somehow, the common defense. If we cannot defend the Republic, all of these other things are simply not going to matter.

Our lack of diligence in Congress creates reduced readiness, a less capable military, cancellation of training, untold family hardships, and a less secure nation. It is so easily solved. We simply do the work, sign the bills, and get them to the President by October 1.

It is pretty simple, and it is extraordinarily important. Today is the 25th of July. There is plenty of time.

The question that I and warriors who still serve in uniform ask is: Will this Congress have the heart and the guts to do what is right?

The clock ticks. Let's stop the madness. Let's stop the debate of ancillary things that don't have anything to do with providing for the common defense, and let's end the continuing resolutions that affect our military funding. Run a clean defense measure.

If we are in so much agreement about funding our military, then my challenge to both sides of the aisle is let's run a clean measure. Let's not attach anything else to it, no Labor-H, no other appropriations measures, a simple, clean measure that we all agree to anyway and we pass year after year. Then we can get it to the President's desk, and our warriors who give us our freedom and allow us to continue with this great Republic for generation to generation will have what they need.

We have not done it in years. This could be a first and could be a hallmark of the 115th Congress.

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

I want to thank the gentleman from Oklahoma for making me aware of the current financial situation, and I will remind him that California is running a very significant budget surplus at the present time. Both of our economies are presently growing, and we are thankful for that.

I also want to thank the gentleman for being a voice of knowledge on the Armed Services Committee, for his many years of service in the United States Army, and for bringing us this resolution today calling for the full and timely funding of the United States Army.

□ 1545

My father, who served in the Army and ended that service as a major, would have been very pleased to hear that there was adequate and timely funding.

I know I have said quite enough on the issue of how we are going to fund the government, and I am sure my colleagues across the aisle probably think I have said too much. If they feel that way, so be it. But I do think that we need to understand the need to be balanced as we move forward.

I announce my support for this resolution, along with the two previous resolutions, and look forward to its immediate passage.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague, Mr. GARAMENDI from California, for his support of these resolutions and for his time focusing on them today on the floor.

I also want to thank my colleague from Oklahoma. There is no stronger supporter of our men and women in uniform that I know of in this body than Mr. RUSSELL from Oklahoma. He understands, I would say, more than most because of his own service that what we do in this body and what we do on this floor has a direct impact on the levels of risk, on the safety, and on the effectiveness of our men and women in uniform.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution highlights the damage that we have seen to the readiness of the United States Army over 9 years of continuing resolutions, sequestration, and overall budget dysfunction.

I want to echo the remarks of my colleague from Oklahoma. Let's change that. Let's make this a new start. Let's make this the year that we don't hold military funding hostage and we pass a clean Defense Appropriations bill. We have done it here in the House. We know they can do it in the Senate. We need to get the bill, take it up, and pass it.

All these other arguments and discussions are important. They are important for the future of the Nation. They are important for our economy. But we should not force our men and women in uniform to have to wait, to have stand by and watch, not knowing whether we are going to be able to pass the bills that they need for the funding they need to continue to keep us all safe.

We did our job for fiscal year 2018, although we were too slow, but we have now appropriated the $700 billion for that fiscal year. Let's do it this year on time, with sufficient funding, and with a level of accountability, and also making sure that our men and women in uniform know that those funds are coming to them.

It is going to take us more than a single year to get ourselves out of the crisis we face, Mr. Speaker. We have made a good start. But I think we should all come together, both sides of the aisle and, frankly, on both sides of Capitol Hill, to say: Look, this is an issue on which we are going to agree.

The security of the Nation is an issue that ought to cross party lines. The support that we are seeing for this resolution and for all the resolutions we have done for our services demonstrates that. Let's make this the year that we do it differently and we do it right, Mr. Speaker.

With that, I thank everyone who has participated in this effort. I thank Chairman THORNBERRY and Chairman GRANGER for their important efforts.

Mr. Speaker, I urge adoption of this resolution, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Wyoming (Ms. CHENEY) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H.R. 1007.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RESTORING ACCESS TO MEDICATION ACT OF 2018

Ms. JENKINS of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 1012, I call up the bill (H.R. 6199) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to include certain over-the-counter medical products as qualified medical expenses, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 1012, in lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Ways and Means printed in the bill, an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 115–82 is adopted, and the bill, as amended, is considered read.

The text of the bill, as amended, is as follows:

H.R. 6199

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the ''Restoring Access to Medication and Modernizing Health Savings Accounts Act of 2018''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
Sec. 2. First dollar coverage flexibility for high deductible health plans.
Sec. 3. Treatment of direct primary care service arrangements.
Sec. 4. Certain employment related services not treated as disqualifying coverage for purposes of health savings accounts.
Sec. 5. Contributions permitted if spouse has a health flexible spending account.
Sec. 6. FSA and HRA terminations or conversions to fund HSAs.
Sec. 7. Inclusion of certain over-the-counter medical products as qualified medical expenses.
Sec. 8. Certain amounts paid for physical activity, fitness, and exercise treated as amounts paid for medical care.

SEC. 2. FIRST DOLLAR COVERAGE FLEXIBILITY FOR HIGH DEDUCTIBLE HEALTH PLANS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 223(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

''(E) FIRST DOLLAR COVERAGE FLEXIBILITY.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—A plan shall not fail to be treated as a high deductible health plan by reason of failing to have a deductible for not more than $250 of specified services for self-only coverage (twice such amount in the case of family coverage) during a plan year.

''(ii) SPECIFIED SERVICES.—For purposes of this subparagraph, the term 'specified services' means, with respect to a plan, services other than preventive care (within the meaning of subparagraph (C)) identified under the terms of the plan as being services to which clause (i) applies.''.

(b) INFLATION ADJUSTMENT.—Section 223(g)(1) of such Code is amended—

(1) by striking ''and (c)(2)(A)'' each place it appears and inserting '', (c)(2)(A), and (c)(2)(E)'', and

(2) in subparagraph (B)—

(A) by striking ''such taxable year'' in the matter preceding clause (i) and inserting ''the taxable year (plan year in the case of the dollar amount in subsection (c)(2)(E))'', and

(B) by striking ''clause (ii)'' and inserting ''clauses (ii) and (iii)'' in clause (i), by striking ''and'' at the end of clause (i), by striking the period at the end of clause (ii) and inserting '', and'', and by inserting after clause (ii) the following new clause:

''(iii) in the case of the dollar amount in subsection (c)(2)(E) for plan years beginning in calendar years after 2019, 'calendar year 2018'.''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply with respect to plan years beginning after December 31, 2018.

SEC. 3. TREATMENT OF DIRECT PRIMARY CARE SERVICE ARRANGEMENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 223(c)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

''(D) TREATMENT OF DIRECT PRIMARY CARE SERVICE ARRANGEMENTS.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—A direct primary care service arrangement shall not be treated as a health plan for purposes of subparagraph (A)(ii).

''(ii) DIRECT PRIMARY CARE SERVICE ARRANGEMENT.—For purposes of this paragraph—

''(I) IN GENERAL.—The term 'direct primary care service arrangement' means, with respect to any individual, an arrangement under which such individual is provided medical care (as defined in section 213(d)) consisting solely of primary care services provided by primary care practitioners (as defined in section 1833(x)(2)(A) of the Social Security Act, determined without regard to clause (ii) thereof), if the sole compensation for such care is a fixed periodic fee.

''(II) LIMITATION.—With respect to any individual for any month, such term shall not include any arrangement if the aggregate fees for all direct primary care service arrangements (determined without regard to this subclause) with respect to such individual for such month exceed $150 (twice such dollar amount in the case of an individual with any direct primary care service arrangement (as so determined) that covers more than one individual).

''(iii) CERTAIN SERVICES SPECIFICALLY EXCLUDED FROM TREATMENT AS PRIMARY CARE SERVICES.—For purposes of this paragraph, the term 'primary care services' shall not include—

''(I) procedures that require the use of general anesthesia,

''(II) prescription drugs (other than vaccines), and

''(III) laboratory services not typically administered in an ambulatory primary care setting.

The Secretary, after consultation with the Secretary of Health and Human Services, shall issue regulations or other guidance regarding the application of this clause.''.

(b) DIRECT PRIMARY CARE SERVICE ARRANGEMENT FEES TREATED AS MEDICAL EXPENSES.—Section 223(d)(2)(C) is amended by striking ''or'' at the end of clause (iii), by striking the period at the end of clause (iv) and inserting '', or'', and by adding at the end the following new clause:

''(v) any direct primary care service arrangement.''.

(c) INFLATION ADJUSTMENT.—Section 223(g)(1) of such Code, as amended by section 2(b), is amended—

(1) by inserting ''(c)(1)(D)(ii)(II),'' after ''(b)(2),'' each place it appears, and

(2) in subparagraph (B), by striking ''and (iii)'' and inserting '', (iii) and (iv)'' in clause (i), by striking ''and'' at the end of clause (ii), by striking the period at the end of clause (iii) and inserting '', and'', and by inserting after clause (iii) the following new clause:

''(iv) in the case of the dollar amount in subsection (c)(1)(D)(ii)(II) for taxable years beginning in calendar years after 2019, 'calendar year 2018'.''.

(d) REPORTING OF DIRECT PRIMARY CARE SERVICE ARRANGEMENT FEES ON W–2.—Section 6051(a) of such Code is amended by striking ''and'' at the end of paragraph (16), by striking the period at the end of paragraph (17) and inserting '', and'', and by inserting after paragraph (17) the following new paragraph:

''(18) in the case of a direct primary care service arrangement (as defined in section 223(c)(1)(D)(ii)) which is provided in connection with employment, the aggregate fees for such arrangement for such employee.''.

(e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to months beginning after December 31, 2018, in taxable years ending after such date.

SEC. 4. CERTAIN EMPLOYMENT RELATED SERVICES NOT TREATED AS DISQUALIFYING COVERAGE FOR PURPOSES OF HEALTH SAVINGS ACCOUNTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 223(c)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended by section 3(a), is amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

''(E) SPECIAL RULE FOR QUALIFIED ITEMS AND SERVICES.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—An individual shall not be treated as covered under a health plan for purposes of subparagraph (A)(ii) merely because the individual, in connection with the employment of the individual or the individual's spouse, receives (or is eligible to receive) qualified items and services at—

''(I) a healthcare facility located at a facility owned or leased by the employer of the individual (or of the individual's spouse), or operated primarily for the benefit of such employer's employees, or

''(II) a healthcare facility located within a supermarket, pharmacy, or similar retail establishment.

''(ii) QUALIFIED ITEMS AND SERVICES DEFINED.—For purposes of this subparagraph, the term 'qualified items and services' means the following:

''(I) Physical examinations.

''(II) Immunizations, including injections of antigens provided by employees.

''(III) Drugs other than a prescribed drug (as such term is defined in section 213(d)(3)).

''(IV) Treatment for injuries occurring in the course of employment.

''(V) Drug testing, if required as a condition of employment.

''(VI) Hearing or vision screenings.

''(VII) Other similar items and services that do not provide significant benefits in the nature of medical care.

''(iii) AGGREGATION.—For purposes of clause (i)(I), all persons treated as a single employer under subsection (b), (c), (m), or (o) of section 414 shall be treated as a single employer.''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to months beginning after December 31, 2018, in taxable years ending after such date.

SEC. 5. CONTRIBUTIONS PERMITTED IF SPOUSE HAS A HEALTH FLEXIBLE SPENDING ACCOUNT.

(a) CONTRIBUTIONS PERMITTED IF SPOUSE HAS A HEALTH FLEXIBLE SPENDING ACCOUNT.—Section 223(c)(1)(B) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking ''and'' at the end of clause (ii), by striking the period at the end of clause (iii) and inserting '', and'', and by inserting after clause (iii) the following new clause:

''(iv) coverage under a health flexible spending arrangement of the spouse of the individual for any plan year of such arrangement if the aggregate reimbursements under such arrangement for such year do not exceed the aggregate expenses which would be eligible for reimbursement under such arrangement if such expenses were determined without regard to any expenses paid or incurred with respect to such individual.''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by this section shall apply to plan years beginning after December 31, 2018.

SEC. 6. FSA AND HRA TERMINATIONS OR CONVERSIONS TO FUND HSAS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 106(e)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended to read as follows:

''(2) QUALIFIED HSA DISTRIBUTION.—For purposes of this subsection—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The term 'qualified HSA distribution' means, with respect to any employee, a distribution from a health flexible spending arrangement or health reimbursement arrangement of such employee directly to a health savings account of such employee if—

''(i) such distribution is made in connection with such employee establishing coverage under a high deductible health plan (as defined in section 223(c)(2)) after a significant period of not having such coverage, and

''(ii) such arrangement is described in section 223(c)(1)(B)(iii) with respect to the portion of the plan year after such distribution is made.

''(B) DOLLAR LIMITATION.—The aggregate amount of distributions from health flexible spending arrangements and health reimbursement arrangements of any employee which may be treated as qualified HSA distributions in connection with an establishment of coverage described in subparagraph (A)(i) shall not exceed the dollar amount in effect under section 125(i)(1) (twice such amount in the case of coverage which is described in section 223(b)(2)(B)).''.

(b) PARTIAL REDUCTION OF LIMITATION ON DEDUCTIBLE HSA CONTRIBUTIONS.—Section 223(b)(4) of such Code is amended by striking ''and'' at the end of subparagraph (B), by striking the period at the end of subparagraph (C) and inserting '', and'', and by inserting after subparagraph (C) the following new subparagraph:

''(D) so much of any qualified HSA distribution (as defined in section 106(e)(2)) made to a health savings account of such individual during the taxable year as does not exceed the aggregate increases in the balance of the arrangement from which such distribution is made which occur during the portion of the plan year which precedes such distribution (other than any balance carried over to such plan year and determined without regard to any decrease in such balance during such portion of the plan year).''.

(c) CONVERSION TO HSA-COMPATIBLE ARRANGEMENT FOR REMAINDER OF PLAN YEAR.—Section 223(c)(1)(B)(iii) of such Code, as amended by section 5(a), is amended to read as follows:

''(iii) coverage under a health flexible spending arrangement or health reimbursement arrangement for the portion of the plan year after a qualified HSA distribution (as defined in section 106(e)(2) determined without regard to subparagraph (A)(ii) thereof) is made, if the terms of such arrangement which apply for such portion of the plan year are such that, if such terms applied for the entire plan year, then such arrangement would not be taken into account under subparagraph (A)(ii) of this paragraph for such plan year, and''.

(d) INCLUSION OF QUALIFIED HSA DISTRIBUTIONS ON W–2.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 6051(a) of such Code, as amended by section 3(d), is amended by striking ''and'' at the end of paragraph (17), by striking the period at the end of paragraph (18) and inserting '', and'', and by inserting after paragraph (18) the following new paragraph:

''(19) the amount of any qualified HSA distribution (as defined in section 106(e)(2)) with respect to such employee.''.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 6051(a)(12) of such Code is amended by inserting ''(other than any qualified HSA distribution, as defined in section 106(e)(2))'' before the comma at the end.

(e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to distributions made after December 31, 2018, in taxable years ending after such date.

SEC. 7. INCLUSION OF CERTAIN OVER-THE-COUNTER MEDICAL PRODUCTS AS QUALIFIED MEDICAL EXPENSES.

(a) HSAS.—Section 223(d)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended—

(1) by striking the last sentence of subparagraph (A) and inserting the following: ''For purposes of this subparagraph, amounts paid for menstrual care products shall be treated as paid for medical care.'', and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

''(D) MENSTRUAL CARE PRODUCT.—For purposes of this paragraph, the term 'menstrual care product' means a tampon, pad, liner, cup, sponge, or similar product used by women with respect to menstruation or other genital-tract secretions.''.

(b) ARCHER MSAS.—Section 220(d)(2)(A) of such Code is amended by striking the last sentence and inserting the following: ''For purposes of this subparagraph, amounts paid for menstrual care products (as defined in section 223(d)(2)(D)) shall be treated as paid for medical care.''.

(c) HEALTH FLEXIBLE SPENDING ARRANGEMENTS AND HEALTH REIMBURSEMENT ARRANGEMENTS.—Section 106 of such Code is amended by striking subsection (f) and inserting the following new subsection:

''(f) REIMBURSEMENTS FOR MENSTRUAL CARE PRODUCTS.—For purposes of this section and section 105, expenses incurred for menstrual care products (as defined in section 223(d)(2)(D)) shall be treated as incurred for medical care.''.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATES.—

(1) DISTRIBUTIONS FROM HEALTH SAVINGS ACCOUNTS.—The amendments made by subsections (a) and (b) shall apply to amounts paid after December 31, 2018.

(2) REIMBURSEMENTS.—The amendment made by subsection (c) shall apply to expenses incurred after December 31, 2018.

SEC. 8. CERTAIN AMOUNTS PAID FOR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY, FITNESS, AND EXERCISE TREATED AS AMOUNTS PAID FOR MEDICAL CARE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 213(d)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking ''or'' at the end of subparagraph (C), by striking the period at the end of subparagraph (D) and inserting '', or'', and by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

''(E) for qualified sports and fitness expenses.''.

(b) QUALIFIED SPORTS AND FITNESS EXPENSES.—Section 213(d) of such Code is amended by adding at the end the following paragraph:

''(12) QUALIFIED SPORTS AND FITNESS EXPENSES.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The term 'qualified sports and fitness expenses' means amounts paid for—

''(i) membership at a fitness facility,

''(ii) participation or instruction in a program of qualified physical activity, or

''(iii) safety equipment for use in a program (including a self-directed program) of qualified physical activity.

''(B) LIMITATIONS.—

''(i) OVERALL DOLLAR LIMITATION.—The aggregate amount treated as qualified sports and

fitness expenses with respect to any taxpayer for any taxable year shall not exceed $500 (twice such amount in the case of a joint return or a head of household (as defined in section 2(b))).

''(ii) DOLLAR LIMITATION ON SAFETY EQUIPMENT.—The amount treated as qualified sports and fitness expenses with respect to any item of safety equipment described in subparagraph (A)(iii) shall not exceed $250.

''(iii) EXCLUSION OF EXERCISE VIDEOS, ETC.—Qualified sports and fitness expenses shall not include videos, books, or similar materials.

''(C) QUALIFIED PHYSICAL ACTIVITY.—For purposes of this paragraph—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in clause (ii), the term 'qualified physical activity' means any physical exercise or physical activity.

''(ii) EXCLUSIONS.—The Secretary, after consultation with the Secretary of Health and Human Services, shall issue guidance to determine for purposes of this paragraph what does not constitute a qualified physical activity, including golf, hunting, sailing, horseback riding, and other similar activities.

''(D) FITNESS FACILITY DEFINED.—For purposes of subparagraph (A)(i), the term 'fitness facility' means a facility—

''(i) providing instruction in a program of qualified physical activity or facilities for qualified physical activity,

''(ii) which is not a private club owned and operated by its members,

''(iii) whose health or fitness facility is not incidental to its overall function and purpose, and

''(iv) which is fully compliant with applicable State and Federal anti-discrimination laws.

''(E) PROGRAMS WHICH INCLUDE COMPONENTS OTHER QUALIFIED PHYSICAL ACTIVITY.—Rules similar to the rules of paragraph (6) shall apply in the case of any program or facility that includes qualified physical activity (or facilities therefore) and also other components. For purposes of the preceding sentence, travel and accommodations shall be treated as an other component.

''(F) INFLATION ADJUSTMENT.—In the case of any taxable year beginning in a calendar year after 2019, the $500 amount in subparagraph (B)(i) and the $250 amount in subparagraph (B)(ii) shall each be increased by an amount equal to—

''(i) such dollar amount, multiplied by

''(ii) the cost-of-living adjustment determined under section 1(f)(3) for the calendar year in which such taxable year begins, determined by substituting 'calendar year 2018' for 'calendar year 2016' in subparagraph (A)(ii) thereof.

If any increase determined under the preceding sentence is not a multiple of $10, such increase shall be rounded to the next lowest multiple of $10.''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to taxable years beginning after December 31, 2018.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The bill, as amended, shall be debatable for 1 hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Ways and Means.

The gentlewoman from Kansas (Ms. JENKINS) and the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Kansas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. JENKINS of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Kansas?

There was no objection.

Ms. JENKINS of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to come to the floor today to speak in support of the Restoring Access to Medication and Modernizing Health Savings Account Act of 2018.

This legislation makes a variety of simple but much-need changes to health savings accounts, or HSAs, rules to ensure that folks have more access and choice when using their HSAs.

This bill contains five separate bipartisan pieces of legislation that passed the Ways and Means Committee earlier this month. It includes a bipartisan policy by Mr. ROSKAM and Mr. THOMPSON that would allow HSA-eligible plans to offer a certain amount of first-dollar coverage in their plan design without losing their HSA-eligibility. This allows HSA plans to offer coverage for valuable services like telehealth or primary care appointments without a deductible.

The bill permits patients with HSAs to access the innovative and patient-centered direct primary care arrangements with HSA plans, provisions championed by the bipartisan team of Mr. PAULSEN and Mr. BLUMENAUER.

The bill also allows coverage for certain medical services from a retail or onsite clinic and permits contributions to an HSA if their spouse has a health FSA, which is prohibited today.

Another commonsense provision in the bill allows rollovers from other tax-advantaged health accounts to be able to fund HSAs. These proposals were included in Mr. KELLY and Mr. BLUMENAUER's bipartisan legislation.

Additionally, this bill contains the PHIT Act, introduced in a bipartisan manner by Mr. JASON SMITH and Mr. KIND, that would allow certain qualified fitness expenses to be eligible items that can be paid for with tax-advantaged dollars, offsetting a portion of their costs and promoting healthy activity.

Lastly, this legislation repeals the Affordable Care Act's unnecessary barriers when it comes to using tax-advantaged health accounts to purchase over-the-counter medicines, something that I have been pleased to work on with my good friend Congressman KIND for the last several years, and I am encouraged that the bipartisan duo of Representatives MENG and PAULSEN have also joined us in introducing the underlying legislation.

In addition to expanding access for over-the-counter medication, the bill also allows for feminine hygiene products to be considered a qualified medical expense.

Since the passage of the Affordable Care Act, Americans have had to seek prescriptions in order to use their health savings and flexible spending accounts on safe and effective over-the-counter medicines. This legislation would end the need for those prescriptions.

It doesn't make any sense to require the millions of American families that use HSAs and FSAs to manage their healthcare needs to go to the doctor in order to access over-the-counter medicines for things like basic pain management and cold and allergy symptoms.

Nobody benefits from this nonsensical policy that requires consumers to jump through unnecessary hoops and increases the burdens on the healthcare system, all while providing no medical benefit. Over-the-counter medicines are often the frontline treatment for many common illnesses and for maintenance of chronic diseases, and they should be treated as medically reimbursable healthcare therapies, just as prescription medications.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased the House is considering H.R. 6199, which gives individuals and families more control over their healthcare spending and increases their options when it comes to health savings accounts.

Today marks a nice opportunity to pass bipartisan legislation to simply make it easier for consumers to meet their basic medical needs. These are commonsense, simple, bipartisan solutions, and I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be here with Ms. JENKINS, moving forward on this legislation. It represents an opportunity for us to deal with a series of, as she mentioned, bipartisan ideas, relatively simple, to enhance service delivery.

I state from the outset that I am troubled that we were not able to provide opportunities to pay for these. They carry a cost. In committee, even though I thought they were a good idea, I voted against some of them because they were rather expensive.

In the aggregate, these are things, moving forward, that will improve healthcare, and I am hopeful that, as we move along the process, we can find some ways to offset the costs involved.

Some of us have philosophical questions about the role of HSAs and how it fits overall, but this legislation will make key consumer-friendly improvements to our existing system. Direct primary care medical homes are an important example of successful delivery reforms that will become easier to access under this legislation.

DPC arrangements offer individuals access to comprehensive primary care and prevention services in a medical home setting for a flat monthly fee, as opposed to concierge services that some people have in mind. Most of these practices typically charge a low monthly fee, perhaps $50 to $100, in most cases, and they serve low- and

moderate-income patients. These fees support the delivery of high-quality, coordinated care by providing better healthcare upfront in primary care settings.

DPC practices reduce unnecessary hospital and specialty care, as well as administrative expenses. This empowers the doctor-patient relationship, enabling providers to resist financial incentives that distort the decision-making process in primary care.

It also reduces the conveyor belt process, where people are typically shuttled into the office in 8-minute increments. This is not the case in direct primary care. It is not uncommon for appointments to last half an hour or even an hour. So they build a better relationship with patients, and they are able to better understand and address healthcare needs.

By offering a high level of access to primary care, evidence shows that direct primary care medical homes improve health outcomes and reduce costs. Today, DPC medical homes serve individuals of all ages and income in at least 47 States.

This legislation simplifies existing IRS regulations and clarifies that direct primary care medical homes are qualified health expenses—medical services—and not health plans.

I personally question the IRS ruling. We have debated with them, but we have lost that. We fix it with this legislation.

□ 1600

As more individuals and employers seek to utilize the direct primary care delivery model, it is important that this outdated tax barrier not get in the way of patients accessing this successful model.

The legislation will allow HSA plans to cover onsite employee clinics. Think for a moment about the nursing stations that we have here in the House of Representatives to provide that service. They can offer physical exams, immunization, over-the-counter drugs, drug testing, hearing and vision screening, and other minor primary care preventive services to help employers assemble a benefits package for their employees that is both practical and can give them a competitive edge.

Allowing employees to access this basic healthcare service at work means it doesn't disrupt the worksite. It is more convenient for them; it is better for the employer.

Another key consumer change made by this bill is to recognize that employees change jobs. This bill allows individuals to streamline the conversion of a medical savings account, flexible savings account, or HSA so they won't lose savings when they change jobs. These reasonable changes will help consumers make the most of their employer-sponsored coverage.

Now—make no mistake—while this legislation will certainly help some consumers, it doesn't atone for the systematic sabotage that we have seen of the Affordable Care Act by the administration and some of my Republican colleagues. By zeroing out the mandate penalty, estimates are that insurance premiums will rise 15 percent. None of these bills before us today undo that premium hike that is visited upon our constituents unnecessarily.

These premium increases are coming after Republicans gave insurance companies billions in tax cuts in their tax bills. Republican attempts to expand HSAs is no replacement for the Affordable Care Act's financial assistance. Attempts to expand HSAs are a continuation of a platform of shifting families into health plans which provide fewer health benefits and higher out-of-pocket costs, while providing greater tax benefits for those who need them least.

HSAs and high-deductible healthcare plans shift costs to consumers without bending the cost curve or addressing underlying costs of medical care in the United States. I think we can and should do better.

For instance, the President has promised action on lowering prescription drug costs. These bills today do nothing to lower the cost of drugs consumers buy, and seek to move more people into plans that provide only catastrophic coverage, exposing more people to pay the full freight of drug price hikes.

Now, we have legislation before our committees that could move forward to do something about this, and I am saddened, despite Trump's talking about it, that we have really not taken action to do so. And we could, on a bipartisan basis, if we were enabled to do so.

The collection of bills on the floor this week will reduce Federal revenues by about $90 billion and will do nothing to reduce the number of uninsured people that will increase as a result of policy changes my Republican friends have done in this Congress. Their sabotage efforts under the Trump administration have caused millions of people to lose coverage, and millions more will do so in the future.

Now we are seeing, in the budget proposal, my Republican friends proposing to cut Medicare and Medicaid by nearly $1 trillion to try and pay for the deficits that have been exaggerated by tax cuts they have enacted. The bills that we will be considering, especially the next one, will only add fuel to that fire.

So, I am pleased that we have got some bipartisan pieces that we can move forward. I am hopeful that we don't abandon a sense of fiscal responsibility to be able to work together to pay for them, and I hope that we can encourage some of my friends on the other side of the aisle to dial back the assault on the Affordable Care Act, especially by the administration, so that we don't destabilize the system further, drive up costs, and increase the number of uninsured.

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

Ms. JENKINS of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. RICE), a distinguished member of the House Ways and Means Committee.

Mr. RICE of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to stand before you today to discuss two bills that expand choice and offer lower cost. And lower cost and choice are what are needed in healthcare.

Back home in South Carolina, the average premium before ObamaCare, in 2013, in the individual market, was $233. In 2017—which the premiums were set before the President took office—before the ''assault'' on ObamaCare that my colleague was speaking of, the premium reached $512. That is a $279-per-month increase in 4 years, a 120 percent increase from 2013 to 2017.

Before ObamaCare, 85 percent of the people in the country were covered by health insurance. At the peak, under the Affordable Care Act, 91 percent were covered. So we covered 6 percent more people, and that is a good thing. But what was the cost of that? To cover 6 percent more of our population, the other 85 percent, who were already covered, either by Medicare, Medicaid, or private insurance, had to pay another 120 percent on their premiums in South Carolina, 105 percent nationwide. And the premiums are going to go up double digits again this year.

We need lower cost, and we need choice. In South Carolina, all of the insurance companies have pulled out of the exchanges except for one. In fact, 40 percent of the counties in the country have only one choice for health insurance. That is no choice at all. It is either health insurance or nothing. You select from that one company, or you get nothing. We need lower cost, and we need choice.

These bills today, by allowing more liberal contributions to health savings accounts, by allowing easier access to health savings accounts, by allowing health savings accounts to be used for more purposes—like private family care or for nonprescription drugs, over-the-counter drugs—they are serving the exact causes, the exact purposes, that I hear the most complaints about back home.

My folks back home are saying: How can I afford these insurance policies? With the high deductibles that are being forced on us by these insurance companies, even if I have the insurance policy, I cannot afford to use it.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to stand before you today to recommend these bills.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. KIND), a senior member of the Committee on Ways and Means, author of several of these reform provisions, and a champion of value over volume in healthcare, as well as fiscal restraint.

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend and colleague from Oregon for yielding me this time. I agree with my colleague.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to this legislation, not because of the policy initiatives underlying these bills, but because of how fiscally irresponsible it is being done.

This week, out of the Ways and Means Committee, we have 10 bills to be debated and voted on on the House floor, at a total cost of roughly $90 billion. There was no effort made to try to find an offset or a pay-for in order to maintain some fiscal discipline in this place. That is problematic, because we keep digging the hole deeper.

But my name is on a few of these bills. Yesterday we had the repeal of the medical device tax, legislation that I had authored with my friend from Minnesota, ERIK PAULSEN. But that came at a cost of $20 billion. No offset. No pay-for. Just borrow more money from China and let future generations wrestle with it.

But it made sense policy-wise to try to repeal that in a fiscally responsible manner, because we were taxing these manufacturers whether they were making a profit or not. In fact, the pre-revenue companies were getting hit by the same tax. Policy-wise, it didn't make a lot of sense.

Today, I was happy to introduce legislation from our friend and colleague, Ms. JENKINS, on the Restoring Access to Medication Act. This will make it easier for patients to purchase over-the-counter medicine with their HSA and FSA account money without having to first run to their doctor to get a prescription. Just for the sake of efficiency and the cost savings, policy-wise, that makes sense; but the legislation comes with a cost, and there was no effort to pay for that.

Also part of this package is legislation I have introduced with our colleague, Mr. SMITH, called the Personal Health Investment Today Act, or the PHIT Act. This would allow HSA and FSA dollars to be used for physical exercise, for gym memberships, so that we are investing in the front end of wellness and keeping people healthy in their lives rather than the hundreds of billions of dollars we spend at the back end dealing with chronic disease management.

Policy-wise that makes sense, but the legislation, again, comes with a cost. No attempt to pay for it. I think that is fiscally irresponsible.

At the time when we worked on and passed the Affordable Care Act, President Obama had one major request, that all of it had to be paid for, all of it had to be offset. We worked hard to accomplish it, and, in fact, we did, and then some. We did not add one nickel to our budget deficit or to future budget debt forecasts because of how we dealt with that in a fiscally responsible manner.

All we are asking is that our colleagues on the other side who are in charge now and running this place try to practice some semblance of that fiscal discipline that we showed with the passage of the Affordable Care Act.

We ought to be working together, finding out what is working with the healthcare system and fixing what isn't.

What is not working is the elimination of cost-sharing reduction payments that help health insurance providers spread the risk in the health insurance exchanges. That is one of the reasons why premiums are being driven up right now.

What is not working is refusing to provide funding to the navigators, who help people make the choices with the health plans that they have available, or undercutting funding for any education outreach with patients, or the elimination of the individual responsibility component so that young and healthy people don't get to sit around and wait until they get sick or injured and then go out and acquire health insurance. That is not how insurance markets work.

What also doesn't work is an administration that is trying to undermine the protections that are in place under the Affordable Care Act for people with preexisting conditions. There is a lawsuit pending right now. This administration should be defending that preexisting condition exclusion, and they are refusing to do so. That will implicate millions of lives throughout our country.

There is a lot that we can and should be working on together to improve the healthcare system, to reduce healthcare costs for all Americans. This approach, this piecemeal approach, while policy-wise there is a lot of justification and explanation for what is happening, is being done in a very fiscally irresponsible manner, just piling on the debt.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BOST). The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentleman from Wisconsin 1 additional minute.

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, this comes, by the way, on the heels, in this session of Congress, of the passage of a major tax cut last year that will add over $2 trillion to our national debt over the next 10 years because, again, there was no attempt to pay for it. It comes on the heels of the passage of a 2-year budget that will increase spending by over half a trillion dollars, none of it paid for, none of it offset.

Just yesterday, President Trump just announced a $12 billion subsidy bailout program for our family farmers because of the adverse effects that they are feeling due to his tariffs. And that is going to be borrowed money from China, again, to pay our farmers because they can't now sell their product—guess where—into the Chinese market.

How crazy is this? I hope we are not in an era now where budget deficits and debt only matters when there is a Democrat in the White House. Over the last year and a half, that certainly seems to be the case in this Congress.

Ms. JENKINS of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my friend's point of view on the other side of the aisle. Mr. KIND and I have worked really hard on this legislation for many years. I want to, for the Record, just remind folks that this bill is simply allowing people to keep more of their hard-earned money.

Letting people keep their own money is not government spending that needs to be offset. Each of these bills contained in this package were authored with our Democratic colleagues without an offset. Each of these bills went through committee, with bipartisan support, without an offset. It is ironic that Democrats want to, all of a sudden, claim to be fiscally conservative.

This is the same Democratic Party that passed the stimulus in 2009. Remember, that bill added nearly $800 billion to the deficit.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. KELLY), a real leader on these issues on the House Committee on Ways and Means.

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for including my bill, H.R. 6305, the Bipartisan HSA Improvement Act of 2018, in H.R. 6199, the Restoring Access to Medication and Modernizing Health Savings Accounts Act.

□ 1615

This important legislation expands access to and enhances the utility of health savings accounts, also known as HSAs.

My legislation gives employers more flexibility to offer quality healthcare in the setting that is best for them, like onsite or retail clinics. Employers around the country are offering innovative ways to deliver healthcare to their associates, and this provision makes sure that individual health savings accounts can utilize these same services.

It also fixes the spouse penalty by allowing individuals to make health savings account contributions if a spouse has a flexible spending account, while preventing double-dipping in tax benefits.

Lastly, it makes it easier for people to save for their healthcare by streamlining the conversion of other tax-preferred accounts to health savings accounts.

Ultimately, this bill modernizes healthcare delivery and gives employers the freedom to innovate and improve their employees' health.

I am also very pleased to see that the PHIT Act was included in this package. I strongly support adding more of an emphasis on exercise and wellness to build a healthy American population.

We spend an incredible amount of money on healthcare but very little on maintenance, like exercise and wellness, before we get sick. The PHIT Act will better incentivize healthy lifestyles.

Mr. Speaker, we are trying to improve healthcare for all Americans.

This means giving consumers a choice in their healthcare by incentivizing wellness and exercise. This is a preemptive effort to build a healthier, stronger America and the freedom to design insurance products that work best for them.

If you want to keep healthcare costs down, let's just make sure people are healthier. That is the best way to do it.

And do you know what? I really like this debate because we talk about how the deficit has grown. And for my colleagues on the other side, I wasn't here at the time, but I watched the deficit grow in the beginning of the Obama administration from $9 trillion to $20 trillion, and I am glad that, finally, somebody has awakened to the fact that we are working with huge deficits.

Now, this bill was passed by the Ways and Means Committee in a bipartisan fashion, and I want to thank my friend EARL BLUMENAUER for working on this issue.

This issue is extremely important for the 175 million Americans who get their health insurance from their employer. I strongly urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to vote in favor of H.R. 6199.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1 minute just to respond briefly.

Mr. Speaker, I was here in 2009. The very month President Obama took office, there were 700,000 jobs lost. There was great fear that we were going to have a complete collapse of the auto industry. There was a whole range of things that we were in an emergency situation on, and the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression.

As it was, a major portion of that bill was tax cuts to try and stimulate the economy. I do point out that as we move forward, our healthcare bill was entirely paid for, and that is what we need to get back to.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS), a champion of healthcare, dealing with disparities in the healthcare system, a champion for balance and vision, and I appreciate him being here.

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague who demonstrates with regularity the intensification of real care for the people.

Today, we take up another bill that does nothing to make up for the long-term Republican sabotage of the Affordable Care Act. Tens of millions of working families also see their healthcare costs skyrocket due to the repeated Republican efforts to undermine the healthcare system.

Tens of millions of Americans with preexisting conditions will still fear the loss of guaranteed health protections with the horrible choice of loss of health insurance or untenable premiums.

The Republicans' sabotage will cost a typical family of four in my congressional district $2,250 more in insurance premiums in 2019. The Republicans' sabotage will cost a typical 55-year-old couple in my congressional district $3,570 more in 2019.

The 2019 premium hikes follow an average 37 percent increase in 2018. These premium hikes are especially disturbing when contrasted with the billions in tax cuts the Republicans gave to insurance companies in their tax law.

H.R. 6199 makes a small change to health savings accounts used exclusively by the wealthy. Many of my constituents have trouble paying for basic living costs like heat, food, and housing. They ask me regularly for a few hundred dollars to help their kids stay in college.

The vast majority of my constituents can't set aside tens of thousands of dollars to pay for their medical care out of pocket in a health savings account. This legislation does nothing to increase coverage, improve affordability, or change the skyrocketing costs of healthcare.

I urge my colleagues to reject this bill, and I urge my Republican colleagues to bring up meaningful legislation to improve coverage and lower costs to help the tens of millions of Americans in need.

Ms. JENKINS of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. ESTES), my friend and colleague.

Mr. ESTES of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak in support of two bills being considered today as part of our overall goal to improve healthcare for families across the country.

Currently, ObamaCare is broken. As I mentioned in an opinion piece, from 2010 to 2016, health insurance premiums increased by nearly $4,400 per family.

This year, health insurance costs rose about 30 percent and are expected to go up an additional 10 to 20 percent in 2019.

These skyrocketing costs are not due to some sabotage, as some folks have suggested. Instead, they are a product of a system that was designed and destined to fail.

Today, we all recognize that ObamaCare has failed to provide insurance for all Americans. Rather than create more government-run healthcare, we need competition and free market solutions like health savings accounts to put patients in control of their own healthcare. That is why I am proud to support H.R. 6199, the Restoring Access to Medication Act of 2018, sponsored by Representative LYNN JENKINS and Representative GRACE MENG.

H.R. 6199 repeals provisions of the Affordable Care Act that restrict health savings accounts, medical savings accounts, health flexible spending arrangements, and health reimbursement arrangements to only be used for prescription drugs or insulin. Removing these restrictions will allow people to use such accounts for over-the-counter drugs.

I am also proud to support H.R. 6311, the Increasing Access to Lower Premium Plans and Expanding Health Savings Accounts Act of 2018, sponsored by Representatives PETER ROSKAM and MICHAEL BURGESS.

H.R. 6311 provides relief from ObamaCare's rising premiums and limited choices by allowing the premium tax credit to be used for plans offered outside of ObamaCare exchanges. The bill also expands access to the lowest premium plans for people purchasing coverage in the individual market and allows the premium tax credit to be used to offset the cost of such plans. These measures increase competition for consumers and seek to drive down the cost of health insurance.

I want to thank the Ways and Means Committee for bringing forward thoughtful healthcare solutions that will help American families. I urge my colleagues to support both bills.

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

Mr. Speaker, I take modest exception to the notion that somehow the Affordable Care Act failed. It represents the largest expansion of healthcare that we have seen in decades. It is so popular and important that, when my Republican friends attempted to repeal it, something they have been working on for 7 years, it blew up in their face. Even President Trump said their bill was mean. And it continues, even though they are working to dismantle it bolt by bolt.

I would hope that we will return to sanity to be able to work to be able to move forward on things like some of the elements in this bill here today that we agree upon that could move us forward rather than the continued battle over the notion that the Affordable Care Act is something that needs to be destroyed. The American people deserve better.

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

Ms. JENKINS of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. ROSKAM), who has provided great leadership in this area.

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to see the inclusion of the Promoting High-Value Health Care Through Flexibility for Deductible Health Plans in this bill today. This is legislation that is bipartisan that I introduced, along with the Congressman from California (Mr. THOMPSON), that gives consumers the choice and flexibility that they need to be engaged in their healthcare.

In a nutshell, the bill allows plans to offer coverage for high-value, low-cost services like telehealth, chronic disease management such as diabetic testing strips, or primary care visits below the deductible. In a nutshell, what we are trying to do is give patients more choices, more capacity to be more demonstrative about navigating through their own healthcare needs.

This is a good bipartisan approach. I thank the gentlewoman for including it, and I thank her for the time. I urge its passage.

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

Ms. JENKINS of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. PAULSEN), who has worked tirelessly in this area.

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairwoman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, as an advocate for giving consumers more choice in healthcare and lowering costs, I support this bill, which also gives more flexibility for those who have healthcare savings accounts, as well as some of the other provisions that were already just previously mentioned.

I want to highlight my support for one of the provisions in this bill that will allow people to use their healthcare savings account to pay for direct primary care and those arrangements.

The concept of direct primary care is simple, and it is supported by a lot of family doctors, a lot of primary care doctors. People pay a monthly fee to see their physician in this area anytime they choose, over the phone, through telemedicine, or in person, and then they get a whole host of services. It is really important for strengthening the doctor-patient relationship, and it means that more people will have access to primary care services instead of just going to the emergency room in order to get care.

But, unfortunately, the IRS has stated that direct primary care arrangements are essentially health insurance, and they categorize them in this way so you cannot use your HSAs and those funds to pay for direct primary care. That is why Congressman BLUMENAUER and I authored legislation to fix this and to allow HSAs, health savings accounts, to be used for direct primary care, and I am pleased that it is included in this bill.

Another important reform will allow employers to offer direct primary care arrangements to employees that have an HSA, also. This will let more people have access to direct primary care through their healthcare savings accounts, allowing family practice doctors like Dr. Julie Anderson in Minnesota to expand their practice without having to worry about the headache of filling out mountains of paperwork and excessive insurance forms, because direct primary care let's the doctor work directly with the patient and you don't have to go through extensive billing services and insurance.

Healthcare savings accounts, Mr. Speaker, have already been proven to help lower healthcare costs; and expanding them, giving consumers more flexibility and more choices, will mean families are also going to be better off.

So let's allow healthcare savings accounts to be used for direct primary care and support the underlying bill.

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

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity for us to have this discussion. It has been fun working with the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. PAULSEN) on this notion of direct primary care. It is a simple notion that runs athwart IRS regulations. I still don't fully understand why these should be classified as ''health plan'' rather than ''payment for service.''

But, nonetheless, we were able to work together on a bipartisan basis to move this forward. It is not expensive. The score is less than $2 billion out of $90 billion that we are tossing around here, and I personally believe that it will result in substantial savings in order to provide more efficient coverage.

But I must say that I am a little troubled by the continuing assault on what we are doing with the fiscal future of this country.

□ 1630

We just saw the latest reports that because of what my Republican friends have done with the budget and with the tax bill, we have doubled the deficit this year. It is doubled.

Now, there were complaints from my friend from Kansas about deficit spending when President Obama took office. Remember, he was only President for one-third of that month and lost 700,000 jobs. The economy was in free fall. Absolutely we took steps: cutting taxes and moving in areas to try and strengthen parts of the economy that was posing huge problems for people across the board. And this was broadly supported by people in business. Economic experts actually agree that probably we didn't do enough, and that slowed the economic recovery. But the economy has recovered.

We have seen 9 consecutive years of private sector job growth. That is what Trump inherited: over 7 years of job growth. The economy was strong. It wasn't in free fall. Yet, in that strong position, we are doubling the deficit this year. We are looking at trillion dollar deficits as far as the eye can see.

And we just had the President announce that he wants to spend $12 billion more, not because we are in economic free fall, but because his ruinous trade policies have resulted in losses to the farming sector. They are going to provide extra government bailout, not because farmers want it, but because they are being injured by these ruinous trade policies.

There was a time when most of my Republican friends would rise up in opposition. It is certain that if these were offered by Bill Clinton or Barack Obama, they would be screaming at the top of their lungs. Most of them are strangely silent now, but it is another $12 billion to try to fix a problem that Trump has created by starting trade wars with our friends, trying to punish China, and, in fact, we are punishing our allies. And somehow auto imports are national security.

This is embarrassing that we are in this situation. But it is not just embarrassing, it is dangerous. We are weakening ourselves economically, while we pick fights with our allies, like Canada and the European Union.

Mr. Speaker, on top of all of this, we are going to advance legislation today that have some nuggets of positive things. I have worked with my colleagues on some of them. There are important advances, but they are coming at a price of $90 billion added to the deficit, without even an attempt to work with us to offset. I think we could have offset the direct primary care piece that we are talking about here. It is relatively small potatoes compared to $90 billion, and compared to $12 billion for tariff relief for a trade war we didn't need.

Mr. Speaker, I enjoy the conversation about some of these items. I think it is important to spotlight them. But I am hopeful that we are able to return to fiscal stability, not having bailouts for farmers that they don't want and wouldn't need if we had a rational tariff policy. I am hopeful that we are not going to have a parade of other things that undermine the Affordable Care Act and add unnecessary costs to the deficit.

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

Ms. JENKINS of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the remainder of my time.

Mr. Speaker, we have heard my friends on the other side of the aisle suggest here, this afternoon, this bill might, in some way, hurt people with preexisting conditions. However, we know that is simply not true. This bill doesn't touch preexisting conditions. It doesn't raise costs or premiums on families. And it doesn't take away anyone's choice of a healthcare plan.

Millions of Americans use tax-advantage healthcare accounts to save and pay for healthcare expenses. In fact, there are twice as many Americans with an HSA than those who get coverage on the Affordable Care Act's exchanges. Almost 22 million people had an HSA in 2017, and there is only about 10 million people enrolled on the exchanges in 2018. Forty-four percent of all civilian workers had access to a health flexible spending arrangement in 2017.

The provisions in this bill allow more things to be paid for out of these accounts, like over-the-counter drugs, feminine products, and fitness activities. This means people are paying less because they are able to use pre-tax dollars or take a deduction for their contribution.

As a reminder, the policies in the bill are all bipartisan. We have worked together to write and advance them.

This bill helps middle class families afford their healthcare expenses, and I hope my colleagues will continue to support this legislation.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

Pursuant to House Resolution 1012, the previous question is ordered on the bill, as amended.

The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 5515, NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2019

Mr. BYRNE, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 115–875) on the resolution (H. Res. 1027) providing for consideration of the conference report to accompany the bill (H.R. 5515) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2019 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

INCREASING ACCESS TO LOWER PREMIUM PLANS AND EXPANDING HEALTH SAVINGS ACCOUNTS ACT OF 2018

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 1011, I call up the bill (H.R. 6311) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act to modify the definition of qualified health plan for purposes of the health insurance premium tax credit and to allow individuals purchasing health insurance in the individual market to purchase a lower premium copper plan, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 1011, in lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Ways and Means, an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 115–83 is adopted, and the bill, as amended, is considered read.

The text of the bill, as amended, is as follows:

H.R. 6311

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the ''Increasing Access to Lower Premium Plans and Expanding Health Savings Accounts Act of 2018''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
Sec. 2. Carryforward of health flexible spending arrangement account balances.
Sec. 3. Individuals entitled to part A of Medicare by reason of age allowed to contribute to health savings accounts.
Sec. 4. Maximum contribution limit to health savings account increased to amount of deductible and out-of-pocket limitation.
Sec. 5. Allow both spouses to make catch-up contributions to the same health savings account.
Sec. 6. Special rule for certain medical expenses incurred before establishment of health savings account.
Sec. 7. Allowance of bronze and catastrophic plans in connection with health savings accounts.
Sec. 8. Allowing all individuals purchasing health insurance in the individual market the option to purchase a lower premium copper plan.
Sec. 9. Delay of reimposition of annual fee on health insurance providers.

SEC. 2. CARRYFORWARD OF HEALTH FLEXIBLE SPENDING ARRANGEMENT ACCOUNT BALANCES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 106 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(h) CARRYFORWARD OF HEALTH FLEXIBLE SPENDING ARRANGEMENT ACCOUNT BALANCES.—A plan shall not fail to be treated as a health flexible spending arrangement under this section or section 105 merely because the lesser of—

''(1) such arrangement's account balance (or any portion thereof) determined as of the end of any plan year, or

''(2) the product of the dollar limitation in effect under section 125(i) for such plan year (determined without regard to paragraph (2) thereof) multiplied by 3,

may be carried forward to the succeeding plan year.''.

(b) COORDINATION WITH LIMITATION ON SALARY REDUCTION CONTRIBUTIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 125(i) of such Code is amended by redesignating paragraph (2) as paragraph (3) and by inserting after paragraph (1) the following new paragraph:

''(2) COORDINATION WITH CARRYFORWARD OF ACCOUNT BALANCES.—The dollar amount otherwise in effect under paragraph (1) for any plan year shall be reduced (but not below zero) by the excess (if any) of—

''(A) the amount of any account balance which is carried forward to such plan year from the preceding plan year, over

''(B) twice the dollar limitation in effect under paragraph (1) (determined without regard to this paragraph).''.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 125(i) of such Code is amended by striking ''taxable year'' each place it appears in paragraphs (1) and (3) (as redesignated by paragraph (1) of this subsection) and inserting ''plan year''.

(c) COORDINATION WITH CAFETERIA PLAN LIMITATION ON DEFERRED COMPENSATION.—Section 125(d)(2) of such Code is amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

''(E) EXCEPTION FOR HEALTH FLEXIBLE SPENDING ARRANGEMENTS.—Subparagraph (A) shall not apply to a plan to the extent of amounts in a health flexible spending arrangement which may be carried forward as described in section 106(h).''.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to plan years beginning after December 31, 2018.

SEC. 3. INDIVIDUALS ENTITLED TO PART A OF MEDICARE BY REASON OF AGE ALLOWED TO CONTRIBUTE TO HEALTH SAVINGS ACCOUNTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 223(c)(1)(B) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking ''and'' at the end of clause (ii), by striking the period at the end of clause (iii) and inserting '', and'', and by adding at the end the following new clause:

''(iv) entitlement to hospital insurance benefits under part A of title XVIII of the Social Security Act by reason of section 226(a) of such Act.''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 223(b)(7) of such Code is amended by inserting ''(other than an entitlement to benefits described in subsection (c)(1)(B)(v))'' after ''Social Security Act''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to months beginning after December 31, 2018, in taxable years ending after such date.

SEC. 4. MAXIMUM CONTRIBUTION LIMIT TO HEALTH SAVINGS ACCOUNT INCREASED TO AMOUNT OF DEDUCTIBLE AND OUT-OF-POCKET LIMITATION.

(a) SELF-ONLY COVERAGE.—Section 223(b)(2)(A) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking ''$2,250'' and inserting ''the amount in effect under subsection (c)(2)(A)(ii)(I)''.

(b) FAMILY COVERAGE.—Section 223(b)(2)(B) of such Code is amended by striking ''$4,500'' and inserting ''the amount in effect under subsection (c)(2)(A)(ii)(II)''.

(c) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 223(g)(1) of such Code is amended—

(1) by striking ''subsections (b)(2) and'' both places it appears and inserting ''subsection'', and

(2) in subparagraph (B), by striking ''determined by'' and all that follows through ''calendar year 2003'.'' and inserting ''determined by substituting 'calendar year 2003' for 'calendar year 2016' in subparagraph (A)(ii) thereof.''.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to taxable years beginning after December 31, 2018.

SEC. 5. ALLOW BOTH SPOUSES TO MAKE CATCH-UP CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE SAME HEALTH SAVINGS ACCOUNT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 223(b)(5) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended to read as follows:

''(5) SPECIAL RULE FOR MARRIED INDIVIDUALS WITH FAMILY COVERAGE.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—In the case of individuals who are married to each other, if both spouses are eligible individuals and either spouse has family coverage under a high deductible health plan as of the first day of any month—

''(i) the limitation under paragraph (1) shall be applied by not taking into account any other high deductible health plan coverage of either spouse (and if such spouses both have family coverage under separate high deductible health plans, only one such coverage shall be taken into account),

''(ii) such limitation (after application of clause (i)) shall be reduced by the aggregate amount paid to Archer MSAs of such spouses for the taxable year, and

''(iii) such limitation (after application of clauses (i) and (ii)) shall be divided equally between such spouses unless they agree on a different division.

''(B) TREATMENT OF ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTION AMOUNTS.—If both spouses referred to in subparagraph (A) have attained age 55 before the close of the taxable year, the limitation referred to in subparagraph (A)(iii) which is subject to division between the spouses shall include the additional contribution amounts determined under paragraph (3) for both spouses. In any other case, any additional contribution amount determined under paragraph (3) shall

not be taken into account under subparagraph (A)(iii) and shall not be subject to division between the spouses.''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to taxable years beginning after December 31, 2018.

SEC. 6. SPECIAL RULE FOR CERTAIN MEDICAL EXPENSES INCURRED BEFORE ESTABLISHMENT OF HEALTH SAVINGS ACCOUNT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 223(d)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

''(D) TREATMENT OF CERTAIN MEDICAL EXPENSES INCURRED BEFORE ESTABLISHMENT OF ACCOUNT.—If a health savings account is established during the 60-day period beginning on the date that coverage of the account beneficiary under a high deductible health plan begins, then, solely for purposes of determining whether an amount paid is used for a qualified medical expense, such account shall be treated as having been established on the date that such coverage begins.''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by this section shall apply with respect to coverage beginning after December 31, 2018.

SEC. 7. ALLOWANCE OF BRONZE AND CATASTROPHIC PLANS IN CONNECTION WITH HEALTH SAVINGS ACCOUNTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 223(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

''(E) BRONZE AND CATASTROPHIC PLANS TREATED AS HIGH DEDUCTIBLE HEALTH PLANS.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—The term 'high deductible health plan' shall include any plan described in subsection (d)(1)(A) or (e) of section 1302 of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

''(ii) CERTAIN RULES NOT APPLICABLE.—Subparagraphs (C) and (D) shall not apply with respect to any plan described in clause (i).''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by this section shall apply to months beginning after December 31, 2018, in taxable years ending after such date.

SEC. 8. ALLOWING ALL INDIVIDUALS PURCHASING HEALTH INSURANCE IN THE INDIVIDUAL MARKET THE OPTION TO PURCHASE A LOWER PREMIUM COPPER PLAN.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1302(e) of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (42 U.S.C. 18022(e)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)—

(A) by redesignating clauses (i) and (ii) of subparagraph (B) as subparagraphs (A) and (B), respectively, and adjusting the margins accordingly;

(B) by striking ''plan year if—'' and all that follows through ''the plan provides—'' and inserting ''plan year if the plan provides—''; and

(C) in subparagraph (A), as redesignated by paragraph (1), by striking ''clause (ii)'' and inserting ''subparagraph (B)'';

(2) by striking paragraph (2); and

(3) by redesignating paragraph (3) as paragraph (2).

(b) RISK POOLS.—Section 1312(c)(1) of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (42 U.S.C. 18032(c)(1)) is amended by inserting ''and enrollees in catastrophic plans described in section 1302(e)'' after ''Exchange''.

(c) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 1312(d)(3)(C) of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (42 U.S.C. 18032(d)(3)(C)) is amended by striking '', except that in the case of a catastrophic plan described in section 1302(e), a qualified individual may enroll in the plan only if the individual is eligible to enroll in the plan under section 1302(e)(2)''.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to plan years beginning after December 31, 2018.

SEC. 9. DELAY OF REIMPOSITION OF ANNUAL FEE ON HEALTH INSURANCE PROVIDERS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 9010(j)(3) of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act is amended by striking ''December 31, 2019'' and inserting ''December 31, 2021''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by this section shall apply to calendar years beginning after December 31, 2019.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The bill shall be debatable for 1 hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Ways and Means.

The gentleman from Illinois (Mr. ROSKAM) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill currently under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I chair the Health Subcommittee at the Ways and Means Committee, and I have had the opportunity, like many of my colleagues, to hear from physicians, hospitals, and patient advocates. I have heard a lot of stories about increased costs, which are exacerbating the coverage and access challenges that we currently face.

There is a broad consensus that healthcare in the United States needs to move towards a system that provides greater access to affordable care. The question is: How do we get that done?

The ACA government-approved, government-mandated one-size-fits-all insurance has dramatically decreased choice and increased premiums in the individual market. We will hear a lot of debate about this today.

But here is what is happening close to home. Mr. Speaker, in my home State, the Department of Health and Human Services released a report that shows, between 2013 and 2017, the average monthly premium for coverage in the individual market, in Illinois, increased 108 percent, or by $3,228 a year.

I have five counties in my constituency. In two of those five counties, there is only one insurer offering plans on the individual exchange. That is not a choice. That is a government mandate. That is a government monopoly.

It is time to drive a discussion around empowering individuals and their families to make healthcare decisions for themselves based on their needs and based on their budgets.

The policies that are included in H.R. 6311 expand access to consumer-directed health plans with tax favored accounts, like health savings accounts, HSAs. This bill increases choice, lowers premiums, and let's more families save more money to pay for their healthcare costs.

Now, my friends across the aisle will, without question, get up this afternoon and say that this bill doesn't do anything to help people. That instead of these policies, we should drop everything and work to fix the very broken, flawed plan that is the ACA. Well, here is the thing.

There are twice as many people who have an HSA than those who are covered under the exchanges. Let me say that again. Twice as many Americans are covered under HSAs than under the Affordable Care Act: 21.8 million people, Mr. Speaker, had a health savings account in 2017, and there is only 10.6 million who are enrolled in the exchanges in 2018—2 to 1.

The bill makes smart changes to help families save more money pre-tax for their healthcare. It changes the so-called use-it-or-lose-it nature of flexible spending arrangements, FSAs, by allowing balances to roll over to the next year. It doubles the amount of money people can put into a health savings account so that they can save enough to cover their exposure to out-of-pocket costs, and they are increasingly vulnerable to these out-of-pocket costs.

Now, my friends on the other side may say they want to talk about and distract from some of these commonsense solutions and say that somehow some subpar insurance is being promoted. Well, even after canceling millions of healthcare plans that people had and that people liked, notwithstanding the President's promise that if you like your coverage, you get to keep your coverage—you remember that, Mr. Speaker—notwithstanding that, Democrats, God bless them, they still think they know what type of healthcare is best for everyone. They haven't learned yet that individuals and families are the best ones to make these decisions, not politicians and not bureaucrats in Washington.

We think people should be able to purchase the type of coverage they want and the type of coverage they can afford. One of the provisions in this bill allows everyone to purchase a catastrophic plan, a plan that was designed by ObamaCare. These plans offer the lowest premiums, and we think everyone should have access to them.

Even better, because these plans have average deductibles of $6,000, we think we should allow catastrophic and bronze plans to qualify for an HSA as well. This means people can get a break in taxes for the money that they save for their huge ObamaCare deductibles. This is real savings to real people who are struggling under the current healthcare law.

□ 1645

It allows working seniors with HSA-eligible coverage who are enrolled in Medicare part A to contribute to an HSA, which can provide an added benefit for seniors and an incentive for them to stay on their employer-sponsored plan over Medicare, if they choose. It makes perfect sense.

It increases utility and flexibility through allowing both spouses to make

catch-up contributions into the same HSA if they are over age 55.

Finally, it delays ObamaCare's health insurance tax for an additional 2 years, which would otherwise increase the cost of insurance premiums through a nearly $27 billion excise tax. This is a flawed tax that gets passed on to American families who are purchasing in the individual market; it gets passed on to seniors in Medicare Advantage; it gets passed on to small businesses; and it gets passed on in Medicaid programs.

So I want to thank the Ways and Means Committee members who took that effort seriously. I look forward to this afternoon's debate.

I want to thank Chairman BRADY for his leadership in driving this discussion, and I reserve the balance of my time.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS,
Washington, DC, July 13, 2018.

Hon. GREG WALDEN,
Chairman, Committee on Energy and Commerce, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN WALDEN: I write to you regarding H.R. 6311, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act to modify the definition of the qualified health plan for purposes of the health insurance premium tax credit and to allow individuals purchasing health insurance in the individual market to purchase a lower premium copper plan.

The Committee on Ways and Means ordered favorably reported this bill which was also referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce. I ask that the Committee on Energy and Commerce waive formal consideration of the bill so that it may proceed expeditiously to the House Floor.

I acknowledge that by waiving formal consideration of the bill, the Committee on Energy and Commerce is in no way waiving its jurisdiction over the subject matter contained in those provisions of the bills that fall within your Rule X jurisdiction. I would support your effort to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees on any House-Senate conference involving this legislation.

I will include a copy of our letters in the Congressional Record during consideration of this legislation on the House floor.

Sincerely,

KEVIN BRADY,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE,
Washington, DC, July 16, 2018.

Hon. KEVIN BRADY,
Chairman, Committee on Ways and Means, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN BRADY: Thank you for your letters regarding H.R. 4952, the ''Improving Seniors Access to Quality Benefits Act,'' H.R. 6138, the ''Ambulatory Surgical Center (ACS) Payment Transparency Act of 2018,'' and H.R. 6311, the ''To amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act to modify the definition of qualified health plan for purposes of the health insurance premium tax credit and to allow individuals purchasing health insurance in the individual market to purchase a lower premium copper plan.''

The Committee on Energy and Commerce will forgo consideration of both bills so that they may proceed expeditiously to the House Floor.

I appreciate your assurance that by forgoing action on these bills, the Committee is in no way waiving its jurisdiction over the subject matter contained in the bills. I also appreciate your offer of support for the appointment of conferees from the Committee to any House-Senate conference involving this legislation.

Sincerely,

GREG WALDEN,
Chairman.

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

Mr. Speaker, I think we need to ask ourselves: What is this bill all about? Why are we here today?

H.R. 6311 is the final of three bills regarding health savings accounts and health taxes that we will be considering this week. I find it sad we are not spending our time today addressing the most pressing concerns of Americans struggling to make ends meet because of the Republican sabotage of healthcare coverage.

Nothing in H.R. 6311, or any other bill we have considered this week, undoes the ongoing harm caused by the actions of the Trump administration or this Republican Congress.

For example, earlier this month, the administration created needless confusion by refusing to make legally required risk adjustment payments until, when there was major protest, it reversed course last night under public pressure. But in June, the Justice Department refused to defend protection for the 130 million Americans living with preexisting health conditions.

Last fall, the President terminated cost-sharing reduction payments for Americans earning 100 to 250 percent of the Federal poverty level. The GOP tax bill gutted the individual responsibility requirement, causing a 15 percent spike in premiums, according to CBO.

Recently, the administration again cut funding for navigator organizations to just $10 million for the upcoming open enrollment period. I saw at home what these navigator provisions meant to nonprofit organizations that were reaching out to people who wanted information and healthcare.

Cut, cut, cut is the administration's answer. And this Congress' response to that administration action is zero, silence, silence, silence.

These and so many other actions by Republicans have led to direct increases in premiums and out-of-pocket costs for middle class families.

Expanding HSAs and shifting more Americans into catastrophic coverage, as H.R. 6311 does, will not meaningfully help middle class families harmed by Republican sabotage of ACA. Instead, it will primarily benefit wealthy Americans and large insurance companies.

According to data from the Joint Committee on Taxation, more than 80 percent of the tax benefit for health savings accounts goes to individuals earning more than $100,000 annually. We pointed that out in committee.

What was the response? Obfuscation, obfuscation. That is a fact and analysis given to us by the Joint Committee on Taxation. So all these crocodile tears for mainly middle class families, I think, are shown for what they are.

Very few families with modest incomes can afford the high, out-of-pocket expenses required in order to participate in a HSA. Doubling the amount that individuals can contribute tax-free—tax-free—as this bill does, will make no difference to the millions of working families who don't have thousands of dollars available to contribute to an HSA in the first place.

I suggest that everybody go home and talk to the general public.

In addition, a 2-year delay of the health insurance provider fee will have only a minimal impact on premiums. Indeed, this provision will mainly benefit insurance companies, while adding more than $25 billion to the deficit.

Not only do the bills we have considered this week not address these pressing issues, they also recklessly add to the deficit. Republicans have failed to produce even $1 for the enormous cost of these bills. So I said to the chairman of the committee that I once chaired, I was sometimes asked that question: Will you pay for it? And I said yes.

I asked the chairman: Will you pay for this? At first, it was said: Well, we don't have to do that in committee. So I said: Will you do it on the floor, yes or no? He said no.

So here we are. Although we do not yet have a final analysis from the Congressional Budget Office or the Joint Committee on Taxation, past estimates of similar provisions have shown us this:

H.R. 184, which would repeal the medical device tax, will cost about $20 billion over 10 years.

H.R. 6199, which would expand HSAs to include over-the-counter medications and gym memberships, will cost roughly $20 billion.

And this bill, which expands HSAs and delays a tax on the health insurance industry, would increase the deficit the most. This is, in a few words, a Risky Roskam bill that would cost up to $50 billion, $50 billion.

When all is said and done, our actions this week could add up to $90 billion to our Nation's debt, increasing pressure to cut vital programs like Medicare. This comes just months after a tax cut bill that would add an additional $2 billion to the debt.

So, look, we need to come and ask ourselves: Why are we here?

These bills will not likely pass the Senate or become law, so here we are. We are going to recess, adjourn tomorrow for 5 weeks or so. I think the reality is that these bills, which will not likely pass the Senate, will not ever become law.

I think it is likely that they have a different purpose, and I think that was described in a recent article in The Hill. I read it because I want the public to question what we do, and I quote:

''The bills on the House floor next week could give victories to the bill

sponsors who are also vulnerable in November.'' The chairman of the subcommittee, where I am ranking member, is facing, this article says, ''a tough reelection race in his suburban . . . district.''

''But overall, the measures slated for consideration are minor and won't make a major dent in premiums, according to Joe Antos, a healthcare expert at the right-leaning American Enterprise Institute.''

I want to quote that again: ''These measures slated for consideration are minor and won't make a major dent in premiums, according to Joe Antos, a healthcare expert at the right-leaning American Enterprise Institute.''

So I think that is really what this is all about. It is a political exercise. It is aimed to help people who are in a vulnerable political position. But that is not a reason to bring up these bills today, when, as I described earlier, there are so many issues relating to healthcare coverage.

The Republicans have undertaken these last months under this administration to do everything they can to sabotage healthcare for Americans. As a result, 3 million people less have healthcare insurance. But ACA works so well that 20 million people received healthcare coverage they did not have.

So, this is kind of a sad moment. We are turning this place into a campaign entity. We should not be doing that when it comes to healthcare coverage. We tried, in recent times, to say to the Republicans, if you want to improve ACA, we are ready. Never has there been any offer to do that. Instead, it was repeal, repeal, repeal. I won't say that 55 times, but that is how often it happened. More recently, it was sabotage, sabotage, sabotage. That isn't what we should be doing for what is so dear to Americans, healthcare coverage.

It is a sad day, as I said earlier, that, here we are, when so much needs to be done, and this, essentially, is a political exercise.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

The gentleman from Michigan asked the rhetorical question: Why are we here?

I will tell you one reason why we are here. One reason why we are here is I have an independent recollection of being in my car on Michigan Avenue in Chicago, listening then to President Obama give a speech to, I think it was the American Medical Association. I was listening on the radio and he said, I think—I may be conflating here. But he said: If you like your coverage, you can keep your coverage. If you like your doctor, you get to keep your doctor.

I think, during the course of the healthcare discussion, the Obama administration made this explicit promise to the American people: You are going to save $2,500 per family. And it was going to be great. It was going to solve all the problems. Yet, that didn't happen. That is why we are here.

I have a constituency where two counties have one insurer. That is why we are here.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. PAULSEN) to tell us why we are here.

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, just to follow up, there are too many families that continue to suffocate under the high premiums and high deductibles that we have from the Affordable Care Act.

In contrast to the top-down, one-size-fits-all approach of ObamaCare, healthcare savings accounts put consumers in charge of their own healthcare. It is no wonder they are gaining in popularity.

Today, nearly 22 million Americans have health savings accounts. That is twice as many as was mentioned earlier, twice as many as the number of people who are getting plans through the ObamaCare exchanges. That is not even close. In Minnesota alone, more than a million, 1.2 million, people and families are eligible for HSA plans.

Now, the bill before us today supports the continued growth of healthcare savings accounts and includes a couple of provisions that I helped author, including allowing working seniors to contribute to an HSA, increasing the limits that individuals and families can contribute to their HSAs, and allowing married couples the opportunity to make larger catch-up contributions to their own healthcare savings accounts. Then it also creates a grace period to help pay for medical expenses that someone may have incurred before they actually set up their healthcare savings accounts.

These are all important improvements that will help provide value in healthcare and help lower prices.

So let's let people purchase the type of coverage that they want and that they can afford. I am really pleased that the bill before us makes these very smart, strategic, calculated reforms, and I ask my colleagues for their support.

□ 1700

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

Mr. Speaker, I have heard the so-called fact that more people have HSAs than those who are covered by ObamaCare. That simply is not true.

ObamaCare includes expanded Medicaid. So if you want to talk about more than in the exchanges, we can discuss that and argue it, but don't come here and minimize the impact of ACA.

We worked hard on it. We meet so many people who have benefited from what we Democrats did, and the public, more and more, is expressing that. You were on the wrong side of history, and you are now on the wrong side of public opinion.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes, or more if he would like, to the gentleman from New York (Mr. HIGGINS), an active member of our committee.

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, health savings accounts, while they may help people manage their healthcare costs marginally, the sad truth is this legislation will do nothing—nothing—to lower healthcare costs and to improve healthcare quality.

The legislation also does nothing—nothing—to protect people with preexisting conditions, and 40 percent of Americans between the ages of 50 and 64½ have preexisting conditions.

The legislation before us will increase the deficit by tens of billions of dollars and will threaten the long-term viability of Medicare and Social Security.

Mr. Speaker, because of recent actions by the Trump Justice Department and House Republicans, millions of Americans between the ages of 50 and 64½ who buy their health insurance on the individual market are about to get clobbered with double-digit multiyear health insurance premium increases, and this Congress is doing nothing—nothing—to help. This population needs the protection of Medicare now.

Medicare at 50 would allow people to buy Medicare as their health insurance. Medicare is Affordable Care Act compliant, with essential benefits, has high patient satisfaction ratings, has full access to primary care and physician specialists, and always, always covers preexisting conditions. Medicare at 50 also is thousands of dollars cheaper when compared with the gold plan on the individual market.

Mr. Speaker, Medicare is the best public option that already exists, and the best public option that already exists should be available to millions of Americans ages 50 to 64½.

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Indiana (Mrs. WALORSKI).

Mrs. WALORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 6311, the Increasing Access to Lower Premium Plans and Expanding Health Savings Accounts Act.

This important bill contains a 2-year delay of the health insurance tax, or HIT. Like the medical device tax, which the House voted yesterday to repeal, the HIT is yet another damaging tax from ObamaCare. It raises premiums for families, for small businesses, for seniors, and for the disabled enrolled in Medicare Advantage. In fact, the HIT could raise annual premiums for the typical Medicare Advantage couple by $500 if it returns in 2020.

I am a proud original cosponsor, with Representatives NOEM, SINEMA, and BERA, of H.R. 5963, which delays the HIT for 2 years, and I am thrilled this bill we are voting for today includes it.

I look forward to the day when we can finally repeal this tax that falls on the backs of seniors, the disabled, small businesses, and hardworking families, but until then, I urge my colleagues to support delaying it.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. JUDY CHU), who is so active and there all the time.

Ms. JUDY CHU of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to H.R. 6311, which, contrary to its name, would do very little to help Americans access quality healthcare coverage. Instead, it would force families to accept low-quality, catastrophic health plans, or junk coverage, that does not meet healthcare needs and leaves ordinary Americans to foot the bill when something goes wrong.

What does a catastrophic and high-deductible plan mean? Well, it is a disaster for many.

Recent studies have shown that 40 percent of Americans cannot afford even a $400 emergency expense, let alone the thousands of dollars necessary for a medical emergency, which could happen to any of us, but that is the plan Republicans are offering. Americans would get a plan that is substandard. No one wants to have health coverage that doesn't actually cover much at all.

What is more, these catastrophic and high-deductible health plans are especially harmful to women. Since 50 percent of the pregnancies in the United States are unplanned, many parents in these plans will not have saved enough to cover these high deductibles or unexpected costs. Furthermore, most pregnancies last 9 months and, thus, span more than one plan year. That means during the course of a single pregnancy, a mother in one of these plans would have to hit her deductible twice.

Maternity care services without complications can average around $10,000 per pregnancy. What would happen in a pregnancy with complications?

The Affordable Care Act was passed so that we could move away from junk plans that offered nothing in terms of coverage and left people with thousands of dollars in medical debt. This bill is just another attempt to undermine the ACA, and we cannot go back.

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

Mr. Speaker, every time today we hear the phrase ''junk coverage,'' think ObamaCare. And I am not trying to be facetious, because there is nothing in this bill that makes any change to any coverage. I could only assume that the gentlewoman from California (Ms. JUDY CHU) is referring to the catastrophic coverage that was part of the ACA.

All we are doing today is saying, with that coverage, they ought not be alone. They ought not just be out on an ice floe all by themselves. People who have that type of catastrophic coverage that our friends, when they were in the majority, created, those people should simply have access to a health savings account.

What is not to love about that?

So when you hear ''junk coverage,'' just be dismissive of that. It is a talking point, and it is not particularly persuasive. Who is persuasive is the gentleman from Nebraska.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. SMITH).

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 6311, the Increasing Access to Lower Premium Plans and Expanding Health Savings Accounts Act.

This bill gives all Americans the option to purchase a catastrophic plan if they so choose, which, under current law, is restricted to a limited population. This bill will increase health insurance plan and pricing options as we continue our work to address the underlying problems of ObamaCare.

Nebraskans continue to tell me that they are desperate for more options to buy health insurance for their families. We are down to only one insurer in Nebraska, in Nebraska's exchange; and with premiums for a family, which can exceed $30,000 before even factoring in four- and five-figure deductibles, families need more options, Nebraskans need more options.

The way to create access to healthcare for more people is by understanding better the buyer-seller relationship.

If you want to reduce costs through increasing participation, whoever is doing the selling must create products the consumer is willing to buy. The more barriers are wedged between the buyer and seller, the more transparency and competition will decrease and the more healthcare costs for consumers will increase.

It is obvious that ObamaCare policies, which have restricted choice through one-size-fits-all requirements for insurance products, continue to fail, and this bill will help give Nebraskans and all Americans the choices they need and deserve.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. ROSKAM for bringing us this bill, and I urge support for it.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DOGGETT), a true fighter.

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, TrumpCare, that is what we are talking about today.

What is TrumpCare? Well, it is not much care. In fact, it is mainly indifference from people that don't really care or understand the plight of thousands of families across this country working to make ends meet, and suddenly somebody has an accident on the way home from work or suddenly a child is diagnosed with some dreaded disease, and they face, without access to affordable health insurance, a catastrophe.

We know that there are a significant number of American families that have said they couldn't meet a $400 or $500 emergency. Think about what happens to them when they face a $4,000 or a $40,000 healthcare bill. That is what the Affordable Care Act has been all about.

So today we see the chapter in the TrumpCare story that Mr. ROSKAM and his colleagues are offering for Trump and all of his cohorts. And what is it? It is the 5 percent solution, because we know that health savings accounts have been used by exactly 5 percent of those who earn less than $100,000.

So, as usual, the Trump approach is let's do more for the few, and to heck with the many, the many people who are out there for whom health savings accounts provide little or no protection.

Now, of course, it is a valuable tax shelter for some people who are a little bit more prosperous in our society, and that is fine, but I believe we need to make healthcare accessible to more people.

And then there is the additional problem that Mr. ROSKAM and his colleagues have decided to pay for their package of bills, $100 billion of bills, by borrowing just a little bit more. After all the trillions of dollars that they have borrowed from the Saudis and the Chinese and people here at home, wherever they can find somebody who will take their IOU, they want to borrow a little more money, $100 billion, almost, to finance this package of bills to help that 5 percent of the families who earn less than $100,000.

I offered an amendment, recognizing that it wouldn't correct all the flaws of TrumpCare, but that it would address one central problem, and that is the problem of preexisting conditions.

What is a preexisting condition? Well, it is whatever an insurance company wants to point to to deny you coverage before the Affordable Care Act.

I do think that our Republican colleagues are afflicted with a very serious preexisting condition. It is called amnesia. They have forgotten what healthcare was like for families before the Affordable Care Act came into existence and prohibited these preexisting conditions not only for those who went to the marketplace, but across the board, to prevent preexisting conditions from being used against someone to deny them coverage or to limit the coverage that they got.

The kind of people whom I came in contact with as we worked on the Affordable Care Act who were determined to have preexisting conditions were a victim of domestic violence, someone who was born with a disability, and someone who had an accident or an illness and found themselves with some lingering effects of that. They would either be denied coverage altogether, or they would find in the fine print of their insurance policy significant limitations on that insurance. The insurance would cover them for everything except what they needed insurance for.

Now, after the Republican attempt—and not just one, but 60 or 70 attempts—to repeal the Affordable Care Act failed in the United States Senate, thanks to the courage of a few there and of the many across this country who said, ''We don't want it repealed,''

now that it has failed, they have devoted the last year to doing everything in the book to try to sabotage the Affordable Care Act.

They won't stabilize health insurance markets. They won't focus on reducing premiums. They won't focus on strengthening and correcting any of the shortcomings within the Affordable Care Act, like the need to rein in the prescription drug price gouging.

So instead of expanding accessible coverage, what they do is to expand a healthcare tax shelter for a few people.

Having done so much harm, they tell us today that they are not advocating junk insurance. Well, let's talk about junk insurance, because I think they are right in the junkyard on it.

President Trump's administration is out there telling the courts that they cannot defend the protections in the Affordable Care Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MITCHELL). The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, they can't defend, and they refuse to defend, the preexisting conditions provisions that protect, in Texas, it is almost half of the population who are said to have some type of preexisting condition.

□ 1715

So the administration won't protect those with preexisting conditions. They are hoping to erode that protection. And when I offered a one-paragraph amendment, Republicans refused it without any decent explanation in our committee to ensure that the preexisting condition provision was in any policy that would be purchased under this plan.

So what you will be left with, as my colleague from California explained, are junk insurance plans. They are the kind that promise great coverage, but down in the fine print of the policy, you don't have coverage when you need it. They are skinny insurance plans that aren't about the size of the person, but the size of the coverage, that it doesn't cover very much. And those kinds of plans are the kind that we will end up having.

We have a saboteur-in-chief, not only when it comes to our military alliances and our friends abroad but, with this President, with reference to healthcare. These bare-bones, junk insurance policies will not get the job done.

I think of the many people whom I represent in central Texas, and I am sure they are not unlike people in the suburbs of Chicago.

They are people like Colleen, who is a bookkeeper. She adopted her son through the foster care system when he was 18 months old. Unknown to her, he had a preexisting condition; and she learned that she had a preexisting condition. And as she said: ''The Affordable Care Act made my family possible.''

I think of people like Theresa in San Antonio, who says that, before the Affordable Care Act, she found herself repeatedly digging out of medical debt because of a preexisting condition.

I think of a constituent who called me during the debate of the Affordable Care Act because her sister could not get coverage for cancer.

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

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, her sister could not get coverage. Though she had substantial chemotherapy coverage, it was not enough to cover the full amount of the treatment that she needed.

We cannot go back. These folks would drag us back along with the chief saboteur of healthcare in this country. We don't want to return to the fine print restrictions, to the clever caveats. We need comprehensive coverage.

The Affordable Care Act can be made better, and I believe we are going to have a Congress that will do just that if we defeat this effort.

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

Mr. Speaker, let's talk about the 5 percent solution. So, if you are in the 5 percent, you need a solution. Five percent of this country is millions of people who are in HSAs.

And the characterization of something as a tax shelter, as the gentleman from Texas just characterized, is a completely loaded and pejorative term.

So where do we go for some level of clarity? Let's go to the Joint Committee on Taxation, and the question that was posed to them was: Show us the tax returns of people who take advantage or who are in a health savings account.

In 2015, 71 percent of returns reported an income of $200,000 or less. Are those rich people? I don't think so. And, in addition, 28 percent reported income of $75,000 or less.

So the hyperbole, the overstatement, the mischaracterization, I think is ''rich.''

And did you notice something, Mr. Speaker? I laid out the President's promise: You like your coverage, you get to keep your coverage. You like your doctor, you get to keep your doctor. And we are going to save $2,500 per year per family.

There has been silence on the other side of the aisle, and I predict that that won't be answered all afternoon. Do you want to know why? Because there is no answer.

For real answers, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. ROE).

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 6311. This bill makes a number of welcome changes to our broken healthcare system to put patients back in charge of their healthcare.

I have been a physician in rural east Tennessee for over 30 years. Mr. Speaker, we heard about how the tax bill had caused these premiums to go up. Let me tell you what has happened in the State of Tennessee. Since the ACA took place, the number of options went down and the premiums have gone up, on average, 175 percent.

Let me say this: In the hospital where I practiced, a university hospital, the majority of people with uncollectible debt are people with insurance.

Let me say that again. The majority of uncollectible debt are people with insurance.

Why? Because the out-of-pockets and copays are so high that they can't afford it. And that is one of the reasons we need this bill.

And let me say, also, that a year ago I was facing a major operation, Mr. Speaker, a cancer operation. I had the ACA insurance. I looked at what my out-of-pocket was, what my copays were, what my premiums were, and what my employer, the taxpayers of this country, paid for me. I would have been better off if I had just written a check for the cost of that cancer operation that I had. I had an insurance card. I didn't have insurance coverage. That is what I had with the ACA so-called insurance.

Now that the mandate is gone—I want to say this—we heard: Oh, goodness, the sky is falling because premiums are going to go up. In Tennessee, our premiums actually went down 10 percent from the major insurer in the State, Blue Cross, and for that we are eternally grateful in my State.

What we want, now that the mandate has gone, this bill will help create a more affordable copper plan option which will allow the tax credit recipients to use their credit to pay for coverage. This is something we should look at to expand. In fact, Senator ALEXANDER and Congressman DUNCAN have introduced legislation which would allow consumers to purchase an off-market plan when there are limited options.

In my district, in the First District of Tennessee, almost as many people, within a few hundred, paid the penalty tax, whatever Justice Roberts wanted to call it, as actually got a subsidy. Almost as many people paid it. So what good is it?

All of these changes are long overdue. Americans have dealt with the crushing costs associated with ObamaCare, and we are trying to give them as much relief as possible. By passing this bill today, we will return control to patients to determine what level of coverage is best for them and their families rather than the government making an arbitrary decision for them.

If we had a system of healthcare in this country where it was patient centered and market driven, these changes would be unnecessary. Instead, we still have a top-down, government-knows-

best approach to healthcare that continues to cost folks all across the country more than they can afford.

I support the provisions in this bill because I have worked very hard to get to it.

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

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

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I will finish by saying that the current system under ObamaCare is unsustainable, and we must increase affordable options or the system will collapse.

Finally, I will put it this way: We need to put patients and doctors—no insurance companies and bureaucrats—in charge of healthcare decisions in this country. That is what a health savings account does, and I encourage all of my colleagues to support this.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, how much time do I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Michigan has 6½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from Illinois has 14 minutes remaining.

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

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. STIVERS).

Mr. STIVERS. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Illinois for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support H.R. 6311, and more specifically, I rise to support bipartisan language to make flexible spending accounts flexible.

While 44 percent of Americans have access to flexible spending accounts, flexible spending accounts have not been flexible. There are two problems:

Under ObamaCare, flexible spending account contributions were capped at $2,650. And while the average American spends more than $5,700 in out-of-pocket healthcare costs, it is just not enough.

The second problem is flexible spending account rules make people use it or lose it at the end of the year, and they can't roll over their money. They have to spend it on things they don't need or they have to lose that money.

Our bipartisan solution solves those problems by doing two things:

First, it increases the limit on FSA accounts by a multiple of three to $7,950. And I did the math for the ranking member. That total would be, over 3 years, if you wanted to save $50 a week, you could accumulate $7,950. Obviously, that would be if you weren't using it, so it would probably take longer than that to accumulate that kind of money. But, again, that is well over the average of $5,700 of out-of-pocket expenses that the average American has.

And, by the way, while flexible spending accounts are accessible to people, one of the reasons people like them is they make out-of-pocket expenses more affordable for individuals because those contributions are pretax dollars.

The second thing our bipartisan language does is it allows the balance to be rolled over at the end of the year up to that $7,950 limit. The rollover provision keeps people from losing their money or making healthcare expenses that are wasteful at the end of the year.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the flexible spending account language and the underlying bill.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. LAWRENCE), my colleague.

Mrs. LAWRENCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak against H.R. 6311.

This bill does no favor for the average working American. This is yet another bill to sabotage the Affordable Care Act and make healthcare more expensive for those who need it the most.

Expanding these health savings accounts, which are simply investment accounts, doesn't cover basic healthcare. It does not help the average American who needs true healthcare.

This Republican legislation will not help my constituents in Michigan. It does not serve the need of access to healthcare for America's most vulnerable. The bill does not serve seniors either. It hurts them by drawing Medicare recipients into high-cost care.

In Michigan, 92 percent of Medicare beneficiaries make under $50,000, and 14 percent are Black seniors who live below the poverty line. We know seniors can't afford this.

We also know this bill will drain more money from Medicare by adding $60 billion to the deficit.

We need affordable care for everyone, not unaffordable health plans for a few. This bill would destabilize and destroy affordable healthcare.

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

Mr. Speaker, there is nothing in this bill that is destructive at all. The entire structure of the bill is invitational. The bill presumes the status quo in terms of the Affordable Care Act, and it allows people to get in sync with the Affordable Care Act, and it allows them to save money in a tax-free manner.

I am really surprised at the hyperbole, the overstatement, and the over characterization. Nobody has answered either, Mr. Speaker, if you will notice, my admonition about the characterization of junk insurance. To attribute that claim, which we have heard from a couple of speakers this afternoon, against this bill is to attribute that claim and that criticism against the ACA, because the underlying bill matches exactly what the ACA purports, that is, catastrophic coverage. It simply says, if you have that coverage and your deductibles take your breath away, good news; you can save on a tax-free basis.

So I think, with all due respect to the talking point writers and all due respect to the critics of this bill, I think the entire debate would be uplifted somewhat if we were debating the actual bill that is before us instead of tweets and news feeds and so forth.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, as I close, I think back some years ago when we were working on ACA. It was one of our proudest achievements. The Republicans, from day one, were determined to destroy it. ACA can be made better, but destruction is not improvement.

This bill, when you put it together, is not only unpaid for, but would be a step to try to undermine the basic thrust of the ACA, to replace these basic provisions with something much less.

In a word, the Republicans are on the wrong side of history, and the clock is ticking.

□ 1730

These bills, when you put them all together, essentially say, these are another way to undercut ACA. This is a very, very weak—and I think worse than a weak set of alternatives. They have never been able to come up with a comprehensive bill, and this effort is the opposite. As we have mentioned, relatively few people with lower income can access these. So many of the people who access HSAs are people who can afford it.

We can make it better. But don't come here when you have had no alternative to say that this is something that could replace ACA. You don't pay for it. You are reckless. This, as I said earlier, is a reckless bill of the chairman of our subcommittee.

So I urge my colleagues to reject this and to not be fooled. We Democrats come to the floor with a sense of being on the right side of history. What is happening in this country is that more and more of the public acknowledge it. Compared to when we first started, I remember going back home, there was so much opposition, so much misguided. But when people—20 million—for the first time, in most cases, had healthcare, the clock began to tick in the direction of universal care.

You are trying to turn back the clock, you Republicans, but it is ticking more and more towards universality. That is what is happening in this country. And this is becoming part of the bedrock, the foundations of care and of provisions for the benefit of the American people as Social Security was, as Medicare was, and as Medicaid was.

You are going to pay the price for your blind opposition. The public is more and more aware, as their eyes have been opened and as their health has been protected, what this has meant to millions of families in this country—millions. I run into it every day I go home, people who come and say: Without healthcare coverage,

where would I be? Not only financially, but where would I be and what is so dear to me, my health and the health of our families and the health of our kids?

I urge we Democrats to stand up tall and say to the American public: The ACA was a major historic step in the right direction. The Republicans continue to try to destroy it. History is showing that, once again, they were moving in the wrong discretion.

Mr. Speaker, I urge that we reject this bill and move proudly forward. We put together this step. We are going to continue to move forward.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to direct their remarks to the Chair.

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

Mr. Speaker, I served on the Ways and Means Committee when the ACA was passed, and I recall then-minority ranking member Dave Camp from Michigan, who went on to become the chairman later, offered an alternative to the ACA.

He inquired of then-chairman Rangel: When are we going to get to the Republican alternative? When are we going to get to the Republican alternative?

I remember this because I was sitting—I think I had the same seat that Mr. HIGGINS from New York has—down in front on the left side of the dais.

Charlie Rangel evoked an old gospel song. He said: Soon and very soon, which is why I remember.

Now, soon and very soon never came for that amendment. Soon and very soon never came for the Republican alternative to be considered in the Ways and Means Committee.

Now what we are dealing with is the reality of the Affordable Care Act. Mr. Speaker, what we are proposing is to say: Look, we have got some suggestions; we think we can make this better.

Is this reckless? I think not. I fundamentally reject that. When you accept the entire premise of the current structure of the Affordable Care Act, and you take something that pre-existed within the Affordable Care Act, that is health savings accounts, and you attach it and you expand it, where is the defensiveness?

This is what is amazing to me about this debate. This is why our country is stuck. Our friends on the other side of the aisle have created the Affordable Care Act, and it is orthodoxy. To take it on and to try to make improvements—they say they want improvements.

They say: Oh, let's work together.

All afternoon with Ms. JENKINS here on the House floor, she was managing time of bills that were bipartisan in nature, bipartisan as they went through the committee, but you got none of that veneer of bipartisanship as they were discussed on the floor. They were perceived as a direct attack at what? Orthodoxy.

So notwithstanding the invitation to work on both sides of the aisle, the other side is making it very clear that they are unwilling to take the structure of the ACA, to take favorable tax treatment and help more people save their own money and spare themselves the results of a law that our friends on the other side of the aisle said that you could keep your doctor, you could keep your coverage, and you would save $2,500 per person—and, again, I reiterate, Mr. Speaker, did you notice there was no answer to that charge this afternoon?

I laid it out twice and now a third time; and absolute silence.

Why? Because they oversold. Now when they have got friends on this side of the aisle who are saying: Look, we can improve this. Let's work here. No, we don't like the ACA, but we can work through some of these things, then, all of a sudden, it is stiff-arm. Then, all of a sudden, it is insincere. Then, all of a sudden, it is political.

This is good work, this is serious work, and it is work that is designed to bring relief to people who are suffering, who have no interest in the nature of a donkeys-and-elephants debate on the House floor. Most people's eyes glaze over.

Most people say they want remedies. This is a remedy that makes sense. This is a remedy in sync with the ACA in some ways. The responses we have heard from the other side I don't think are persuasive.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the passage of H.R. 6311, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

Pursuant to House Resolution 1011, the previous question is ordered on the bill, as amended.

The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

MOTION TO RECOMMIT

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion to recommit at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentlewoman opposed to the bill?

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. I am opposed in its current form.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Ms. Frankel of Florida moves to recommit the bill H.R. 6311 to the Committee on Ways and Means with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith with the following amendment:

At the end, add the following:

SEC. 10. RESTORATION OF MEDICARE TRUST FUND SOLVENCY.

Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act, no amendment made by this Act shall take effect until the annual reports of the Board of the Trustees of the Federal Hospital Insurance Trust Fund established under section 1817 of the Social Security Act and the Federal Supplementary Medical Insurance Trust Fund established under section 1841 of the Social Security Act indicate the reduction of solvency of such trust funds by reason of Public Law 115–97 (and the amendments made thereby) have been reversed.

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to dispense with the reading.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman is recognized for 5 minutes in support of her motion.

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, this is the final amendment to the bill which will not kill the bill or send it back to committee. If adopted, the bill will immediately proceed to final passage, as amended.

Mr. Speaker, my motion will make this bill much better. It is going to delay this legislation from going into effect until we clean up one of the messes caused by the Republican tax scam, the big giveaway to the richest few in this country at the expense of most Americans.

Now, listen to this. The 2018 Medicare trustee report predicts that the Medicare trust fund will be depleted in 2026—3 years earlier than predicted in last year's report.

Now, Mr. Speaker, why is this? Not a big surprise. The $2.3 trillion Republican tax cut for the benefit of corporations and billionaires has shortchanged the longevity of the fund that pays for the healthcare of 58 million seniors. It is called Medicare, a program that celebrates its 53rd year anniversary this month, a system that seniors have spent a lifetime paying into.

Just ask Eve in my hometown of West Palm Beach who relies on skilled nursing care, like the 1.8 million Eves in this country; or Irving in Delray, who had his prostate removed. Like Irving, 6.6 Americans rely on Medicare to pay for their hospital visits every year.

Medicare helps to keep our grandmothers and grandfathers healthy and repair them when they are sick. It allows men and women who raised families and built their country to retire in dignity without paying every last dollar for their needed well-care visit, their blood pressure medicine, or their hip replacement.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to do the right thing for the folks whom we love and who love us, take the time to fix this legislation, and put the money back into the Medicare trust fund, that was cruelly—I say cruelly—stolen by the Republican tax scam, the giveaway to the richest 1 percent and the big corporate interests.

Let's keep Medicaid alive and well. Please support this motion to recommit.

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

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, I claim the time in opposition.

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

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, I urge us to reject this motion to recommit.

The hospital insurance trust fund isn't going to be insolvent purely because we are freeing Americans from the individual mandate. This crisis has been going on for decades.

Mr. Speaker, I urge a ''no'' vote, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit.

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

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 and clause 9 of rule XX, this 15-minute vote on the motion to recommit will be followed by 5-minute votes on:

Passage of H.R. 6311, if ordered; and

Passage of H.R. 6199.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 187, nays 229, not voting 12, as follows:

[Roll No. 375]

YEAS—187

Adams
Aguilar
Barragán
Beatty
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blum
Blumenauer
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (MD)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capuano
Carbajal
Cárdenas
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Cooper
Correa
Costa
Courtney
Crist
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Demings
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Engel
Eshoo
Espaillat
Esty (CT)
Evans
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Gomez
Gonzalez (TX)
Gottheimer
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hastings
Heck
Higgins (NY)
Himes
Hoyer
Huffman
Jackson Lee
Jayapal
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Khanna
Kihuen
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster (NH)
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lawson (FL)
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham, M.
Luján, Ben Ray
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn B.
Matsui
McCollum
McEachin
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Halleran
O'Rourke
Pallone
Panetta
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Raskin
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Rosen
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sires
Smith (WA)
Soto
Suozzi
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NAYS—229

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Arrington
Babin
Bacon
Banks (IN)
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Bergman
Biggs
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Bost
Brady (TX)
Brat
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Budd
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Cheney
Cloud
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comer
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Crawford
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Curtis
Davidson
Davis, Rodney
Denham
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Emmer
Estes (KS)
Faso
Ferguson
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Flores
Fortenberry
Foxx
Gaetz
Gallagher
Garrett
Gianforte
Gibbs
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guthrie
Handel
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Higgins (LA)
Hill
Holding
Hollingsworth
Hudson
Huizenga
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (LA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jordan
Joyce (OH)
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger
Knight
Kustoff (TN)
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamb
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
Lesko
Lewis (MN)
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Marshall
Massie
Mast
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Messer
Mitchell
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Newhouse
Noem
Norman
Nunes
Olson
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Pittenger
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Posey
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Rice (SC)
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney, Francis
Rooney, Thomas J.
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce (CA)
Russell
Rutherford
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smucker
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Taylor
Tenney
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Zeldin

NOT VOTING—12

Bass
Black
Blackburn
Cramer
Dunn
Ellison
Frelinghuysen
Hanabusa
Maloney, Sean
Palazzo
Speier
Walz

□ 1807

Messrs. REED, KINZINGER, MacARTHUR, RUSSELL, BRAT, BISHOP of Utah, and RICE of South Carolina changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

Mr. SOTO, Mses. JAYAPAL and BROWNLEY of California, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Messrs. O'HALLERAN and GOTTHEIMER changed their vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated against:

Mr. DUNN. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay" on rollcall No. 375.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

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

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 242, noes 176, not voting 10, as follows:

[Roll No. 376]

AYES—242

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Arrington
Babin
Bacon
Banks (IN)
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Bera
Bergman
Biggs
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Blum
Bost
Brady (TX)
Brat
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Budd
Burgess
Bustos
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Cheney
Cloud
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comer
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Crawford
Cuellar
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Curtis
Davidson
Davis, Rodney
Denham
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Dunn
Emmer
Estes (KS)
Faso
Ferguson
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Flores
Fortenberry
Foxx
Frelinghuysen
Gaetz
Gallagher
Garrett
Gianforte
Gibbs
Gohmert
Gonzalez (TX)
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gottheimer
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guthrie
Handel
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Higgins (LA)
Hill
Holding
Hollingsworth
Hudson
Huizenga
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (LA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jordan
Joyce (OH)
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger
Knight
Kuster (NH)
Kustoff (TN)
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamb
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
Lesko
Lewis (MN)
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Marshall
Massie
Mast
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Messer
Mitchell
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Murphy (FL)
Newhouse
Noem
Norman
Nunes
O'Halleran
Olson
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Peterson
Pittenger

Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Posey
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Rice (SC)
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney, Francis
Rooney, Thomas J.
Ros-Lehtinen
Rosen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce (CA)
Russell
Rutherford
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smucker
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Taylor
Tenney
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Zeldin

NOES—176

Adams
Aguilar
Barragán
Beatty
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (MD)
Brownley (CA)
Butterfield
Capuano
Carbajal
Cárdenas
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Cooper
Correa
Costa
Courtney
Crist
Crowley
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Demings
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Engel
Eshoo
Espaillat
Esty (CT)
Evans
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Gomez
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hastings
Heck
Higgins (NY)
Himes
Hoyer
Huffman
Jackson Lee
Jayapal
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Khanna
Kihuen
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Krishnamoorthi
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lawson (FL)
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham, M.
Luján, Ben Ray
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn B.
Matsui
McCollum
McEachin
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Panetta
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Raskin
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sires
Smith (WA)
Soto
Suozzi
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—10

Bass
Black
Blackburn
Cramer
Ellison
Hanabusa
Maloney, Sean
Palazzo
Speier
Walz

□ 1813

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RESTORING ACCESS TO MEDICATION ACT OF 2018

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on passage of the bill (H.R. 6199) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to include certain over-the-counter medical products as qualified medical expenses, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 277, nays 142, not voting 9, as follows:

[Roll No. 377]

YEAS—277

Abraham
Aderholt
Aguilar
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Arrington
Babin
Bacon
Banks (IN)
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Bera
Bergman
Biggs
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Blum
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Bost
Brady (TX)
Brat
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Budd
Burgess
Bustos
Byrne
Calvert
Carbajal
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Cheney
Cleaver
Cloud
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comer
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Correa
Costello (PA)
Crawford
Crist
Cuellar
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Curtis
Davidson
Davis, Rodney
DeFazio
Delaney
Denham
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Dunn
Emmer
Estes (KS)
Faso
Ferguson
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Flores
Fortenberry
Foxx
Frelinghuysen
Gaetz
Gallagher
Garrett
Gianforte
Gibbs
Gohmert
Gonzalez (TX)
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gottheimer
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Green, Gene
Griffith
Grothman
Guthrie
Handel
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Higgins (LA)
Hill
Holding
Hollingsworth
Hudson
Huizenga
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (LA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jordan
Joyce (OH)
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger
Knight
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster (NH)
Kustoff (TN)
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamb
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
Lesko
Lewis (MN)
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham, M.
Lynch
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Marshall
Massie
Mast
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meeks
Meng
Messer
Mitchell
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Murphy (FL)
Newhouse
Noem
Nolan
Norman
Nunes
O'Halleran
O'Rourke
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Panetta
Paulsen
Pearce
Perlmutter
Perry
Peterson
Pingree
Pittenger
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Polis
Posey
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Rice (NY)
Rice (SC)
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney, Francis
Rooney, Thomas J.
Ros-Lehtinen
Rosen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce (CA)
Ruiz
Russell
Rutherford
Sanford
Scalise
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shea-Porter
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smucker
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Suozzi
Swalwell (CA)
Taylor
Tenney
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tipton
Torres
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Vela
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Zeldin

NAYS—142

Adams
Barragán
Beatty
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blunt Rochester
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (MD)
Butterfield
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeGette
DeLauro
DelBene
Demings
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Engel
Eshoo
Espaillat
Esty (CT)
Evans
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Gomez
Green, Al
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hastings
Heck
Higgins (NY)
Himes
Hoyer
Huffman
Jackson Lee
Jayapal
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Khanna
Kihuen
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lawson (FL)
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lieu, Ted
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Luján, Ben Ray
Maloney, Carolyn B.
Matsui
McCollum
McEachin
McGovern
McNerney
Moore
Moulton
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Norcross
Pallone
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Peters
Pocan
Price (NC)
Quigley
Raskin
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sires
Smith (WA)
Soto
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Tsongas
Vargas
Veasey
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—9

Bass
Black
Blackburn
Cramer
Ellison
Hanabusa
Maloney, Sean
Speier
Walz

□ 1820

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERMISSION FOR MEMBER TO BE CONSIDERED AS FIRST SPONSOR OF H.R. 1002

Mr. MCKINLEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that I may hereafter be considered as the first sponsor of H.R. 1002, a bill originally introduced by Representative DENT of Pennsylvania, for the purposes of adding cosponsors and requesting reprintings pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII.

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

There was no objection.

CAMBODIA DEMOCRACY ACT OF 2018

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on the Judiciary be discharged from further consideration of the bill (H.R. 5754) to promote free and fair elections, political freedoms, and human rights in Cambodia, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

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

There was no objection.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5754

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Cambodia Democracy Act of 2018''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) Cambodia's present political system was established in 1991, after decades of internal conflict, by the United Nations-brokered Paris Peace Accords. The first national elections under this system were administered by the United Nations in 1993. Hun Sen, the current Prime Minister of Cambodia, has been in power in Cambodia since before this time, serving as premier from 1985 to 1993, and as Prime Minister thereafter. Hun Sen has used his position to cling to the pinnacle of power in Cambodia for 32 years, through tactics including coup d'état, irregular election procedures, and the silencing of opposition voices.

(2) In Cambodia's most recent general elections in 2013, Hun Sen's Cambodian People's Party (CPP) maintained its parliamentary majority by the smallest margin to date, while a unified opposition Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP) made substantial gains. The Department of State's Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2016 described Cambodia's 2013 elections as ''largely free of intimidation, in contrast to previous national elections'', yet also ''fraught with irregularities''. Subsequent local elections marked similar setbacks for the ruling CPP.

(3) Cambodia's next general elections will occur in June 2018. According to the 2017 Freedom in the World Report issued by Freedom House, in the intervening period Hun Sen has overseen ''a decisive crackdown on the country's beleaguered opposition and press corps as his [CPP] prepared for national elections''. Regional experts have reached a general consensus that Hun Sen and the CPP have undertaken this crackdown to consolidate power ahead of an election that may have ended their grip on power.

(4) Hun Sen's actions in late 2017 pushed Cambodia further away from democracy. In late August 2017, the regime shut down the National Democratic Institute and expelled its entire foreign staff from the country within a week. Less than a week later, radio stations carrying Radio Free Asia and Voice of America were also shut down by the regime. On September 3, 2017, authorities arrested Kem Sokha, the leader of the CNRP, and charged him with treason, allegedly for participating in an American plot to undermine Hun Sen's regime. Kem Sokha remains in detention. On November 16, 2017, Cambodia's Supreme Court dissolved the CNRP, eliminating the most popular and viable challenger to Hun Sen's regime. Subsequent actions by Hun Sen have aimed to ''cement total control over Cambodian government and business'', according to Human Rights Watch.

(5) Since the dissolution of the CNRP, both the Department of State and the White House have issued statements condemning the Hun Sen regime's actions to undermine democracy and calling for Kem Sokha's release. On November 16, 2017, the White House announced that the United States would terminate support for Cambodia's National Election Committee. On December 6, 2017, the Department of State began implementing visa restrictions for officials responsible for undermining Cambodian democracy. On February 27, 2018, the White House announced further assistance reductions following Cambodian Senate elections on February 25 which did not represent the genuine will of the Cambodian people.

SEC. 3. SANCTIONS RELATING TO UNDERMINING DEMOCRACY IN CAMBODIA.

(a) DESIGNATION OF PERSONS RESPONSIBLE FOR UNDERMINING DEMOCRACY IN CAMBODIA.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the President shall apply the sanctions described in subsection (b) on—

(1) each senior official of the Government, military, or security forces of Cambodia that the President determines has directly and substantially undermined democracy in Cambodia; and

(2) each senior official of the Government, military, or security forces of Cambodia that the President determines has committed or directed serious human rights violations associated with undermining democracy in Cambodia.

(b) SANCTIONS DESCRIBED.—

(1) ASSET BLOCKING.—The President shall exercise all of the powers granted to the President under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.) to the extent necessary to block and prohibit all transactions in property and interests in property of a person designated under subsection (a) if such property and interests in property are in the United States, come within the United States, or are or come within the possession or control of a United States person.

(2) VISA RESTRICTIONS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of State, in consultation with the Secretary of Homeland Security, shall continue to implement the policy announced by the Department of State on December 6, 2017, to restrict entry into the United States of person involved in undermining democracy in Cambodia, including any person designated under subsection (a).

(B) EXCEPTION FOR MULTILATERAL ACTIVITIES.—Persons otherwise restricted from entry into the United States under this section may be admitted if such admission is necessary to comply with United States obligations under the Agreement between the United Nations and the United States of America regarding the Headquarters of the United Nations, signed at Lake Success June 26, 1947, and entered into force November 21, 1947, or under the Convention on Consular Relations, done at Vienna April 24, 1963, and entered into force March 19, 1967, or other applicable international obligations of the United States.

(3) PENALTIES.—The penalties provided for in subsections (b) and (c) of section 206 of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1705) shall apply to a person that violates, attempts to violate, conspires to violate, or causes a violation of paragraph (1) to the same extent that such penalties apply to a person that commits an unlawful act described in subsection (a) of such section 206.

(e) LIST OF DESIGNATED PERSONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall transmit to the appropriate congressional committees a list of persons designated under subsection (a).

(2) UPDATES.—The President shall transmit to the appropriate congressional committees updated lists under paragraph (1) as new information becomes available.

(f) IMPLEMENTATION.—The President may exercise all authorities provided under sections 203 and 205 of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1702 and 1704) to carry out this section.

(g) WAIVER.—The President may waive the application of sanctions described in subsection (b) with respect to a person described in subsection (a) if the President determines and certifies to the appropriate congressional committees that such waiver is in the national interest of the United States.

SEC. 4. SUSPENSION AND TERMINATION OF SANCTIONS.

(a) SUSPENSION.—The sanctions described in section 3 may be suspended for up to one year upon certification by the President to the appropriate congressional committees that Cambodia is making meaningful progress toward the following:

(1) Ending government efforts to undermine democracy.

(2) Ending human rights violations associated with undermining democracy.

(3) Conducting free and fair elections which allow for the active participation of credible opposition candidates.

(b) RENEWAL OF SUSPENSION.—The suspension described in subsection (a) may be renewed for additional, consecutive 180-day periods if the President certifies to the appropriate congressional committees that Cambodia is continuing to make meaningful progress towards satisfying the conditions described in such subsection during the previous year.

SEC. 5. SUNSET.

This Act shall terminate on the date that is five years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 6. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term ''appropriate congressional committees'' means the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives, and the Committee on Foreign Relations and the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate.

(2) UNITED STATES PERSON; PERSON.—The term ''United States person'' means—

(A) a United States citizen or an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence to the United States; or

(B) an entity organized under the laws of the United States or of any jurisdiction of

the United States, including a foreign branch of such an entity.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. ROYCE OF CALIFORNIA

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I have an amendment at the desk.

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

The Clerk read as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Cambodia Democracy Act of 2018''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) Prime Minister Hun Sen has been in power in Cambodia since 1985 and is the longest-serving leader in Southeast Asia. Despite decades of international attention and assistance to promote a pluralistic, multiparty democratic system in Cambodia, the Government of Cambodia continues to be undemocratically dominated by the ruling Cambodia People's Party (CPP), which controls every agency and security apparatus of the state.

(2) In 2015, the CPP-controlled parliament passed the ''Law on Associations and Non-Governmental Organizations'', which gave the government sweeping powers to revoke the registration of NGOs that the government believed to be operating with a political bias in a blatant attempt to restrict the legitimate work of civil society. On August 23, 2017, Cambodia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs ordered the closure of the National Democratic Institute and the expulsion of its foreign staff. On September 15, 2017, Prime Minister Hun Sen called for the withdrawal of all volunteers from the United States Peace Corps, which has operated in Cambodia since 2006 with 500 United States volunteers providing English language and healthcare training.

(3) The Government of Cambodia has taken several measures to restrict its media environment, especially through politicized tax investigations against independent media outlets that resulted in the closure of The Cambodian Daily and Radio Free Asia in early September 2017. Additionally, the Government of Cambodia has ordered several radio stations to stop the broadcasting of Radio Free Asia and Voice of America programming.

(4) Each of the five elections that have taken place in Cambodia since 1991 were conducted in circumstances that were not free and fair, and were marked by fraud, intimidation, violence, and the government's misuse of legal mechanisms to weaken opposition candidates and parties.

(5) On September 3, 2017, Kem Sokha, the President of the Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP), was arrested on politically motivated charges, including treason and conspiring to overthrow the Government of Cambodia, and faces up to 30 years in prison. The CNRP's previous leader, Sam Rainsy, remains in exile. On November 16, 2017, Cambodia's Supreme Court dissolved the CNRP, eliminating the CPP's only viable challenger.

(6) The United States is committed to promoting democracy, human rights, and the rule of law in Cambodia. The United States continues to urge the Government of Cambodia to immediately release Mr. Kem Sokha, reinstate the political status of the CNRP and its 55 elected seats in the National Assembly, and support electoral reform efforts in Cambodia with free and fair elections in 2018 monitored by international observers.

SEC. 3. SANCTIONS RELATING TO UNDERMINING DEMOCRACY IN CAMBODIA.

(a) DESIGNATION OF PERSONS RESPONSIBLE FOR UNDERMINING DEMOCRACY IN CAMBODIA.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall apply the sanctions described in subsection (b) on—

(1) each senior official of the Government, military, or security forces of Cambodia that the President determines has directly and substantially undermined democracy in Cambodia

(2) each senior official of the Government, military, or security forces of Cambodia that the President determines has committed or directed serious human rights violations associated with undermining democracy in Cambodia; and

(3) entities owned or controlled by senior officials of the Government, military, or security forces of Cambodia described in (1) and (2).

(b) SANCTIONS DESCRIBED.—

(1) ASSET BLOCKING.—The President shall exercise all of the powers granted to the President under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.) to the extent necessary to block and prohibit all transactions in property and interests in property of a person designated under subsection (a) if such property and interests in property are in the United States, come within the United States, or are or come within the possession or control of a United States person.

(2) VISA RESTRICTIONS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of State, in consultation with the Secretary of Homeland Security, shall continue to implement the policy announced by the Department of State on December 6, 2017, to restrict entry into the United States of persons involved in undermining democracy in Cambodia, including any person designated under subsection (a).

(B) EXCEPTION FOR MULTILATERAL ACTIVITIES.—Persons otherwise restricted from entry into the United States under this section may be admitted if such admission is necessary to comply with United States obligations under the Agreement between the United Nations and the United States of America regarding the Headquarters of the United Nations, signed at Lake Success June 26, 1947, and entered into force November 21, 1947, or under the Convention on Consular Relations, done at Vienna April 24, 1963, and entered into force March 19, 1967, or other applicable international obligations of the United States.

(3) PENALTIES.—The penalties provided for in subsections (b) and (c) of section 206 of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1705) shall apply to a person that violates, attempts to violate, conspires to violate, or causes a violation of paragraph (1) to the same extent that such penalties apply to a person that commits an unlawful act described in subsection (a) of such section 206.

(e) LIST OF DESIGNATED PERSONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall transmit to the appropriate congressional committees a list of persons designated under subsection (a).

(2) UPDATES.—The President shall transmit to the appropriate congressional committees updated lists under paragraph (1) as new information becomes available.

(f) IMPLEMENTATION.—The President may exercise all authorities provided under sections 203 and 205 of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1702 and 1704) to carry out this section.

(g) WAIVER.—The President may waive the application of sanctions described in subsection (b) with respect to a person designated under subsection (a) if the President determines and certifies to the appropriate congressional committees that such waiver is in the national interest of the United States.

SEC. 4. SUSPENSION OF SANCTIONS.

(a) SUSPENSION.—The sanctions described in section 3 may be suspended for up to one year upon certification by the President to the appropriate congressional committees that Cambodia is making meaningful progress toward the following:

(1) Ending government efforts to undermine democracy.

(2) Ending human rights violations associated with undermining democracy.

(3) Conducting free and fair elections which allow for the active participation of credible opposition candidates.

(b) RENEWAL OF SUSPENSION.—The suspension described in subsection (a) may be renewed for additional, consecutive 180-day periods if the President certifies to the appropriate congressional committees that Cambodia is continuing to make meaningful progress towards satisfying the conditions described in such subsection during the previous year.

SEC. 5. SUNSET.

This Act shall terminate on the date that is five years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 6. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term ''appropriate congressional committees'' means the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives, and the Committee on Foreign Relations and the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate.

(2) PERSON.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ''person'' means—

(i) a natural person; or

(ii) a corporation, business association, partnership, society, trust, financial institution, insurer, underwriter, guarantor, and any other business organization, any other nongovernmental entity, organization, or group, and any governmental entity operating as a business enterprise or any successor to any entity described in this clause.

(B) APPLICATION TO GOVERNMENTAL ENTITIES.—The term ''person'' does not include a government or governmental entity that is not operating as a business enterprise.

(3) UNITED STATES PERSON.—The term ''United States person'' means—

(A) a United States citizen or an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence to the United States; or

(B) an entity organized under the laws of the United States or of any jurisdiction of the United States, including a foreign branch of such an entity.

Mr. ROYCE of California (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to dispense with the reading.

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

There was no objection.

The amendment was agreed to.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, was read the third time, and passed, and a motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERMISSION TO PLACE INTO THE RECORD AN EXCHANGE OF LETTERS ON H.R. 5754

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to place into the RECORD an exchange of letters with the Judiciary Committee on H.R. 5754.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD an exchange of letters.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY,
Washington, DC, July 20, 2018.

Hon. EDWARD R. ROYCE,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN ROYCE: I write with respect to H.R. 5754, the ''Cambodia Democracy Act.'' As a result of your having consulted with us on provisions within H.R. 5754 that fall within the Rule X jurisdiction of the Committee on the Judiciary, I forego any further consideration of this bill so that it may proceed expeditiously to the House floor for consideration.

The Judiciary Committee takes this action with our mutual understanding that by foregoing consideration of H.R. 5754 at this time, we do not waive any jurisdiction over subject matter contained in this or similar legislation and that our committee will be appropriately consulted and involved as this bill or similar legislation moves forward so that we may address any remaining issues in our jurisdiction. Our committee also reserves the right to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees to any House-Senate conference involving this or similar legislation and asks that you support any such request.

I would appreciate a response to this letter confirming this understanding with respect to H.R. 5754 and would ask that a copy of our exchange of letters on this matter be included in the Congressional Record during floor consideration of the bill.

Sincerely,

BOB GOODLATTE,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC, July 18, 2018.

Hon. BOB GOODLATTE,
Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN GOODLATTE: Thank you for consulting with the Foreign Affairs Committee and agreeing to be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 5754, the Cambodia Democracy Act, so that the bill may proceed expeditiously to the House floor.

I agree that your forgoing further action on this measure does not in any way diminish or alter the jurisdiction of your committee, or prejudice its jurisdictional prerogatives on this bill or similar legislation in the future. I would support your effort to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees from your committee to any House-Senate conference on this legislation.

I will seek to place our letters on H.R. 5754 into the Congressional Record during floor consideration of the bill. I appreciate your cooperation regarding this legislation and look forward to continuing to work together as this measure moves through the legislative process.

Sincerely,

EDWARD R. ROYCE,
Chairman.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 5754.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, thank you for bringing this important and timely legislation to the House Floor.

I want to begin by thanking Rep. YOHO, the Chairman of the Asia and Pacific Subcommittee, for authoring this bill, which is the product of his important oversight work. I would also like to recognize Rep. ALAN LOWENTHAL for his tireless advocacy for this bill, as well as Ranking Member's ENGEL and SHERMAN for their strong support.

In four days, Cambodians will vote for a new head of government. Unfortunately, this election will not be legitimate in any way. Hun Sen and his thugs long ago decided the outcome, by marginalizing, beating, and imprisoning members of the opposition.

Since Cambodia's deeply flawed elections in 2013, we have seen intensifying attacks on Cambodians peacefully opposing their government. Hun Sen's thuggish regime continues to crack down on political opposition and other activists who oppose his rule. Freedom House consistently rates Cambodia as ''Not Free,'' noting harassment of the regime's political opposition.

That's putting it mildly. Three years ago, opposition lawmaker and American citizen Nhay Chamreoun was severely and brutally attacked by plainclothes bodyguards, who repeatedly kicked and stomped him. He was hospitalized for months. Several months later, Kem Ley, a popular Cambodian political commentator, was murdered in broad daylight for his outspoken protests of the regime.

Over the last year, Hun Sen has dispatched any notions of democracy in Cambodia. He dissolved the opposition party, CNRP, arrested its leader Kem Sokha—who now faces spurious treason charges—and completely dismembered the political system in Cambodia.

Importantly, the Cambodia Democracy Act of 2018 imposes sanctions on all members of Hun Sen's inner circle for their role in undermining democracy in Cambodia and committing serious human rights violations. Specifically, it bars these individuals from entering the U.S. and blocks any assets or property they may possess.

It will be up to the President to determine who should be designated for these sanctions. But given the brashness of this regime, we do have a good idea of who the President should target:

Hun Sen: Prime Minister, President of Cambodian People's Party (CPP); Sar Kheng: Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of the Interior, Vice President of CPP; Tea Banh: Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of National Defense, Member of the CPP; Aun Pornmoniroth: Minister for Economy and Finance; Koeut Rith: Secretary of State of Ministry of Justice; Sun Chanthol: Minister of Public Works and Transport; Prak Sokhonn: Minister of Foreign Affairs; Om Yentieng: President of Anti-Corruption Unit attached to the Office of the Council of Ministers, Advisor to the Prime Minister; Pol Saroeun: Four-Star General, Member of the Supreme Council of National Defense, Commander-in-Chief of RCAF; Neth Savoeun: Director-General of the National Police, Member of CPP Permanent Committee; Kun Kim: Four-Star General, Deputy Commander-in-Chief of RCAF, Chief of RCAF Joint General Staff, Chief of Personal Advisers and Cabinet of the Prime Minister; Sao Sokha: Four-Star General, Deputy Commander-in-Chief of RCAF, Commander of the National Royal Military Police; Hing Bunheang: Four-Star General, Deputy Commander-in-Chief of RCAF; Choun Sovann: Deputy Chief of National Police and Chief of Phnom Penh Municipal Police; Hun Manet: Deputy Chief of RCAF Joint General Staff; Sok Puthyvuth: CEO of SOMA Group conglomerate; and Hun Mana: Chair of Bayon Height Media System.

Again, thank you Mr. Speaker for bringing up this very important and timely legislation. The people of Cambodia deserve far better than the Hun Sen's despotism. Political pluralism will soon reach Cambodia, and this legislation will not only help Cambodians attain that goal, but will also send a strong signal that Congress will not tolerate these human rights abuses.

ZIMBABWE DEMOCRACY AND ECONOMIC RECOVERY AMENDMENT ACT OF 2018

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the bill (S. 2779) to amend the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act of 2001, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

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

There was no objection.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 2779

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Amendment Act of 2018''.

SEC. 2. RECONSTRUCTION AND REBUILDING OF ZIMBABWE.

Section 2 of the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act of 2001 (22 U.S.C. 2151 note; Public Law 107–99) is amended by striking ''and restore the rule of law'' and inserting ''restore the rule of law, reconstruct and rebuild Zimbabwe, and come to terms with the past through a process of genuine reconciliation that acknowledges past human rights abuses and orders inquiries into disappearances, including the disappearance of human rights activists, such as Patrick Nabanyama, Itai Dzamara, and Paul Chizuze''.

SEC. 3. FINDINGS.

Section 4(a) of the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act of 2001 is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking ''costly deployment of troops to the Democratic Republic of the Congo'' and inserting ''private appropriation of public assets''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(6) In October 2016, the Government of Zimbabwe cleared a small hurdle in its longstanding public sector arrears with the IMF.''.

SEC. 4. PROVISIONS RELATED TO MULTILATERAL DEBT RELIEF AND OTHER FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.

Section 4(b)(2) of the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act of 2001 is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), by striking ''to propose that the bank should undertake a review of the feasibility of restructuring, rescheduling, or eliminating the sovereign debt of Zimbabwe held by that bank'' and inserting ''to support efforts to reevaluate plans to restructure, rebuild, reschedule, or eliminate Zimbabwe's sovereign debt held by that bank and provide an analysis based on reasonable financial options to achieve those goals''; and

(2) in subparagraph (B), by striking ''dollar'' and inserting ''currency''.

SEC. 5. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON THE UNITED STATES-ZIMBABWE BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP.

It is the sense of Congress that the United States should seek to forge a stronger bilateral relationship with Zimbabwe, including in the areas of trade and investment, if the following conditions are satisfied:

(1) The Government of Zimbabwe takes the concrete, tangible steps outlined in paragraphs (1) through (4) of section 4(d) of the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act of 2001, as amended by section 6 of this Act.

(2) The Government of Zimbabwe takes concrete, tangible steps towards—

(A) good governance, including respect for the opposition, rule of law, and human rights;

(B) economic reforms that promote growth, address unemployment and underdevelopment, restore livelihoods, ensure respect for contracts and private property rights, and promote significant progress toward monetary policy reforms, particularly with the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe, and currency exchange reforms; and

(C) identification and recovery of stolen private and public assets within Zimbabwe and in other countries.

(3) The Government of Zimbabwe holds an election that is widely accepted as free and fair, based on the following pre- and post-election criteria or conditions:

(A) Establishment and public release, without cost, of a provisional and a final voter registration roll.

(B) The Zimbabwe Electoral Commission is permitted to entirely carry out the functions assigned to it under section 239 of Zimbabwe's 2013 Constitution in an independent manner, and the chairperson meets and consults regularly with representatives of political parties represented in the parliament of Zimbabwe and the parties contesting the elections.

(C) Consistent with Zimbabwe's 2013 Constitution, the Defence Forces of Zimbabwe—

(i) are neither permitted to actively participate in campaigning for any candidate nor to intimidate voters;

(ii) are required to verifiably and credibly uphold their constitutionally-mandated duty to respect the fundamental rights and freedoms of all persons and to be nonpartisan in character; and

(iii) are not permitted to print, transfer, or control ballots or transmit the results of elections.

(D) International observers, including observers from the United States, the African Union, the Southern African Development Community, and the European Union—

(i) are permitted to observe the entire electoral process prior to, on, and following voting day, including by monitoring polling stations and tabulation centers; and

(ii) are able to independently access and analyze vote tallying tabulation and the transmission and content of voting results.

(E) Candidates are allowed access to public broadcasting media during the election period, consistent with Zimbabwe's Electoral Act and are able to campaign in an environment that is free from intimidation and violence.

(F) Civil society organizations are able to freely and independently carry out voter and civic education and monitor the entire electoral process, including by observing, recording, and transmitting publicly-posted or announced voting results at the ward, constituency, and all higher levels of the vote tallying process.

(4) Laws enacted prior to the passage of Zimbabwe's March 2013 Constitution that are inconsistent with the new Constitution are amended, repealed, or subjected to a formal process for review and correction so that such laws are consistent with the new Constitution.

(5) The Government of Zimbabwe—

(A) has made significant progress on the implementation of all elements of the new Constitution; and

(B) has demonstrated its commitment to sustain such efforts in achieving full implementation of the new Constitution.

(6) Traditional leaders of Zimbabwe observe section 281 of the 2013 Constitution and are not using humanitarian assistance provided by outside donor organizations or countries in a politicized manner to intimidate or pressure voters during the campaign period.

SEC. 6. CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS.

Section 4(d) of the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act of 2001 is amended—

(1) in paragraph (3), by striking ''consistent with'' and all that follows through ''September 1998'';

(2) by striking paragraph (4); and

(3) by redesignating paragraph (5) as paragraph (4).

SEC. 7. REMOVAL OF AUTHORITY TO PAY LAND ACQUISITION COSTS.

Section 5(a) of the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act of 2001 is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2), by striking '', including the payment of costs'' and all that follows through ''thereto; and'' and inserting a semicolon;

(2) in paragraph (3), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(4) identify and recover stolen public assets.''.

SEC. 8. INCLUSION OF AUSTRALIA, THE UNITED KINGDOM, THE AFRICAN UNION, AND THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY IN CONSULTATIONS ABOUT ZIMBABWE.

Section 6 of the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act of 2001 is amended by inserting ''Australia, the United Kingdom, the African Union, the Southern African Development Community,'' after ''Canada,''.

SEC. 9. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON ENFORCEMENT OF SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY TRIBUNAL RULINGS.

It is the sense of Congress that the Government of Zimbabwe and the Southern African Development Community (referred to in this section as ''SADC'') should enforce the SADC tribunal rulings issued between 2007 to 2010, including 18 disputes involving employment, commercial, and human rights cases surrounding dispossessed Zimbabwean commercial farmers and agricultural companies.

The bill was ordered to be read a third time, was read the third time, and passed, and a motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks on S. 2779.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Senators FLAKE and COONS for their leadership and sustained engagement on this issue. I also want to thank Chairman SMITH and Ranking Member BASS for their focus on Zimbabwe at the Africa subcommittee.

On July 30th, the people of Zimbabwe will have the opportunity to vote for their next president. As the first election since Robert Mugabe, this is a pivotal moment for Zimbabwe. For 37 years, Zimbabweans have suffered greatly under authoritarian rule and economic devastation. The government drove the economy into the ground and violently suppressed any opposition to their power.

With elections now just days away, the situation in Zimbabwe should be viewed with cautious optimism. I am encouraged by some of the statements and actions taken by the government. President Mnangagwa, along with key opposition candidates, signed a public pledge to ensure peaceful elections. The opposition is allowed to campaign across the country, the voter roll has been released for inspection, and U.S. and international observers will be permitted to observe the elections.

However, reports of voter intimidation, efforts to politicize food aid, and increased military presence in rural polling stations are deeply concerning. The people of Zimbabwe, as well as the international community, remember the horrific violence that occurred during the 2008 elections. That cannot happen again.

That's why this legislation is so critical. This bill makes important changes to update the 2001 Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act. It lays out our expectations for a free and fair election, as well as actions needed to achieve key economic reforms. The expectations of the 2001 legislation hold true today—Zimbabwe must make credible progress towards holding free and fair elections, restore the rule of law, and ensure military subordination to the civilian government, among other desperately needed reforms. These are realistic and universally recognized standards.

Both the government and the opposition must follow through on their statements to hold a free, fair, and credible election on July 30th. This is an opportunity to chart a dramatic new course for Zimbabwe. We urge the next President to take bold and immediate action to address key governance

and economic issues. We stand by the people of Zimbabwe in their efforts to see a more democratic, peaceful, and prosperous Zimbabwe.

HOUR OF MEETING ON TOMORROW

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 9 a.m. tomorrow.

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

There was no objection.

CONGRATULATING R.D. KINSEY

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

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to congratulate my good friend, R.D. Kinsey, on becoming the first African American to be elected as commander of the American Legion Department of Arkansas.

Kinsey is a Vietnam-era veteran of the Air Force and a retired Federal civil service employee. He is the founding member of American Legion Post 74 and has been the post commander every year since that founding in 2004. He decided to step down this spring to seek the State commander's position.

He previously served as the vice chairman of the National Legislative Council of Arkansas and held numerous appointments on the National Legislative Commission. He is a member of the City of Sherwood Civil Service Commission and is the founding president of the Sherwood Citizens Police Academy Alumni Association.

I am proud of my friend, Commander R.D. Kinsey, who has proven his devotion to community and our State and veterans. He will be a great leader for Arkansas' American Legion.

HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES IN PAKISTAN

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

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise to call the House's attention to ongoing human rights abuses in Pakistan, particularly in the province of Sindh. For years, political activists and religious minorities in Sindh have faced daily threats of forced conversion, disappearances by security forces, and murder.

Hundreds of Sindhis remain unaccounted for and others have been held away from their families for months or years to create a climate of fear and repression. There is also a disturbingly high incidence of terrorist violence against religious minorities, which Pakistani security forces have been unable or unwilling to prevent.

I call upon the administration to prioritize these issues with Pakistan, which is conducting their national election today. The assault on religious and ethnic minorities in Pakistan must end, and the hundreds of people who have been detained indefinitely must be released.

RECOGNIZING ''BLUEBONNET BELLE''

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

Mr. WILLIAMS. Mr. Speaker, today I want to recognize the famed *Bluebonnet Belle* C–47 Skytrain in Burnet, Texas, that I represent.

The *Bluebonnet Belle* was designed and built in 1944. It flew more than 75 missions during World War II to carry cargo, passengers, and evacuate casualties.

The Highland Lakes Squadron Commemorative Air Force purchased the *Belle* in 2002 where it then made its way to Burnet, Texas, and has called the Lone Star State home ever since.

As recently as last year, this aircraft was used to transport food and supplies to the good people of Texas who suffered from Hurricane Harvey. It logged 13.6 flight hours going back and forth, which is incredible for a plane of this age.

Unfortunately, on Saturday, June 21, as the plane headed for the Oshkosh Air Show in Wisconsin, it crashed upon takeoff before catching fire and eventually exploding.

By the grace of God, all 13 crew members and passengers aboard the aircraft survived and are now in good spirits and safe.

I am thankful for the first responders who tended the aircrew and to those who helped contain the fire. I am sad to say that the *Bluebonnet Belle* will not be able to be restored. It is a huge loss for Burnet and for Texas 25. We will always remember this plane and all it accomplished across the United States and the world. It was a treasure that cannot be replaced.

In God we trust.

AMERICAN GROWN FLOWER MONTH

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

Ms. PINGREE. Mr. Speaker, as co-chair of the House Cut Flower Caucus, I rise today in recognition of July as American Grown Flower Month.

Every year, U.S. consumers spend billions of dollars on cut flowers, but I think most would be surprised to hear that just 20 percent of these flowers are grown in the United States. The vast majority are imported from Colombia and other countries in South America and Africa.

The U.S.-grown flower industry has shrunk considerably in the last 30 years, but recently it has had a resurgence. As consumers have bought more food from local farmers, they have begun to ask where their flowers come from as well.

The growth in consumer interest has been an opportunity for many farmers I represent to diversify and boost their income. For example, Broadturn Farm in my district has had so much success selling flowers that it now has four acres under cultivation and even offers a flower Consumer Supported Agriculture, or CSA, share.

So, this month, I ask my fellow consumers to ask themselves an important question before their next flower purchase: What better way to celebrate a wedding, offer condolences, or show your appreciation than with flowers that are not only beautiful but also meaningful in their connection to the places where they grow and the people who grow them.

□ 1830

AMERICAN GROWN FLOWER MONTH

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

Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as a co-chair of the Congressional Cut Flower Caucus to recognize July as the American Grown Flower Month.

During the month of July, every State is in the season of harvesting a wide variety of beautiful flowers and blooms. This makes July the perfect month to celebrate America's flower farms in all 50 States and, specifically, Holland America Flower Gardens, located in my district.

Holland America Flower Gardens in Woodland, Washington, is owned and operated by four generations of Dobbe family members. Their expertise in flower bulbs allows for the harvesting of several specialty crops, such as lilies, freesias, peonies, and tulips. Most important, all of their vibrant cut flowers are American grown.

As a cosponsor of H. Res. 413, I support the designation of July as American Grown Flower Month and support America's flower farmers that range in size and economic production, but make up an ever-growing floriculture industry. Flowers grown in the United States create almost $42 million in economic impact daily and support hundreds of growers, thousands of small businesses, and tens of thousands of jobs in the United States.

In addition to the important economic impact, this industry also has a huge cultural impact.

UNDERSTANDING STORM SURGE

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

Mr. MCNERNEY. Mr. Speaker, as we enter the heart of hurricane season, it is important to understand hurricane storm surge.

Storm surge is the abnormal rise in water caused by hurricanes and the deadliest part of the storm. For large storms, mathematical models can predict a storm surge up to 48 hours before landfall. However, a 48-hour window is not sufficient for emergency management to make decisions on an evacuation order needed to save lives.

I recently met a young woman named Cindi-Ann Findley who has been working on solutions to this problem as she completes her undergraduate studies. With a National Science Foundation grant, Cindi-Ann is spending the summer exploring the sensitivities that lead to errors in forecasts by simulating previous storms using a detailed operational model. She hopes to find the characteristics that cause the largest storm surge errors.

Her work illustrates just one way that mathematics can be used to approach real-world problems and save lives.

JOSH REDDICK AND MIRACLE FIELD

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

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Houston Astro's right fielder and a constituent of the First Congressional District of Georgia, Mr. Josh Reddick, for his contribution to his hometown: the Josh Reddick Stadium.

Mr. Reddick is a highly successful Major League Baseball player with a World Series title and two Defensive Player of the Year Awards.

But I am proud of Mr. Reddick for continuing to make his community a top priority and helping to improve the quality of life for children with special needs.

Last year, he donated $1 million to build the state-of-the-art Josh Reddick Baseball Stadium in Effingham County, which is accessible for all children, including those with special needs.

On Saturday, July 21, the stadium officially opened, ready for play.

Thank you, Mr. Reddick, for your gift to Effingham County and for your desire to help all children enjoy the game of baseball. Good luck during the rest of this season in the majors.

HONORING DANA BOWMAN

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

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, John Quincy Adams once said:

> If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more, and become more, you are a leader.

Special Forces Sergeant Dana Bowman is the epitome of that leader, continuously inspiring those around him. Indeed, he is a retired sergeant first class with the U.S. Army Special Forces and a member of the elite parachute team, the Golden Knights.

On February 6, 1994, while training and descending at 300 miles per hour from the plane that dropped him, he collided midair with his teammate, Sergeant Jose Aguillon. The result of that horrendous collision was the unfortunate death of Sergeant Aguillon and the severing of both of Sergeant Bowman's legs, one above the knee and the other below.

Nine months following this deeply tragic event, he became the first double amputee to reenlist in the United States Army.

I witnessed his fortitude firsthand this past week at the 2018 opening of the national Civilian Marksmanship Program in Port Clinton, Ohio. On July 9, at Camp Perry, during the beginning of the shooting matches for this year, Sergeant Bowman began the program by parachuting from very high with a gigantic American flag that he helped unfurl as he landed on Earth. After a few short minutes, Sergeant Bowman landed perfectly right behind the podium. What a sight to behold.

I say to my fellow countrymen, truly, this man embraces the words, ''Land of the free, home of the brave,'' and teaches us all how to rise above adversity and reach beyond whatever limitations life may deliver to any of us.

Godspeed, Sergeant Bowman. You make us proud to be Americans.

GLENVILLE STATE COLLEGE TUITION

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

Mr. MCKINLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Glenville State College in Glenville, West Virginia.

With an enrollment of 1,641 students, Glenville State has emerged as a pivotal institution of higher education in central West Virginia.

Under the leadership of its president, Tracey Pellett, they stand out for their efforts to reduce the cost of tuition, thereby giving more students access to an affordable education.

When we meet with students, their number one concern is the amount of debt that they are accumulating. That is understandable.

Since 1987, nationwide tuition rates have grown more than 213 percent. But since 2016, while most colleges have hiked their tuition, Glenville has frozen their rates and even cut the cost of summer courses by 25 percent.

For the upcoming school year, the school plans on reducing tuition by a full 2 percent. This could be a template for other universities and colleges across the country to follow.

I applaud Glenville State College for its dedication to ensuring that every student can access a quality, affordable education.

WEEKEND VOTING

(Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, sadly, voter turnout in the United States ranks as one of the lowest among developed democratic countries.

We know that low voter turnout results in frustration, apathy, and a democracy that is not truly representative of the public.

Fortunately, Mr. Speaker, there is one relatively easy way that we can address this and improve voter turnout, and that is to switch to weekend voting. Weekend voting is a proven method that increases accessibility, engagement, and turnout.

The reason why we vote on Tuesday in the United States is because of a law that has existed ever since 1845. It was because we didn't want to vote on the Sabbath; it took a day to travel to the county seat; and people needed to get back home in time for market day on Wednesday. Clearly, society has changed a great deal in the last 173 years.

That is why I introduced the Louise Slaughter Weekend Voting Act to officially change election day to the first weekend after the first Friday in November. Weekend voting makes sense, and our representative democracy should demand it.

LOWER PREMIUM PLANS AND HEALTH SAVINGS ACCOUNTS

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

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, for far too long, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle have advocated for a one-size-fits-all approach to healthcare. But as we have learned of the failures of ObamaCare, Federal Government mandates do not work for the American people. They demand choice.

Part of the House Republican's Better Way agenda is to restore the doctor-patient relationship and put patients back in control of their healthcare decisions. That is what we have done today.

I congratulate my colleagues on passage of H.R. 6311. H.R. 6311, the Increasing Access to Lower Premium Plans and Expanding Health Savings Accounts Act, will provide more choice by expanding health savings accounts to help people plan and save for their healthcare needs, while also assessing lower cost healthcare plans.

Instead of paying high premiums, Americans can save their hard-earned money in tax-favored health savings accounts. It also delays ObamaCare's tax on health insurers for an additional 2 years, providing relief from the premium increase caused by the tax itself.

Simply put, our current healthcare system is failing the American people,

and I believe this reform will lower the cost of care while enhancing competition.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA AAA BOND RATING

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

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I ask the House to celebrate the District of Columbia, one of only eight big cities with a AAA bond rating. Indeed, only 22 of the States have a AAA bond rating.

This outsized performance should encourage Congress to recognize the D.C. budget autonomy law, which would improve D.C.'s credit profile even more.

Fully respecting D.C.'s budget autonomy also would mean lower taxes and less Federal funds the District needs from the Federal Government. I have already gotten the rating agencies to count as a positive to D.C.'s credit rating my annual provision in the D.C. appropriation exempting D.C. from the threat of shutdowns when the Federal Government shuts down.

Seven-hundred thousand D.C. residents pay the highest Federal taxes per capita in the United States. The rating agencies have awarded D.C. for ''exemplary fiscal governance.''

Mr. Speaker, I ask the House to do the same by recognizing D.C.'s budget autonomy over its own 100 percent local budget.

REQUEST TO ADDRESS THE HOUSE FOR ONE MINUTE

Mr. MCKINLEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to address the House for 1 minute.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GALLAGHER). The Chair will not entertain more than one 1-minute request per Member per day.

COMMONSENSE GUN LEGISLATION

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

Mr. SUOZZI. Mr. Speaker, on August 14, it will be 6 months since the Parkland shootings. It has been 5 years since the Sandy Hook shootings. It has been 25 years since the Long Island Railroad massacre. And it has been 37 years since President Reagan was shot.

We need commonsense gun legislation in this country, legislation that the vast majority of Americans support, legislation to plug some of the holes in our commercial background checks.

The good news is that high school students and college students in my district are calling attention to this very important issue. I have been meeting with them throughout the year. They come to me and tell me what it is like when there is a fire alarm in their district.

When I was a kid and there was a fire alarm at school, we would be excited to go outside and see our friends and talk to people. Instead, when they hear a fire alarm, they figure out: Where can I hide? Where can I go if this turns out to be a catastrophe?

These students deserve our attention from this body, Democrats and Republicans working together to try to address this very real problem in our country. I am committed to doing it. I hope my colleagues will as well.

□ 1845

REAUTHORIZATION OF THE VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow will be a great day. We will introduce the reauthorization of the historic Violence Against Women Act. We are excited about this introduction because so many women had an opportunity for almost a year and a half, close to 2 years, to discuss, to invest, to make suggestions, and to bring together this collaboration endorsed by the national task force, a bipartisan group of 35 organizations, from religious organizations, to Native American organizations, to organizations that have been on the front lines of protecting women or seeking to stop the violence against women.

We have expanded the rape prevention section, for the rising need for that section as it relates to the #MeToo movement, sexual assault, and sexual harassment.

We are excited by the confidentiality provisions that indicate that Federal and State agencies that are receiving grants must maintain the confidentiality of those who have been victims.

Mr. Speaker, we invite the entire House of Representatives to join us on this historic occasion and support the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act, which will be introduced in the very near future, tomorrow.

NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF GOVERNING BY CONTINUING RESOLUTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WITTMAN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the topic of this Special Order.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the body and my colleagues for joining me today in highlighting the negative impact that continuing resolutions have on our Nation's military, on our national security, and on how this Nation addresses the challenges in our military.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, I would argue that, if you were to come up with a way not to run a government, if you were to come up with a way not to run a business, you would come up with a continuing resolution.

We know how problematic those continuing resolutions are for this Nation. They damage our military readiness. They damage us being able to make long-term decisions. They put our sailors, our marines, our soldiers, and our airmen at risk.

This is not the way for this Nation to do business. Yet, year after year after year, we find ourselves without appropriations bills being done on time. We find ourselves facing government shutdowns. We find ourselves passing continuing resolutions in order to continue government operations.

This is not the way for us to conduct this Nation's business. It is not what our military needs. It is not what we must do to make sure there is certainty in the future for what this Nation must do under Article I, Section 8 of our Constitution.

I have been asked by a number of folks why we need to spend these dollars on our Nation's military, especially to you, ROB WITTMAN, because you are a fiscal hawk. Tell us why the spending is necessary.

Well, I can say this: We have been through, now, almost 8 years of the continuing resolution facade that is brought to us under the guise of sequestration. The Budget Control Act of 2011 was supposed to be the avenue to make the tough decisions on spending in this body. Yet, that didn't happen. And here we are, facing these automatic budgets cuts every year for our Nation's military.

Instead of making those tough decisions or setting the sequester aside, we find ourselves in a situation where, each year, it is another continuing resolution.

I would argue that this is absolutely avoidable. It is avoidable by this body making decisions on time to get appropriations bills passed out of the House, get all those done prior to this body going home for August recess. I want to make sure that those things get done.

I have come to the realization, too, that this body has a variety of choices. It can make the choice to properly fund our Nation's military. It can make the choice to get appropriations bills done on time. It can make the choice to avoid this.

I would argue that, in order to become a more effective and efficient government, these choices have to be made. I would argue that it is actually Members of Congress who should suffer

the consequences if these decisions aren't made on time. That is, if all 12 appropriations bill aren't done out of the House, I think Members should have to stay in town until it is done. I think we shouldn't get to go home on August recess until all 12 appropriations bills are done.

Our men and women in the military are required to do the job on time, and it is a performance standard. They don't get to go on leave unless the mission is accomplished. It should be the same for Members of Congress.

It is also about making priority decisions, Mr. Speaker. Look at what this body has to do, and we absolutely have to perform our constitutional duty. We have to get appropriations bills done to fund our military. We have to make sure we do that in context of also addressing the deficit and the debt.

I would make arguments that we have seen that situation the last several years where it is a matter of priorities. It is a matter of looking at getting both things done, but doing that in a timeframe.

If you look at what a homeowner might face, let's say a homeowner owns a two-story home and they find themselves in this situation. They find themselves, as they drive up the driveway, knowing that their house has termites rife through the foundation, knowing that before they got home. But as they pull up in the driveway, they find that the second floor of their home is on fire.

Now, that homeowner, we know, is going to make a priority decision, like everybody else, and say: Well, what am I going to do? Am I going to put the second floor fire out, or am I going to address the termites?

Well, everybody knows they are going to put the fire out on the second floor. They are going to call the fire department. They are going to do everything they can to address the significance and the priority of the situation that they face in front of them. Then they will make sure that they call the pest exterminator to come in and get rid of the termites.

That is the same situation this Congress finds itself in, to make sure that we take care of the most pressing issue before us as a priority. That is funding our Nation's military, restoring readiness, stopping continuing resolutions, making decisions on appropriations on time, getting that done before the end of the fiscal year so we don't have to do a continuing resolution.

But it doesn't in any way, shape, or form change the scenario that we face with the termites in the foundation. The termites in the foundation of this Nation are our deficit and our debt, and those things, too, must be done. They are also a priority, just not quite as immediate as restoring military readiness, as bringing in the fire department to put out the second floor fire.

For us, the analogy to the fire department is us getting our job done on time, because there is immediacy to that. There is that requirement that we take on the lack of military readiness in this Nation, the challenges that we face.

It is not coming just from this body, Mr. Speaker. It is coming from Secretary James Mattis. In January of this year, Secretary Mattis said this: As hard as the last 16 years have been, no enemy in the field has done more to harm the readiness of the U.S. military than the combined impact of the Budget Control Act's defense spending cuts and operating under continuing resolutions. Those two, added together, create the situation we find ourselves in today.

Mr. Speaker, don't think that our adversaries don't look at that and chuckle a little bit and say this is an entirely avoidable situation. This is a situation that the United States has put itself in, that Congress has put itself in. Don't think that our adversaries haven't taken advantage of that.

Don't think that China doesn't look at this and go: Wow, here is our chance to catch up. Here is our chance to put resources in the right places to gain on the technological front.

In addition to what they steal from us, they also take advantage of this disparity in what we are not doing to rebuild this Nation's military readiness and use this opportunity not only to catch up with us but, in many areas, to surpass us.

The same with Russia. While Russia's economy is much smaller, when we mark time, when we stop making progress in rebuilding our Nation's military, when we don't properly fund training, when we don't properly maintain the equipment that we have, it gives our adversaries an advantage. Don't think that Russia hasn't taken the same advantage of this situation to not only catch up and, in other areas, surpass us, even with the small economy that they have.

The same with North Korea, the same with Iran, the same with anybody out there that is looking to gain an advantage over the United States.

These continuing resolutions that have happened over the past 9 or 10 years have left us in that situation, where we have allowed training to atrophy. We have seen that manifest itself in military units not having the joint training opportunities that they need to have the skills necessary, so that, if we call them into action, they can go with the full scope of abilities to take on any challenge that they may face.

We have an obligation as a Nation to make sure that they have the best training and the best opportunities available, to make sure that they can face their adversaries, that they can fight to victory, and that they can come home safe. We owe them nothing less than that.

Continuing resolutions take resources away from that. They create uncertainty for military leaders to know: Will I have the resources to put in place the training? Will I have the simple elements of training? Will I have the fuel? Will I have the ammunition to make sure that it is a meaningful training exercise?

Those things are lacking when you have a continuing resolution. The automatic budget cuts that come from sequester also add to that.

When you look at our military hardware and look at the time that it needs to be maintained to make sure it is in working order, so that when our men and women in the military need it, when we ask them to go into harm's way, they have systems that work, they have systems that function at the highest level to make sure that they are successful. If we skip maintenance availabilities, if we skip the time necessary, if we delay maintenance, we place risk right there in the hands of our soldiers, sailors, marines, and airmen.

We have seen, over the past 10 years, our force structure rapidly diminishing. We see our force structure in the Navy going from 11 carriers down to nine carriers. That is going to happen over the next 30 years because we haven't made the commitment to make sure that we are building carriers faster than we are retiring them.

We also have to make sure that we are maintaining those ships. That, too, lends itself to problems—ships having to be in port longer when we do maintain them because more things have gone wrong, because we have missed maintenance opportunities.

Our attack submarine force structure is going to be reduced by 20 percent over the next 10 years while, at the same time, our adversaries are building more submarines. They have submarines with greater capabilities.

We are missing an opportunity there to do what we need to do as a Nation. I want to make sure that we are doing those things, and I am going to talk a little bit later on about the specifics about where just the Chinese are surpassing our capabilities there within the submarine realm. We have superiority in the undersea world, but it doesn't come automatically. It doesn't come without commitment. It doesn't come without investment.

Those things absolutely have to happen, Mr. Speaker, in the years to come and, I would argue, not just the years to come, in the days to come, as we look at the National Defense Authorization Act that, hopefully, will come up tomorrow in the conference report for this body to pass, as well as an appropriations bill that will come up that, hopefully, we will get passed here. If not, we will face more continuing resolutions.

Now, I know my colleagues who are here with me today express the same reservations about the impact of continuing resolutions. I am honored to have with us today the gentlewoman from Arizona (Mrs. LESKO), and I yield to the gentlewoman for her perspective

on what impacts continuing resolutions have on this Nation.

Mrs. LESKO. Mr. Speaker, I agree with the gentleman from Virginia. Continuing resolutions are a growing threat to our national security. Yet, for the past 17 years, Congress has forced the Department of Defense to begin the fiscal year under a continuing resolution 13 times.

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Continuing resolutions are designed to temporarily fund the Federal Government if more time is needed to debate and finish remaining appropriations bills; however, they inhibit the Defense Department planning for the future. Not only do they harm us and our ability to deter and defend against emerging threats, but they also put our national security in a gridlock.

Supporting defense programs through prior year funding levels is wasteful and inefficient. Think about it. Are our family's or business' needs the exact same as they were last year? the year before that? Of course not, because as we grow and develop, our needs change.

The short-term fixes of continuing resolutions ultimately obstruct and hinder the military and its responsibility to secure our Nation. The consequences of shutdown politics will ultimately compromise the Department of Defense by inhibiting our military's ability to pursue long-term projects and reforms.

The Department of Defense relies upon multiyear contracts for fighter jets like the F–35, missile defense systems, and other advanced weapons. This is because contracts are usually the most cost-effective means to pay for military equipment.

At Luke Air Force Base, which is in my district, I have heard repeatedly how uncertainty in the defense budget and the restrictions that come from continuing resolutions have stalled the Air Force's F–35 fighter jet program. This is not acceptable. We must change how we do business and fund our single most important responsibility in Congress: our national defense.

We all agree that we must provide a common defense for our country, and we need to stop letting political grandstanding get in the way of that. We have worked too hard to begin rebuilding our military in a meaningful way to let shutdown politics put our Nation at risk.

While I am pleased and proud at what the House has done, that we have done our job and voted to approve both the National Defense Authorization Act and the Department of Defense Appropriations bill for fiscal year 2019, our work is not done. We must work with our counterparts in the Senate to ensure these bills are signed into law.

We cannot stop falling back on continuing resolutions to determine our military's defense budget. We must keep working for the men and women who put their lives at risk every day to defend our freedom.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Virginia, Representative WITTMAN, for his commitment to our military.

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Arizona, and I would like to ask that she maybe elaborate a little bit more.

I think the gentlewoman brings up a great point about the impact on the Air Force, with Luke Air Force Base being there in her district, and the impact on airmen, the impact on the job that they do. I would love to have her share a little bit more about the conversations that I know she has had a lot with members of the military back in her district, but especially there at Luke Air Force Base, maybe elaborate a little bit more on the specific impacts that they deal with on a daily basis there at Luke Air Force Base.

Mrs. LESKO. Mr. Speaker, yes, we have Luke Air Force Base in my district in Arizona. And it is not only a powerful base for the defense of our Nation; it is the largest training base for our fighter jets in the entire Nation. We have F–35s. Prior to that, we had F–16s.

Just like everything else, just like a family, we need to know what our budget is long term, because we need to train our fighter pilots. We need to know how many hours of funding we have to do that. We need to have a reliable amount of money that we can depend on in order to enter contracts.

So this whole continuing resolution thing, we really need to get past that.

I was the senate appropriations chairman in Arizona, and I heard over and over and over again from businesses that: We just need something to rely on. We need something that is steady.

And that is what we need. We need to pass a budget that really puts the defense of our country front and center because, after all, that is Congress' number one job.

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I agree fully with the gentlewoman from Arizona, and I thank her so much for being part of this Special Order this evening.

Mr. Speaker, I think there are a number of important points that the gentlewoman from Arizona brings up. And she talks about training. I think training is one of those elements that is absolutely essential for us to remember that that training doesn't happen by accident. It happens because of concerted efforts here in Congress, within the Pentagon, within the service branches, all the way down to the unit level to make sure that training takes place.

But it doesn't take place when there is uncertainty about funding, because what is the first thing in a budget that gets put on hold when it pertains to our service branches? When they look at uncertainty, what is the place where they have the maximum flexibility? It is training.

When you look at it, they have money that is already obligated in programs to do things like build ships, to build aircraft, but the one place where they can move money around is for training. I can tell you that that has a tremendous impact on units at the unit level, commanders trying to figure out: How am I going to make sure my units get the training?

As I spoke of earlier, it is not just about tactical training; it is about training at the strategic level. How do you interact with other service branches so, if you find yourselves in a major conflict, you can work across service branches to make sure you have the proficiency to be successful on that mission, to be successful in battle?

Those things are critical, and that doesn't come automatically. That comes with repeated training at the highest levels, and it comes with assurance that the resources are going to be there so our military leaders can plan for that. We want to make sure that that gets done on a timely basis.

I understand, too, that there is a lot of hesitancy in folks to say: Well, if we can't reach a conclusion on spending decisions, then the best thing to do is a continuing resolution.

I would argue that that is not the case. I would argue that this goes right down to the command level. It goes to our combatant commanders who have to deal with this every day.

Our combatant commanders are faced with threats that are on their doorstep every day, and there is no place where this threat is more apparent on a daily basis than what our Pacific Command faces with the aggression of the Chinese, with the aggression of North Korea there in the Pacific.

Admiral Harris, the previous Commander of PaCOM, I think said it extraordinarily well. He said this:

''The Pacific is the principal space where submarines are the most important warfighting capability we have. As far as Virginia-class submarines, it is the best thing we have. . . . My submarine requirement is not met in the Pacific Command, and I am just one of many combatant commanders that will tell you that. . . . ''

That brings us back to the subject of submarines. Attack submarines, our ability to go undetected around the world to sense what our adversaries do and also to understand that that threat is real, we have, today, an advantage in the undersea world, but that advantage continues to wane because we are not making the progress in keeping up with building submarines in relation to retiring submarines. That, I think, is key, Mr. Speaker.

I want to point to this chart on the floor. I am going to walk there.

As we see from the chart, we see the U.S. fleet of attack submarines, and we see what happens when we come to 2029. We reach a low point, a low point where this Nation only has 42 attack submarines when we get to 2029.

You see the chart where our adversaries go. You see where the Chinese

go: a significant increase in submarines because they see the value of submarines; they see that attack submarines give them a strategic advantage in the Pacific.

It is pretty simple, folks. It is a geography lesson.

The Pacific is water, and in order to maintain strategic importance in that region, you have to control the undersea domain. The Chinese understand that. We used to understand it, until now, when we see that our attack submarine force is going down to a low of 42 submarines. We don't get back to where we need to be to get anywhere close to the Chinese until 2050.

Now, what happens in the meantime when the Chinese now surpass us, have that strategic advantage? And I would argue, when the Chinese have that strategic advantage, it will embolden them. They will look at this as an opportunity to say: Wow. The United States is really not committed to a naval presence in this area of the world. We are not only going to express that naval dominance in our territorial waters, but we are going to even move out into the South China Sea, move into the Pacific, into the Indian Ocean, even the Atlantic Ocean.

We look at how they are spreading their influence and presence today. It is all over the world, folks. So our signal that we are sending to them, saying, ''Hey, we are just not going to build submarines; we are going to retire them faster than we are building them,'' has an impact. And it gets exacerbated when we have continuing resolutions or we don't make the commitment necessary that comes with getting appropriations bills passed on time. This puts us at a strategic disadvantage.

If you add, now, attack submarines with ballistic missile submarines—which, by the way, we are starting down the road to build the replacement for our *Ohio*-class submarines that are the most important part of the nuclear triad, I believe, for this Nation—the delta gets even bigger, because it is going to be all we can do to build the replacement submarines for the *Ohio*-class.

But what is happening is that the Chinese are building even more ballistic missile submarines. So if you add attack submarines and ballistic missile submarines, you have a number somewhere around 70 total submarines in 2020 that the Chinese will have.

They, potentially, are building at a rate of five to six additional submarines each year, combined attack submarines and ballistic missile submarines, which would put them in the realm, by the time we get down in 2028, well above 100 total submarines, where we are going to be struggling with our reduction in submarines at 42 and just beginning to build the new ballistic missile submarine, and in an area where you hear from Admiral Harris the most requested asset in the United States military is the attack submarine. It is where we have dominance. It is where we are yielding dominance with just the Chinese. That doesn't even include the Russians, who have developed a very advanced ballistic missile submarine, the Severodvinsk class, that is an extraordinarily capable submarine.

If we don't have attack submarines to keep up with their submarines, a nation that has a large stockpile in inventory of nuclear weapons that are deployed on submarines, then the question becomes: If you combine that with the Chinese, where does it leave this Nation? It leaves us with a strategic capability that is lacking in relation to our adversaries.

And, folks, if you look at times in the history of the world where there have been conflicts between major powers, those conflicts have been a result of a major imbalance between those powers.

If we allow this imbalance to continue because Congress goes down the road of continuing resolutions, which continues to erode the ability for us to deploy dollars to do things like build submarines, if we don't get past the sequester, which puts artificial reductions in our defense budget while, at the same time, our adversaries are increasing their efforts, we will find ourselves in that situation in the not too distant future where we say: How did we get here? How did we find ourselves in this strategic position where our adversaries now don't have to do a whole lot to surpass us, where we embolden our adversaries, where we put ourselves in the position where are adversaries say: It won't take much for us to take on the United States and do that successfully?

That, I think, is the key of what we have to address.

Mr. Speaker, I want to yield to my colleague from Pennsylvania for his perspective, because I think he has a very unique perspective not just on major powers, but specifically on where Russia plays in this.

We talked about China, but I want to yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania to get his perspective on how this major power imbalance affects the United States' security, affects our strategic ability to deter our adversaries, and I would like to recognize his perspective.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ROTHFUS).

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Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Virginia for yielding. It wasn't too long ago that we had the gentleman visit our district in western Pennsylvania to talk to a number of folks in the defense industry, and I just applaud him for his very serious work on the Armed Services Committee.

He is good to highlight the situations that we come into when we see these continuing resolutions, the damage it does to our military, the need for long-term planning, how we have threats around the world, both emerging threats that continue to evolve, but there are our old adversaries and not-so-old adversaries: Russia, China, North Korea, Iran, and global terror networks.

We could go on and on and on, but we have to have a military that is ready to respond. And we cannot be holding our military budget hostage to any other part of the Federal Government. It makes no sense.

Speaking of one of those adversaries, I want to talk a little bit about Russia, because Russia has been in the news so much lately. Mr. Speaker, I want to talk about Russia and the threat it poses to us and our allies.

For the past 40 years or so, I would describe myself as a hawk when it comes to Russia. As such, I would like to welcome my friends from across the aisle who are finally starting to express their concerns about the Russian bear. The question I have is: What took so long?

Russia has been an adversary of the United States and the West for decades. I will spare the House a lengthy history lesson and then, instead, focus on the recent past. This is important because in conversations I have had back home, there are some constituents who are unaware of that history.

Next month will mark 10 years since Russia invaded the Republic of Georgia. In response to this, then-President George W. Bush condemned the action saying:

> The territorial integrity and borders of Georgia must be respected, just as those of Russia or any other country.

Less than 7 months after the 2008 Georgia invasion, however, during the opening days of the Obama administration, then-Secretary of State Clinton presented a reset button to Russian's foreign minister, as if it was the prior administration's fault for Russia's aggression and consequent chilly relationship.

And mere months after hitting the reset button, we learned President Obama was shutting down a proposed missile defense system in Poland and the Czech Republic. Some reset.

Within the aura of this reset, a Russian bank paid Secretary Clinton's husband $500,000 for a 1-hour speech in Moscow. That is some billable rate, even for a Yale Law School graduate.

At the same time, a Russian company was preparing to take a controlling interest in Uranium One, a corporation that held 20 percent of the U.S's uranium supply. That foreign acquisition required the approval of the Obama administration and Secretary Clinton. Approval was granted.

Ultimately, The New York Times reported that $2.3 million of contributions from Uranium One connections flowed to the Clinton Foundation. But that has not seemed to draw concerns from the new Democrat Russia hawks from across the aisle.

Later, as Secretary Clinton wrapped up her State Department tenure in

2012, President Obama, not aware that a microphone was picking him up said to then-Russian President Medvedev:

This is my last election. After my election, I will have more flexibility.

And Medvedev responded:

I will relay that to Vladimir.

That would be Vladimir Putin. The flexibility was about missile defense. President Obama even mocked Mitt Romney in a 2012 Presidential debate after Romney identified Russia as our biggest geopolitical threat.

President Obama glibly responded to Romney: ''And, the 1980s are now calling to ask for their foreign policy back . . . ''

During President Obama's second term, we saw continued indifference towards Russia, Crimea, Eastern Ukraine, the downing of Malaysia Airlines Flight 17, Russian violations of the Reagan-Gorbachev Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, ceding Middle East influence that fueled the growth of ISIS, and failure to respond to Bashar al-Assad's use of chemical weapons, to name a few. And not once do I recall ever hearing a peep from my friends across the aisle, even after President Obama drew his infamous red line.

Let's compare the response to the shooting down of Korean Airlines Flight 007 to that of flight MH17. Brilliantly, U.N. Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick publicly prosecuted and convicted Russia at the United Nations for shooting down KAL Flight 007, which killed 269 innocent civilians, including Congressman Larry McDonald.

The KAL 007 shoot down dramatically increased our resolve to collapse the evil empire. However, the Obama administration never thoroughly prosecuted the case for Russia's culpability for the MH17 shoot down.

In the midst of all this, Russia was plotting to interfere in our elections. Ignoring the 1980s calling about the foreign policy, the Obama administration did not take the Russia threat seriously. They never picked up the voicemail that the 1980s left.

It was the last administration's failure to understand the threat that Russia posed that virtually paved the way for the aggressive Russia we see today. Throughout the Obama administration, Secretary Clinton and others failed to confront Russian hostility, the result of a reset button.

The reality is that Vladimir Putin wants to sow discord in the West. He would cause trouble to whoever was in the White House. Interestingly, when Putin said in Helsinki that he wanted Trump to win, it was amazing to see people accept his remarks without a hint of skepticism, even though Putin is a former KGB agent and a master of disinformation. Let me repeat that. Vladimir Putin is a former KGB agent and a master of disinformation.

It is President Trump that wants to arm Ukrainians. He is demanding that Germany stop buying gas from Russia. He is advancing American energy development, as opposed to the Obama administration that sought to curtail it. And when Russia's puppet, Assad, used chemical weapons on his own people, President Trump responded with military force.

From that perspective, would Putin, the master of disinformation, really have preferred President Trump over President Clinton? The American people can draw their own conclusions. While my friends across the aisle seem to have awoken to the threat that Russia presents, going forward, I hope they remain as concerned about Russia and President Putin as they are about President Trump.

For starters, they could show up by helping to get to the bottom of the Uranium One scandal. Meanwhile, on our side of the aisle, we take Russia seriously and have done so for decades. We are providing military assistance to Ukraine. We are passing new Russian sanctions legislation on top of what we passed earlier this year. We are the ones countering Russia's influence in the Middle East and their ally, Iran.

When it comes to checking Russia, it is Republicans, not Democrats, who have the established record of doing so, and we will continue to do that for as long as Russian hostility exists.

I simply implore President Trump to be vigilant and clear and heed the concerns of my fellow Republican legislators who have engaged on Russian matters for years.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his work on this area.

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania for outlining very in-depth the impact that Russia has on the United States, the responses that are needed to be strong against Russian aggression, against the things that they are trying to do to destabilize this Nation.

I appreciate the gentleman's leadership there in pointing that out and calling everyone to task to make sure that we, as a Nation, are acting to make sure we are doing the right things, to make sure, too, we point out past instances where there have been inconsistencies in how this issue has been addressed with previous administrations.

I deeply appreciate that. I think it is an important part of our discussion here today about what we have to do to counter those threats, the obligation this Nation has to counter those threats. The gentleman has laid it out very plainly, very succinctly, and very clearly for what the obligation of this Nation is, and calling upon our colleagues on the other side of the aisle to be as committed to countering Russia as we are on this side of the aisle. So I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Speaker, I want to also point out that it is not just the strategic impact that continuing resolutions and lack of on-time appropriations bills has on our Nation strategically. We pointed those out, the threats that are there, but also the impact that it has at the individual level; the impact that it has on sailors, on soldiers, marines, and airmen.

We saw this past year in two ship collisions where 17 sailors died on board the USS *Fitzgerald* and the USS *McCain*. And we see that there was a contributory factor for the lack of training on those ships, the issues of material readiness on those ships that goes back to continuing resolutions and not adopting appropriations bills on time.

The uncertainty that comes with that and the lack of resources dedicated for proper training, for proper maintenance, did have a contributory effect there. It didn't create the sole impact necessary for those unfortunate incidents to occur, but it did contribute to those incidents.

In avoiding continuing resolutions, we can send a clear message to our men and women in the military, to their families, that this Nation is committed to their wellbeing; that this Nation is committed to them getting the mission done; that this Nation is committed to giving them the best; to give them the tools that they need to succeed; to give them the ability, when called upon, to fight to victory and come home safe.

We, as a Nation, owe them nothing less. And when we have continuing resolutions, or lack of adopting appropriations bills on time, we are not sending the message to them and their families that we are committed to reducing their risk. That is key for us to make sure that we get that done. And it is also a commitment that we have to taxpayers to assure them that we will spend money efficiently and effectively to defend this Nation.

Continuing resolutions are not effective or efficient ways to spend money. Not getting appropriations bills done on time do not allow long-term planning.

And let me tell you, our adversaries long-term plan. And they look at our lack of long-term commitment here as a vulnerability. And, indeed, it is. It is a vulnerability not only for our Nation, but it is a vulnerability that we see manifested in the risks that our sailors, soldiers, and marines face, and, ultimately, those who gave their lives in avoidable accidents on board those ships.

It is not just ships, Mr. Speaker. It is also aircraft. We have seen an inordinate number of aircraft crashes this year and last year that are associated with lack of maintenance on those aircraft, in some instances, tangentially associated with training. Those things are preventable. They are preventable if we adopt appropriations bills on time for our Nation's defense, and avoid continuing resolutions.

We must make sure that we get that job done on time. And I can tell you that it is not just Members that see it that way, but it is also the Speaker. In fact, PAUL RYAN was quoted just yesterday saying: ''We really just want to get the military funded on time, on

budget, on schedule this year and that's the primary concern.''

He pointed that out because that is the primary concern for what we are facing with getting appropriations bills done on time. That is the primary consideration in getting the National Defense Authorization Act conference report out of the House tomorrow so that it can get over to the Senate so that they can get it done on time.

If this gets done this year, Mr. Speaker, it will be the soonest it has been done in almost 30 years.

Why is this year the exception? This should be the rule. We should be getting these things done early, getting it done in time so that we can get an appropriations bill done prior to the end of the fiscal year. Those are obligations that this Nation has to make sure that we get that done on time.

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The NDAA has some very important elements in it this year that are critical to our Nation's military readiness, critical to our getting the job done for our men and women in the military, and critical to making sure that we can counter the threats that we know are there from our adversaries. It accelerates U.S. efforts to field conventional prompt strike capability before fiscal year '22. Those things are critical. That strike capability is the deterrence for our members of the military. Those things absolutely must happen, and this bill lets us get that done.

It also focuses on rebuilding the nuclear deterrence of our Nation. Nuclear deterrence is the way we keep our adversaries at bay; and when they look at us and don't see a commitment there that is expressed in getting appropriations bills done on time and having ourselves in these continuing resolutions debacles year after year after year, they look at it as a vulnerability.

It also allows us to improve our missile defense. An aging missile defense, one that in comparison to upgrades by our adversaries, put us in a terrible strategic position.

Also enhancing our space warfighting. The disparity that we have in space operations with our adversaries is mind-boggling. The only way that we close that delta is to make the commitment and put the resources in place on time.

Mr. Speaker, I want to put in perspective where we are today and the waste that occurs with a continuing resolution.

I will conclude my remarks with the comments of Secretary Richard Spencer that he outlined on our behavior that this body has put in place since 2011. He actually came before the House Armed Services Committee and said this, he said:

> We have put $4 billion in a trash can, poured lighter fluid on it, and burned it. $4 billion is enough to buy a squadron of F–35s, two Arleigh Burke-class destroyers, 3,000 Harpoon missiles. It is enough money to buy us additional capacity that we need today in order to counter the threats that we find ourselves facing around the world. Instead, it's lost because of inefficacy in the ways of the continuing resolution.

Mr. Speaker, this is an entirely avoidable situation, one that Congress year after year after year finds itself in a position to address, yet chooses not to. It is not just a single continuing resolution. Last year we found ourselves in a situation of having four continuing resolutions that took us 6 months into the budget year and then finally coming up with an appropriations bill that finished the year with 6 months of funding that was supposed to take place over 12 months.

So, Mr. Speaker, not only did you miss out on the certainty with the first 6 months of funding that was done by continuing resolutions, but now you take 12 months' worth of money and try to pack it into 6 months, and we wonder why there is inefficiency there. We wonder why money is pushed out the door in ways that waste money.

The Secretary of the Navy pointed it out and showed us the ills of our ways, and what we can do to avoid this, what we can do to make sure that resources will get to the right place, get there on time, can be efficiently deployed where there is certainty in what our military needs to plan for the long-term needs that this Nation has left unaddressed, for the long-term needs of rebuilding readiness.

It hasn't happened, Mr. Speaker, and it is entirely avoidable. We have that full ability in our grasp to make sure this doesn't happen again.

Again, if we were to come up with the worst way to run a business and with the worst way to run a government, it would be a continuing resolution. It is avoidable.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues that when the National Defense Authorization Act conference report comes up before this body that they vote ''yes,'' that we do that this year in the quickest timeframe we have done in nearly 30 years.

And that when the Defense Appropriation bill comes before this body—after the Senate puts together whatever they will put together—that we must get the defense of this Nation funded prior to the end of the budget year.

If we do that, then the 17 billion additional dollars that we put towards helping our soldiers, our sailors, our marines to do the job we ask them to do will be there. To deter our adversaries around the world, the resources in order to accomplish that will be there. To do anything less is a disservice to this Nation. To do anything less is a disservice to the men and women who serve in our military. To do anything less is disrespectful to their commitment to our Nation, and the commitment that their families make to this Nation.

We can do better. We must do better. And we have an opportunity in the weeks to come to do better.

Mr. Speaker, I urge Members to show the same kind of commitment for this Nation's military through no continuing resolutions and through passing appropriations bills for our defense on time. That same commitment should be shown by us as the commitment by our brave men and women in uniform.

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

FEDERAL EMPLOYEE UNIONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GARRETT). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include any extraneous material on the subject of my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia?

There was no objection.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor today to speak to two issues. One, is the dagger thrown at the heart of the right of Federal employees to organize. The second will be ICE raids that randomly rounded up residents of the District of Columbia without a warrant and without any cause.

Let me proceed first to the gang-up on Federal employees by the executive and Republicans in the House to undermine the rights of Federal unions to represent Federal employees.

We have seen Republicans for years try to weaken the rights of Federal employees. Certainly, we have seen them go at unions before. But this time, they have gone even further. The intention to destroy the right of a union to represent Federal employees is the clear intent of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle.

I shall explain why that intent is so obvious this evening. The American Federation of Government Employees had a rally today. Attending also were many other employee unions, but the AFGE led the rally because of the acute danger that the current work of the Republican House and the President present to the right to organize and to be represented.

Federal employees are represented in virtually every category of work by the AFGE. If we look at what the President and the House Republicans are doing, it is clear that they have declared war on their own Federal employees. They have done it by striking at the heart of the right to be represented by a Federal union.

I will explain how they have moved against that right, but, first, let me explain where that right comes from and why there is any such right at all.

You certainly don't have that kind of right in the business sector. You can't

go to the business sector and say: Hey, look, I have a right to have a union here.

You have to fight for it, and I might add, so do Federal unions have to fight for it. They have to get their cards and the Federal employee votes. But there is an important trade-off here. The Civil Service Reform Act of 1978, recognizing that the Government did not want to allow Federal workers the right to strike—which is a constitutional right—designed a system which is indeed a trade-off. You will give up the right to strike, and, in return, you, Federal employees, will have the right to be represented by a union if you win a union election and the Federal Government will not oppose your right to organize.

That is very important because employers in the private sector, of course, do oppose. I don't mean to say that Federal agencies don't try their best to see that an agency doesn't get representation, but they cannot simply keep that from occurring. That is the trade-off from the Civil Service Reform Act.

One of the most important aspects of the right to represent Federal employees is to use official time-on-the-job to represent employees to settle matters with a Federal agency. That is the whole reason that this right was given in the first place. Even apart from a right to strike, if you have an employee who has a grievance, there has got to be some way to make sure that grievance is attended to.

Official time use, by another Federal employee operating as a volunteer, allows such matters to be settled in a peaceful way without a strike. What the official time means is, an employee says: With no pay, I agree to help other employees through the system to have their matter brought to the agency and somehow dealt with. They either win or they lose or they settle. Employees often don't understand the system. They don't use the system every day, so a volunteer works to help them use the official time.

Now, official time only means that that volunteer employee is given time from his or her work to represent this person. Does that mean the person doesn't have any work? It does not. It is a real sacrifice, Mr. Speaker. That person isn't given a lesser workload, that person has to find a way to get that done and to represent employees as well, or to trade off with another employee who will also represent employees.

Remember, this is to keep labor peace and to keep the Federal Government working so that there is a civilized way to settle a matter between the Federal employer and an employee.

But the AFGE has had to turn to the courts in order to get this right enforced.

Why in the world would that be necessary given the Civil Service Reform Act of 1978?

It is going to be necessary because what is being proposed in this House is in violation of that act.

I shall explain. Republicans today are so intent on destroying unions—understand, unions are not nearly as powerful as they once were decades ago—but Republicans are so intent on destroying unions that in the case of Federal employees, they are using the two branches of Government at once—remember, they control three—the two political branches of Government to destroy the representation of a union.

They control the executive, they control the House, they control the Senate. So they pull all stops, using all of their energy and all of their power against their own Federal workers.

I think of it as a two-fisted approach. One fist is pending on this House floor, as I speak. Indeed, it is due to come to the House floor in September. It is a bill I fought in committee along with many other members.

You can't just abolish official time to represent employees, because the Civil Service Reform Act gives them that right.

This is why I think that what the House does in this bill cannot stand, because what it does is to so reduce the amount of time, so-called official time, that you can help many employees get through the system. You are like a lawyer. The employee is fresh to the system, so he or she needs somebody to tell the employee how to get through the system.

But if there is so little time, while you are helping one employee who may be using up all the time that the House Republican bill would give, which is one-quarter of the time that is now being allowed.

Where did they get that figure from? Nowhere.

□ 1945

It is just a matter of not being able to wipe it all out, so let's wipe out almost all of it. It gives so little time to represent all those who need to go through the system with the help of a volunteer employee that I do not believe, for a moment, that this matter will stand. That is why I think the AFGE was right to go to court now. I will tell you in a moment why it has gone to court, even though this bill has not passed the House, as I speak.

Not only is so little time given that you couldn't possibly handle all of those who have issues or grievances—it is only a quarter of the time an employee has, that has been previously spent helping other employees to get through the process. There also is an enforcement mechanism in the House bill that is truly vicious.

If you go into overtime in helping another employee, you will do so at your own risk, because you will lose your pension credits if you devote more than the amount of time prescribed in this bill. That loss of pension credits is also without due process and arbitrary. That also is why I believe this bill can't stand. But my Republican friends are so anxious to cripple Federal employee unions that they also have asked for the other fist, a Trump executive order.

If you look at this executive order, which is essentially the same thing as the pending bill, you can't help but ask: Why two fists on these Federal workers? Why get the President and the Republican House to promise to do the same thing? How many branches, how many arms of government do you need to try to stamp out the rights of Federal employees?

I believe I know why the House has turned to President Trump. The House bill is so extreme, so clearly illegal, in my judgment, that it will be difficult to get it through the Senate. So, the President, who obviously has control over the workforce, is being asked to do the same thing by executive order.

I don't believe he can do it. I don't believe he can just wipe out official time, if not all of it, so much of it, so that employees cannot be served. But the President may have preempted the House bill, that may come on the floor in September, by his executive order against official time.

If you play chess though, watch out, because he has hopped right into it. Now that he has signed an executive order, now that he has come forward with an executive order, he has allowed the AFGE to make a brilliant move.

Before the ink was dry on the executive order, the AFGE had gone to court, in a brilliant chess move. And I have no doubt that they will win in court because the flaws of the bill are so clear. I think courts will agree with AFGE. Had the Republicans tried to kill official time and the Senate or to get the same thing through an executive order, you have the same problem, even perhaps worse.

The executive order is a clear violation of the Civil Service Reform Act.

Understand why the act has worked for so many decades. It is because of labor peace, to use a word that is often used to describe why unions have been important in the Federal sector. You need labor peace. You don't need strikes or disruption by Federal employees.

But you have got to have a tradeoff. That tradeoff is adequate representation through a formal process. If that formal process is cut to smithereens and you leave a figment of it in place, don't think that the Federal courts will be fooled by that. This process has worked, but it won't if you make it impossible to do the job that the Civil Service Reform Act prescribes, and that is to represent Federal employees.

Now, the unions aren't fools. They recognize they can't depend on the House or the President. They also recognize there is an election coming up and they know that, at least as of the moment, the people are there to correct for issues either ignored in this House or by threats like the pending bill and the executive order on official time that threatens their rights.

The all-powerful Federal Government has absolutely nothing to lose by allowing its employees, who have so little authority, fair access to a process that does no more than allow them to be heard before all-powerful Federal agencies.

What could the largest employer in the world be afraid of?

It looks as if it is afraid of its own employees, ordinary citizens represented also by Members of the House and the Senate, who ask for no more than a process and, if I may say so, a fair process to be heard, a process that does not show anything like guaranteed winning, but it is at least a process.

Well, perhaps these employees are to be feared after all because today they showed up in great numbers. Remember, they showed up on the streets of Washington, D.C., but there are millions of them throughout the United States. They showed up in a fighting mood, fighting back.

I am pleased to come to the floor to represent the thousands of employees who showed up. I am simply one among hundreds of Members of the House who will always show up for workers when their rights are being threatened.

As it turns out, the American Federation of Government Employees represents both D.C. employees of the D.C. government and Federal employees of the Federal Government and I am proud to represent them all.

All that my Republican friends have done is raise their fighting spirit, which has already shown that our chances of taking back the House of Representatives have grown every single day.

The second issue I want to say a word about has to do with indiscriminate raids of the kind we have never had in the United States of America before. These are raids on residents. I have seen their effect here, so I will talk about these residents living in the District of Columbia.

When you hear of such raids and indiscriminate arrests, perhaps you will understand why cities like the District of Columbia have declared themselves to be sanctuary cities that protect, particularly, their immigrant residents from arbitrary action, recognizing that they will not be able and do not wish to protect them when, in fact, there is a right to take them back to where they came from. But that is not what I am talking about this evening.

In the District of Columbia, at least a dozen individuals were arrested last week when it is clear that they would not have been arrested had there been a warrant or had anything but racial profiling—racial and ethnic profiling, I might add—been used, a brazen act.

As it turns out, some of the people arrested were, for example, MS–13. So far as the numbers show, that is 37. Those are people for whom they had a warrant. Those are people for whom there is probable cause that they committed a crime. But that is 37 out of 132. They never could have gotten the rest of these residents without indiscriminate racial profiling.

What did they do?

First of all, they went to predominantly Latino D.C. neighborhoods, and they went there for a reason. They snatched what appeared to be anyone on the streets who looked like the people they wanted, based on race or appearance.

When you have, in the United States, police picking up people based on their appearance, you understand what a police state looks like. The reaction will be, I am sure, intimidation from going into the streets of your own city.

Now, ICE boasts that it went looking and found people who present a significant security threat, but they were only able to show 37 such people. When you round up citizens without a warrant and without probable cause based on what they look like, that is what you get: indiscriminate arrests, arrests based on appearance, arrests where you cannot possibly show a significant public safety threat.

I am not here to say that MS–13 or others who pose such a threat should not be arrested. I am here to say that breaking up families is an outrageous way to enforce a law and does not, in fact, do so.

The Washington field office was responsible for this roundup, and they have indicated the people whom they arrested.

I am not here on this floor this evening to defend—here I am reading from people they say they arrested—the El Salvadoran national identified as a high-ranking MS–13 member.

I am not here on this floor to defend a Bolivian national who has four prior convictions for rape and intercourse with a victim under 13. They are not what I am here talking about.

□ 2000

I am here talking about people who were in the streets minding their own business, with no criminal arrests, with no criminal background, with families at home waiting for them.

Yes, we have got to deport people from this country, even if they come in ways that we could otherwise understand. Deportation has to occur. It occurred in the last administration. Some were deported right at the border. I am not here making the case to open the borders wide open and let everybody in.

But the courts have already turned around the procedures now being employed, because every day you read in the papers and see on television how many families have been disunited, children and parents broken up, parents deported without their children. The authorities are still looking to unite hundreds of children with their parents. That just isn't what we do in the United States of America.

Since one of these roundups occurred here in the Nation's Capital, and the shame is that it would occur in the Capital of the United States, I thought it was my responsibility to come to this floor to call it out and to indicate that these raids are one of the reasons why the District of Columbia will always be a sanctuary city—not a city for MS–13, not a city for those who should be deported, but a city for those who have a right to go through a lawful process.

We will not stand for residents to be rounded up in the streets. That means that each and every one of us could be rounded up in the streets based on what we look like. We will not have it. We will resist it.

There is a way to deport people. There is a way to make sure that you come into this country legally and to make sure that you are deported if you do not.

The wrong way to do it, the way that we cannot tolerate, is to go to police state tactics, unknown before in our country, and particularly police state tactics in the Capital of the United States, Washington, D.C.

So, Mr. Speaker, as the House prepares to go home later in the week, these are two issues I felt I had to put before this body. I would hope that we all would think of better ways to accomplish our ends.

If our problem is with Federal employees, let's deal with that problem and not try to nullify a statute that took into account our differences, the Civil Service Reform Act.

As for Hispanics and other immigrants being snatched off the streets, I would hope that I do not stand alone in saying tonight that that is not the American way. There are hundreds of jurisdictions that are with us as sanctuary cities to stand and say that that is not the American way. I am pleased that the courts of the United States have protected sanctuary cities just as these cities have protected residents from arbitrary treatment in the United States of America.

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

REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS) for 30 minutes.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the topic of my Special Order.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, as co-chair of both the Hellenic Caucus and the Congressional Hellenic-Israel Alliance, I rise tonight with my colleagues to provide an update on one of the United States' most strategic allies, the Republic of Cyprus.

Sadly, Mr. Speaker, this year marks the 44th anniversary of the illegal invasion and occupation of 40,000 Turkish troops in Cyprus. Turkey, a NATO ally, must cease its inflammatory rhetoric, normalize relations with the Republic of Cyprus, and commit to peacefully working toward a negotiated solution. Greek and Turkish Cypriots, Mr. Speaker, deserve an end to the senseless division and occupation.

Despite the challenge of continued occupation, Cyprus has long been a strong and faithful ally of the United States. Due to Cyprus' unique geopolitical role in the eastern Mediterranean, it is in the best interests of our country, the United States of America, to support peace and the end of this illegal occupation. Cyprus' special geopolitical position stems from its location at the southeasternmost corner of the EU.

The eastern Mediterranean is turbulent, Mr. Speaker, but holds a promise of significant opportunity. Cyprus' status as an EU member state, as well as its excellent longstanding relations with its neighbors, enhances its strategic importance to the United States.

Cyprus has taken steps in recent years to facilitate international partnerships and demonstrated an impressive ability to serve as a catalyst in the development of mutually beneficial goals among countries in the region and around the globe.

Of equal importance, Cyprus also enjoys a longstanding record of serving as an unwavering U.S. ally by promoting regional stability, energy security, and counterterrorism efforts. Regional stability is a necessary precursor to attainment of its full economic, social, and strategic potential.

Moderate countries in the eastern Mediterranean have an obligation to strengthen their ties because, the stronger the bonds, the greater the opportunity for building a more prosperous, peaceful future.

As discussed by Cyprus' Foreign Minister Nikos Christodoulides, Cyprus recognizes the importance of regional stability. Along with Greece, it has spearheaded efforts to create trilateral cooperation mechanisms with moderate countries of the region, including Israel, Egypt, Jordan, and Lebanon.

This initiative has been one of the most successful developments of the past decade and has laid the foundation for regional cooperation on a variety of priority goals that are crucial to the international community. These trilateral discussions are now commonplace, and the meetings are taking place at regular intervals, creating and facilitating the development of mutually beneficial partnerships around a broad range of areas, including economic cooperation, culture, and education.

Prime Minister Netanyahu of Israel and Prime Minister Tsipras joined President Anastasiades in Nicosia in May for a trilateral meeting. Currently, preparations are under way for a trilateral meeting between Cyprus, Greece, and Egypt in Crete, and in December with Israel.

Minister Christodoulides has explained that the central tenets of the trilateral cooperation are neither exclusionary nor exclusive; additionally, they are not directed against any country but, instead, are utilized as an opportunity for promoting enhanced cooperation.

As with everything in life, there is no one-size-fits-all approach, as you know, Mr. Speaker, but each trilateral meeting has been crafted to meet the needs of participating countries when it makes sense to do so.

Additionally, Cyprus has taken the lead to include countries from outside the regions to further economic, social, and international goals. For example, Cyprus, Greece, and Israel have expanded their talks to include Italy and the European Commission in negotiations on energy-related issues. The benefits from these regional developments positively impact participating countries as well as the United States of America and the international community as a whole.

Cyprus holds the potential to play an important role in international energy security, Mr. Speaker, which is obviously a natural interest to the United States of America. The discovery of hydrocarbons in the eastern Mediterranean has motivated countries within the region to work together in order to maximize the benefit of these natural resources.

The U.S. Geological Survey assessments indicate the eastern Mediterranean region holds large quantities of natural gas and oil. It is in the United States' best interest, in my opinion, Mr. Speaker, to ensure that these resources held by an allied nation contribute to the availability of affordable energy. This development can help ensure the long-term financial sustainability of the region.

Minister Christodoulides, again, also heralds the work of Egypt, Israel, and Lebanon, in partnership with Cyprus, again, to formulate their own exclusive economic zones, or EEZ, which has created greater transparency based on international law, outlined new economic border structures, and established a proven framework for cooperation around a common goal.

This framework also created the necessary legal and institutional structures to attract investment in Cyprus by major oil and gas companies. ExxonMobil, Eni, Total, Noble Energy, and Shell have entered into agreements with Cyprus for exploratory drilling and development work. Energy expansion in Cyprus holds even greater future potential, and it will compete directly with Russian energy in the region.

Cyprus is also close to concluding agreements for the export of natural gas from its Aphrodite reservoir in its EEZ to Egypt and the plants there in Egypt. It is also concluding an intergovernmental agreement with Egypt that will create a direct, underwater pipeline to carry Aphrodite's natural gas to Egypt.

Similarly, the East Med pipeline project will allow for the transfer of natural gas, by an underwater pipeline, from Israel and Cyprus to Greece via Crete and from Greece to Italy.

Energy potential and its accompanying economic benefit has become a tool of cooperation and alignment of initiatives that would create an economy of scale and invite investment while meeting the energy security needs of the region.

Cyprus has also proven itself as an important partner in the global war against terrorism. Since their inception, the trilateral meetings led by Cyprus have always included counterterrorism cooperation as a priority. Minister Christodoulides, again, correctly asserted earlier this year that it is not enough to secure one's country and borders; close cooperation with reliable and like-minded partners is also necessary.

Cyprus has entered into a close dialogue with its regional neighbors to create a unified approach to battling terrorist ideology, understanding that there are no firm barriers to the spread of radical indoctrination, especially given the advent of social media, Mr. Speaker.

Cyprus is participating in a number of international efforts, including the Coalition Against the Islamic State and the Aqaba Process. Minister Christodoulides further noted that Cyprus has actively, and in cooperation with some of its European allies, provided military assistance and nonmilitary support to international efforts in the African region of the Sahel.

□ 2015

Cyprus has cooperated with the U.S. in providing specialized training assistance to officials from neighboring countries and collaborated closely with Egypt. The training revolves mostly on civilian type of expertise, in customs and border controls.

Additionally, Cyprus has provided training on the identification and containment of various chemicals, as well as better storage and handling of dangerous substances. Cyprus has also explored collaborative efforts to counter violent extremism and radicalization in an attempt to attack the problem at its root.

In recent years, Cyprus has invested a great deal of energy and resources in education and the exposure of its communities to the historical roots of anti-Semitism and racism. This is an invaluable investment, not only because it is the right thing to do, Mr. Speaker, but because it is the best proven way to prevent radicalization and violence.

Cyprus is committed to remain at the forefront of these efforts. After suffering a profound financial crisis not long ago, the previous decade, Cyprus has undertaken significant reforms

under the great, capable leadership of President Anastasiades that have stabilized and strengthened the country's economy and its banking sector.

The result of these reforms, coupled with other government policies and the ingenuity of the very special Cypriot people, is that the Cypriot economy is experiencing strong growth and is one of the fastest growing economies in Europe.

The future is bright for Cyprus. They are really a great model to go by. Again, the future is bright for Cyprus and its banking sector.

This is the fourth year in a row, Mr. Speaker, that they have had positive GDP growth. The EU predicts that real GDP growth is expected to reach 3.6 percent in 2018 and 3.3 percent in 2019. Unemployment continues to shrink with the rate being cut in half to 8 percent since the financial crisis, and it was a crisis, there is no question. I talked to many people who live on the island and many relatives here in the United States of those folks, and they went through a lot, but they recovered.

Cyprus can survive, Mr. Speaker. It is surviving without dependence on Russian money. Russian deposits have dropped nearly 50 percent and make up just 5 percent of the three largest banks' portfolios.

Cyprus has been actively promoting policies to counter money laundering and terrorist financing activities. The powers and tools of the regulators, principally the Central Bank of Cyprus, the office of the attorney general, and financial intelligence units have been greatly upgraded.

As a result, the Cyprus banking sector has significantly improved ultimate beneficial ownership transparency, greatly reduced its dependency on foreign deposits and transactions, and terminated accounts that do not meet its rigorous new standards.

Ending the illegal occupation of Cyprus, Mr. Speaker, would safeguard the country's independence while amplifying its bridge-building capacity. What a capacity it has. They have done so much. So just think, if there was reunification, Mr. Speaker.

Again, further stabilizing and bringing peace to the region, it is in our national interests, Mr. Speaker. All of which, again, makes Cyprus an even stronger ally of the United States.

After stalling earlier this year, reunification efforts are once again underway. Former U.S. Deputy Secretary of Homeland Security Jane Holl Lute has recently been appointed the U.N.'s new special adviser in the Cyprus reunification talks.

Ms. Lute plans to tour Nicosia, Athens, and Ankara this month and provide an assessment to the U.N. Secretary General Antonio Guterres on whether there is potential for the assumption of negotiations on the issue of reunification.

The Republic of Cyprus has been a steadfast ally, and Cypriots of all backgrounds desire an end to the senseless division of their homeland. Today, the United States, despite Erdogan's provocative language and actions, still enjoys a unique role as a partner for both Cyprus and Turkey. As an honest broker to both sides, we can help them see that a unified future for Cyprus is far more promising than the present division.

Our relationship with our allies must be based on shared values and mutual respect. At the core, the rule of law must be respected above all else.

I encourage the Greek and Cypriot leaders to keep up the hard work of unifying a people divided for more than a generation. Tough and important issues remain, but, hopefully, this illegal occupation will come to an end.

A reunified island nation would serve as a spark for further cooperation and economic stability. In short, it would unleash the region's incredible potential.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY), co-chair of the Hellenic Caucus. She is a founder, along with my father, Michael Bilirakis, of the Hellenic Caucus and also a member of the Congressional Hellenic-Israel Alliance.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend and co-chair of the Hellenic Caucus for all his hard work on this Special Order and for his hard work in Congress and on so many issues. He has been a leader for Greece, Cyprus, Florida, and the United States, and is a strong and effective leader here in Congress.

Mr. CICILLINE, who is here representing the Democratic side, has been a strong advocate and leader, not only in this but in so many areas in our caucus, in our Congress, and in so many ways.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to show my strong and unwavering support for the U.S.-Cyprus relationship.

As co-chair of the Hellenic Caucus along with Mr. BILIRAKIS, I would be remiss if I did not mention the tragic wildfires that tore through Greece yesterday, killing dozens, and injuring and displacing hundreds more. I am heartbroken by the loss of life and destruction these rapidly moving fires left in their wake, and I send my deepest condolences, along with all of my colleagues in Congress, to the Greek people at this time.

I know that the Hellenic American community, many of whom are my constituents, are affected by this disaster as well and have already begun efforts to help.

I want to thank, especially, my fellow Hellenic Caucus co-chair, Representative GUS BILIRAKIS from the great State of Florida, for organizing this Special Order hour, and also the Congressman from Rhode Island (Mr. CICILLINE) for joining him in organizing it.

I founded the caucus with his father, former Representative Mike Bilirakis, in 1996, and it remains one of the largest and most active caucuses in Congress. We founded this caucus after Turkey invaded EMEA. It seemed like, every other day, there was a major crisis that came to the floor of Congress, and we felt it was important to really find where our supporters were.

I am proud that, since this caucus has been founded, no single bill has been taken to the floor that in any way hinders or rolls back rights to Greece or Cyprus.

Cyprus is one of our staunchest allies in the world. Strengthening our alliance must remain a constant foreign policy priority for the United States.

We must acknowledge a solemn anniversary last week. It has been 44 years since the illegal, terrible, unjust invasion by Turkish troops into the northern third of the nation of Cyprus. To this day, the island and the people living on either side of the U.N.-monitored buffer zone remain separated. There are 40,000 Turkish troops occupying northern Cyprus today. It is unjust; it is wrong; and they should be removed.

They pose a looming threat that the Cypriot people have been forced to live with each and every day. Negotiations on reunification, unfortunately, are stalled for now, after some signs of progress early last year.

Turkish troops are undeniably a hindrance to peace. No just and lasting settlement for either Greece or Turkish Cypriots can be achieved with the presence of the Turkish military.

We are here today to show the support of the U.S. Congress for a bicommunal, bizonal federation that is in the best interests of the United States, the entire Eastern Mediterranean, and, most of all, Cypriots themselves.

Two years ago, I joined a congressional delegation led by ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, the former chair of the Foreign Relations Committee, to Cyprus. As we toured along the buffer zone, or the so-called Green Line that partitions the country, the ghost towns of Famagusta and Varosha illustrated the drastic impact that a divided Cyprus has on its people.

I would call it a lost opportunity and lost economic advancement. It is literally a deserted ghost town on one of the most beautiful beaches in the world, one of the most beautiful towns in the world. Yet, I have constituents who I represent who crawled out of Famagusta on their bellies as Turkish planes were dropping bombs after them, and their dream is to go back to their homeland.

But it is a wasteland. When you pass the Green Line into the occupied area, it is like totally deserted. It is like a lost economic opportunity, lost living style, lost life. When you see it, it is a visualization of so many opportunities lost for this great country, the time wasted and the development foregone because of this extended conflict and separation between the Greek and Cypriot areas and the Turkish areas.

Some may not be aware that the buffer zone is patrolled now by U.N. peacekeeping forces. The U.S. must maintain its financial support for these forces that are keeping peace in Cyprus. It is an effective investment, especially now, and it is needed.

There are numerous examples of Turkish aggression in the Eastern Mediterranean. Violations of Greek airspace and territorial waters are commonplace. Turkey continues to intimidate and interfere with the companies operating in Cyprus' exclusive economic zone and violates Cyprus' sovereign claims to its territory.

Fortunately, there are near-term initiatives that Congress is pursuing right now to defend Cyprus' stability and sovereignty. The NDAA conference report released Monday includes a provision to study lifting the arms embargo on Cyprus that has been in place since 1987.

I think we need to go much further than that. I think the embargo should be lifted today, and I am proud to be an original cosponsor of Representative CICILLINE's bill to do just that. This study will hopefully be at least a step in the right direction.

The NDAA also prohibits the sale of F–35 fighter jets to Turkey. That provision is long overdue, and that is in the defense budget that we will be considering today and tomorrow.

Cyprus is a vital U.S. partner in global and regional security, economic cooperation, and energy development. I am proud to be a champion of this relationship in Congress through the Hellenic Caucus and to have the support of so many of my Hellenic American constituents in that effort.

Mr. Speaker, I see my colleague, Mr. CICILLINE, representing the great State of Rhode Island is here. He is an incredible leader in this caucus, the leader of our messaging unit, and, in so many other ways, an important leader in this Congress.

□ 2030

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. CICILLINE), a great advocate for Cyprus. We have cosponsored legislation together.

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Florida for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from New York for her cochairmanship of this caucus. Both Mr. BILIRAKIS and Mrs. MALONEY have been great champions on this issue, and I am honored and privileged to work with them.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to join both of my colleagues in celebrating the important relationship between the United States and Cyprus and in highlighting the critical role our partnership with Cyprus plays in advancing both of our nations' national security interests.

The Republic of Cyprus is a strategic partner to the United States in the eastern Mediterranean region and an effective ally combating threats posed by terrorism and nuclear proliferation.

Through information sharing, training programs, counterterrorism activities, and increased cooperation on energy policy, our relationship with Cyprus allows us to advance our Nation's interests, defend against the rise of terrorism and regional actors who seek to take steps counter to American interests, and to promote the ongoing close cooperation between the United States and Europe.

The U.S. participates in a number of joint exercises with Cyprus, including annual multinational search and rescue and crisis management exercises, and we coordinate training programs for Cyprus in explosives management and disposal, cybersecurity, counterterrorism, and maritime safety and security.

We work closely with our Cypriot allies to combat the spread of weapons of mass destruction and foster an effective international nonproliferation regime.

In 2015, we joined Cyprus as members of the Proliferation Security Initiative in cohosting a regional nonproliferation workshop focusing on inspecting and identifying proliferation material. We are also joining Cyprus in providing more secure sources of domestic energy for Cyprus and all of Europe.

American companies are playing a valuable role in energy exploration activities in Cyprus' exclusive economic zone in order to help provide Europe with potential alternatives to Russian gas and oil. Yet, despite this critical partnership between our two countries, the United States has had in place an arms embargo against the island of Cyprus since 1987.

This policy was initially intended to prevent an arms race on the island with Turkey, following Turkey's 1974 invasion of Cyprus and its subsequent occupation of the northern territory, in order to provide space for reunification talks. However, more than 30 years since the embargo was first implemented, Turkey still has more than 30,000 troops occupying the northern territory of Cyprus, reunification talks have not produced intended results, and the U.S. is unable to maintain a full security relationship with a key partner in combating terrorism.

On top of this, Turkey continues to threaten Cyprus' energy exploration by continually harassing drilling vessels in the EEZ. Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs, Wess Mitchell, has said that this harassment cannot be tolerated.

We need to enact policies that strengthen our relationship with Cyprus and counteract dangerous elements in the region which threaten our national security interests and the interests of our allies in the eastern Mediterranean.

Last year, I introduced legislation to lift the three-decade-old embargo on Cyprus, which would allow us to strengthen the partnership that we have built with the Republic of Cyprus. Our inability to provide Cyprus with necessary equipment needed to defend its sovereignty and its economic interests threatens our own national security.

Lifting the arms embargo will allow Cyprus to better establish itself as a frontline state for Western security interests, defend itself from external threats, and ensure Cyprus is no longer forced to seek assistance for its defense from countries like Russia. Cyprus is an invaluable partner, and we need to make sure that we are treating it as such.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues for organizing this opportunity to highlight the importance of the U.S.-Cypriot relationship, and I look forward to working with them, with our State Department, and with the Cypriot Government to continue to partner in important ways.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Rhode Island for those remarks. He is a great advocate for Cyprus.

Cyprus is a great partner, a great strategic ally, and will continue to be. We wanted to highlight that this evening, and I think we have.

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

SENATE BILL REFERRED

A bill of the Senate of the following titles was taken from the Speaker's table and, under the rule, referred as follows:

S. 2278. An act to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide grants to improve health care in rural areas; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

SENATE ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

The Speaker announced his signature to enrolled bills of the Senate of the following titles:

S. 2245. An act 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 nonimmigrants if United States nationals are treated similarly by the Government of New Zealand.

S. 2850. An act to amend the White Mountain Apache Tribe Water Rights Quantification Act of 2010 to clarify the use of amounts in the WMAT Settlement Fund.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 8 o'clock and 34 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, July 26, 2018, at 9 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

5768. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants From the Portland Cement Manufacturing Industry Residual Risk and Technology Review [EPA-HQ-OAR-2016-0442; FRL-9981-06-OAR] (RIN: 2060-AS92) received July 20, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5769. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval of California Plan Revisions; Northern Sonoma County Air Pollution Control District; Stationary Source Permits [EPA-R09-OAR-2018-0171; FRL-9980-01-Region 9] received July 20, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5770. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Flonicamid; Pesticide Tolerances [EPA-HQ-OPP-2017-0224; FRL-9977-82] received July 20, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5771. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Magnuson-Stevens Act Provisions; Fisheries Off West Coast States; Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery; 2017-18 Biennial Specifications and Management Measures; Amendment 27; Correction [Docket No.: 160808696-799-03] (RIN: 0648-BG17) received July 23, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. THORNBERRY: Committee of Conference. Conference report on H.R. 5515. A bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2019 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes (Rept. 115–874). Ordered to be printed.

Mr. BYRNE: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 1027. Resolution providing for consideration of the conference report to accompany the bill (H.R. 5515) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2019 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes (Rept. 115–875). Referred to the House Calendar.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. FOSTER (for himself, Mr. CAPUANO, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Ms. JAYAPAL, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. QUIGLEY, Ms. TITUS, and Mr. TAKANO):

H.R. 6501. A bill to secure Federal access to scientific literature and other subscription services by requiring Federal agencies and legislative branch research arms to make recommendations on increasing agency library access to serials, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. SMITH of Nebraska (for himself, Mrs. BLACK, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. GRIFFITH, and Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico):

H.R. 6502. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to establish a program to allow qualified group practices to furnish certain items and services at qualified skilled nursing facilities to individuals entitled to benefits under part A and enrolled under part B of the Medicare program to reduce unnecessary hospitalizations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts:

H.R. 6503. A bill to authorize the President to provide assistance to the Governments of Haiti and Armenia to reverse the effects of deforestation, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. CLYBURN (for himself, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. SUOZZI, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Ms. FUDGE, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Ms. BASS, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Ms. PLASKETT, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mrs. DEMINGS, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. VEASEY, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. EVANS, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. MCEACHIN, Mr. CLAY, Mr. RUSH, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. PAYNE, Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, and Ms. ADAMS):

H.R. 6504. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the increase in unrelated business taxable income by amount of certain fringe benefit expenses; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. DOGGETT (for himself, Mr. WELCH, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. KHANNA, Ms. DELAURO, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. POCAN, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. ADAMS, Ms. BARRAGÁN, Ms. BASS, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. CICILLINE, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. COHEN, Mr. CRIST, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. DESAULNIER, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. EVANS, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. GONZALEZ of Texas, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Ms. HANABUSA, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. HIGGINS of New York, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Ms. JAYAPAL, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHI, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. LAWSON of Florida, Ms. LEE, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. MCNERNEY, Ms. MOORE, Mr. NADLER, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. NOLAN, Ms. NORTON, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. RASKIN, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Ms. TITUS, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. VEASEY, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. VISCLOSKY, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. ESPAILLAT, Mr. PETERSON, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. JEFFRIES, and Ms. FRANKEL of Florida):

H.R. 6505. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to negotiate prices of prescription drugs furnished under part D of the Medicare program; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. WILSON of South Carolina (for himself, Mr. HOLDING, Ms. GABBARD, and Mr. BERA):

H.R. 6506. A bill to provide for United States actions to advance the United States-India strategic relationship; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania (for himself and Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania):

H.R. 6507. A bill to amend the Oil Region National Heritage Area Act to reauthorize the Oil Region National Heritage Area, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. LIPINSKI:

H.R. 6508. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for the public disclosure of charges for certain hospital and ambulatory surgical center treatment episodes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Ms. SCHAKOWSKY (for herself, Mr. LYNCH, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. GRIJALVA, and Mr. LANGEVIN):

H.R. 6509. A bill to require all newly constructed, federally assisted, single-family houses and town houses to meet minimum standards of visitability for persons with disabilities; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. BISHOP of Utah (for himself, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. SIMPSON, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. STIVERS, Ms. HANABUSA, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. KILMER, Mr. COOK, Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. SCHRADER, Mr. WEBSTER of Florida, Ms. SINEMA, Mr. GIANFORTE, Mr. WELCH, Mr. CRAMER, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. COLE, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. HURD, Ms. MENG, Mr. CURTIS, Mr. COSTA, Mr. REICHERT, Mr. KIND, Mrs. LOVE, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mr. AMODEI, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Mr. TIPTON, Mr. PANETTA, Mr. STEWART, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Ms. DEGETTE, Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN of Puerto Rico, Ms. NORTON, Mrs. HANDEL, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. UPTON, Mr. GONZALEZ of Texas, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mrs. COMSTOCK, Mr. VISCLOSKY, Mr. PAULSEN, Mr. TURNER, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Ms. BONAMICI, and Mr. NOLAN):

H.R. 6510. A bill to establish, fund, and provide for the use of amounts in a National Park Service and Public Lands Legacy Restoration Fund to address the maintenance backlog of the National Park Service, United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management, and Bureau of Indian Education, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committees on Education and

the Workforce, and Transportation and Infrastructure, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. BARTON (for himself and Mr. RUSH):

H.R. 6511. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Energy to carry out a program to lease underutilized Strategic Petroleum Reserve facilities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. BILIRAKIS:

H.R. 6512. A bill to authorize the Attorney General to establish a five-year pilot program to make grants to local educational agencies for the hiring of school resource officers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. BROOKS of Alabama (for himself, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Mr. PALMER, Mr. ADERHOLT, Mr. BYRNE, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, and Mrs. ROBY):

H.R. 6513. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1110 West Market Street in Athens, Alabama, as the ''Judge James E. Horton, Jr. Post Office Building''; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Ms. CLARKE of New York (for herself, Mr. DONOVAN, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, and Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN of Puerto Rico):

H.R. 6514. A bill to require the Administrator of the Small Business Administration to establish a pilot program for certifying the status of a small business concern as a small business concern owned and controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business.

By Mr. CONAWAY:

H.R. 6515. A bill to limit private antitrust damages against occupational licensing boards, to promote beneficial reforms of State occupational licensing, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mrs. DAVIS of California:

H.R. 6516. A bill to amend the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to establish a permanent, nationwide summer electronic benefits transfer for children program; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. ENGEL (for himself and Mr. VALADAO):

H.R. 6517. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to direct the Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network to establish and implement reforms to the criteria for liver allocation so that such allocation is not based on the donor candidate's place of residence or listing, except to the extent necessary to avoid wasting organs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. GOTTHEIMER (for himself, Mr. FASO, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. COHEN, Mr. KILDEE, Mrs. LOVE, Mr. SIRES, and Mr. SUOZZI):

H.R. 6518. A bill to require the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration to implement a national employer notification service; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. GRIJALVA:

H.R. 6519. A bill to withdraw certain Federal lands and interests located in Pima and Santa Cruz counties, Arizona, from the mining and mineral leasing laws of the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. GRIJALVA:

H.R. 6520. A bill to designate certain public lands in the Sonoran Desert of the State of Arizona as national conservation areas and wilderness areas, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. GRIJALVA:

H.R. 6521. A bill to establish the Great Bend of the Gila National Monument in the State of Arizona, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. GRIJALVA:

H.R. 6522. A bill to establish the Santa Cruz Valley National Heritage Area, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. GRIJALVA (for himself and Mr. GALLEGO):

H.R. 6523. A bill to amend title 39, United States Code, to provide that the United States Postal Service may not close or consolidate any postal facility located in a ZIP code with a high rate of population growth, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. KENNEDY (for himself, Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico, Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER, and Mr. MCKINLEY):

H.R. 6524. A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to streamline enrollment of certain Medicaid providers and suppliers across State lines, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. LEWIS of Georgia (for himself and Mr. GUTIÉRREZ):

H.R. 6525. A bill to prohibit discrimination in higher education against certain undocumented students on the basis of immigration status, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. LOEBSACK:

H.R. 6526. A bill to establish an Office of Rural Education Policy in the Department of Education, make other modifications to Federal law to improve rural schools, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. MCEACHIN (for himself, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. NADLER, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. SOTO, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Mr. COHEN, Ms. NORTON, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Ms. JAYAPAL, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. VEASEY, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. RASKIN, Ms. MENG, Mr. WELCH, Mr. JEFFRIES, Mr. PALLONE, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. PANETTA, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. KHANNA, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. VELA, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. GALLEGO, Mr. RICHMOND, and Mr. SMITH of Washington):

H.R. 6527. A bill to provide access to counsel for children and other vulnerable populations; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. MOULTON (for himself, Mr. KEATING, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. GRIJALVA, and Mr. HUFFMAN):

H.R. 6528. A bill to amend the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act to provide fisheries disaster relief for commercial fishery failures that are due to certain tariffs imposed by other countries, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. NORMAN:

H.R. 6529. A bill to prohibit the use of Federal funds by the Department of Health and Human Services to award a grant to study cigar flavors; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committees on Ways and Means, Education and the Workforce, and Natural Resources, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. PANETTA (for himself and Mr. KNIGHT):

H.R. 6530. A bill to prohibit the use of funds to withdraw the United States from the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. PRICE of North Carolina:

H.R. 6531. A bill to strengthen the disclosure requirements for creditors under the Truth in Lending Act; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. ROKITA (for himself and Mr. WEBSTER of Florida):

H.R. 6532. A bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to update and improve eligibility criteria for the Social Security Disability Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. SARBANES (for himself and Mr. POLIS):

H.R. 6533. A bill to amend the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 to require an individual to register as a lobbyist under such Act if the individual is employed or retained by a client for making more than one lobbying contact over a 2-year period and to treat legislative, political, and strategic counseling in support of lobbying contacts as lobbying activity under such Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on House Administration, and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. SCHAKOWSKY (for herself, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Ms. LEE, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. POLIS, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. RASKIN, Mr. POCAN, Ms. MOORE, Mr. PALLONE, Ms. JAYAPAL, Mr. KHANNA, and Mr. RUSH):

H.R. 6534. A bill to phase out the use of private military contractors; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committees on Armed Services, and Intelligence (Permanent Select), for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. SHEA-PORTER:

H.R. 6535. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to prevent certain alcohol

and substance misuse; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. SMUCKER (for himself and Mr. FRANCIS ROONEY of Florida):

H.R. 6536. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to provide for an H-2C nonimmigrant classification, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committees on Ways and Means, and Oversight and Government Reform, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California (for herself, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. COHEN, Ms. LEE, Mr. RUSH, Ms. NORTON, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. GOMEZ, Mr. ELLISON, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Ms. BARRAGÁN, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. CAPUANO, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. BROWN of Maryland, and Mr. BLUMENAUER):

H.R. 6537. A bill to require the Secretary of Education to annually report on the Federal civil rights violations of educational institutions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. WELCH (for himself and Mr. NORMAN):

H.R. 6538. A bill to authorize certain long-term contracts for Federal purchases of energy; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mrs. LESKO:

H. Res. 1026. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that Medicare and Social Security provide an essential benefit for current enrollees and should be strengthened for future generations; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. MEADOWS (for himself, Mr. JORDAN, Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. BIGGS, Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. GAETZ, Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. POSEY, and Mr. PERRY):

H. Res. 1028. A resolution impeaching Rod Rosenstein, the Deputy Attorney General of the United States, for high crimes and misdemeanors; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. GALLAGHER (for himself, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. GALLEGO, Mrs. HARTZLER, Mr. KILMER, Ms. STEFANIK, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, and Ms. LOFGREN):

H. Res. 1029. A resolution reaffirming the United States-Australia diplomatic, security, and economic relationship; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. FRANCIS ROONEY of Florida (for himself, Mr. CONNOLLY, and Mr. POE of Texas):

H. Res. 1030. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the territories of Abkhazia and South Ossetia are a part of the sovereign state of Georgia and condemning the decision by the Syrian Arab Republic to recognize these territories as independent of Georgia; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Ms. ROSEN (for herself, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. NEAL, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. NADLER, Mr. HOYER, and Ms. PELOSI):

H. Res. 1031. A resolution authorizing certain Committees of the House of Representatives to intervene in the case of Texas v. United States, No. 4:18-cv-00167-O (N.D. Tex.) and authorizing the Office of General Counsel of the House to represent such Committees in such intervention; to the Committee on Rules.

By Mr. SCHIFF (for himself, Ms. JAYAPAL, Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Ms. BARRAGÁN, Ms. NORTON, Ms. KAPTUR, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. KILMER, Mrs. DINGELL, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Mr. COHEN, Ms. TITUS, and Mr. SHERMAN):

H. Res. 1032. A resolution supporting infant nutrition through improved breastfeeding practices; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

MEMORIALS

Under clause 3 of rule XII, memorials were presented and referred as follows:

238. The SPEAKER presented a memorial of the Senate of the State of California, relative to Senate Joint Resolution No. 26, urging the U.S. Congress to act favorably in regard to legislation to have the Mare Island Naval Cemetery transferred to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and that the National Cemetery Administration restore the cemetery to national cemetery standards and provide for perpetual care of the facility as dictated by those standards; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

239. Also, a memorial of the Senate of the State of California, relative to Senate Joint Resolution No. 23, urging the U.S. Department of Defense, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to implement and the U.S. Congress to require, if necessary, a resolution between the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services and TRICARE to immediately restore data sharing and to waive the one-year timely filing restriction for all claims caught in this stoppage; jointly to the Committees on Armed Services, Energy and Commerce, and Ways and Means.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. FOSTER:

H.R. 6501.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clauses 1 and 18 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. SMITH of Nebraska:

H.R. 6502.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1.

By Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts:

H.R. 6503.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, U.S. Constitution

By Mr. CLYBURN:

H.R. 6504.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the Constitution of the United States.

By Mr. DOGGETT:

H.R. 6505.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1 of Section 8 of Article I of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. WILSON of South Carolina:

H.R. 6506.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution

By Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania:

H.R. 6507.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution, which gives Congress the power ''to regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several states, and within the Indian Tribes.''

By Mr. LIPINSKI:

H.R. 6508.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1 of Section 8 of Article I of the Constitution of the United States grants the Congress the power to enact this law.

By Ms. SCHAKOWSKY:

H.R. 6509.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Sec. 8, Clause 18

By Mr. BISHOP of Utah:

H.R. 6510.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article IV, section 3, clause 2

By Mr. BARTON:

H.R. 6511.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1 of the Constitution of the United States.

By Mr. BILIRAKIS:

H.R. 6512.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. BROOKS of Alabama:

H.R. 6513.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The Postal Clause in Article 1, Section 8, Clause 7 of the Constitution

By Ms. CLARKE of New York:

H.R. 6514.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

the power granted to Congress under Article I of the United States Constitution and it subsequent amendments, and further clarified and interpreted by the Supreme Court of the United States.

By Mr. CONAWAY:

H.R. 6515.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8.

By Mrs. DAVIS of California:

H.R. 6516.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I Section 8

By Mr. ENGEL:

H.R. 6517.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 1 of the Constitution.

By Mr. GOTTHEIMER:
H.R. 6518.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18 of the United States Constitution.
By Mr. GRIJALVA:
H.R. 6519.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.
By Mr. GRIJALVA:
H.R. 6520.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.
By Mr. GRIJALVA:
H.R. 6521.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.
By Mr. GRIJALVA:
H.R. 6522.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution. [Page H1125]
By Mr. GRIJALVA:
H.R. 6523.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
U.S. Const. art. I, §§ 1 and 8.
By Mr. KENNEDY:
H.R. 6524.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8—to provide for the general welfare and to regulate commerce among the states
By Mr. LEWIS of Georgia:
H.R. 6525.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I of the United States Constitution and its subsequent amendments, and further clarified and interpreted by the Supreme Court of the United States.
By Mr. LOEBSACK:
H.R. 6526.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Clause I of Section 8 of Article I of the Constitution
By Mr. McEACHIN:
H.R. 6527.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8
By Mr. MOULTON:
H.R. 6528.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1 of the Constitution of the United States
By Mr. NORMAN:
H.R. 6529.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8
By Mr. PANETTA:
H.R. 6530.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 18
By Mr. PRICE of North Carolina:
H.R. 6531.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I; Section 8; Clause 1 of the Constitution states: ''The Congress shall have Power To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.''
By Mr. ROKITA:
H.R. 6532.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution
By Mr. SARBANES:
H.R. 6533.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution under the General Welfare Clause.
By Ms. SCHAKOWSKY:
H.R. 6534.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
''The constitutional authority of Congress to enact this legislation is provided by Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution (Clause 14), which grants Congress the power to ''make Rules for the Government and Regulation of the land and naval Forces.''
By Ms. SHEA-PORTER:
H.R. 6535.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause XVIII—To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.
By Mr. SMUCKER:
H.R. 6536.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Clause 3 of section 8 of article 1 of the Constitution
By Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California:
H.R. 6537.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8, clause 1 of the U.S. Constitution and
Article 1, Section 9, clause 7 of the U.S. Constitution.
By Mr. WELCH:
H.R. 6538.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18: The Congress shall have Power To . . . make all Laws which hall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 113: Mr. TURNER.
H.R. 176: Mr. ARRINGTON and Mr. YOHO.
H.R. 217: Mr. NORMAN.
H.R. 246: Mr. STIVERS.
H.R. 305: Mr. DEUTCH.
H.R. 392: Mr. LAMB.
H.R. 444: Mr. GRIJALVA and Mrs. TORRES.
H.R. 490: Mr. SESSIONS.
H.R. 671: Mr. DELANEY and Mr. LAWSON of Florida.
H.R. 756: Mr. KNIGHT.
H.R. 936: Ms. SINEMA.
H.R. 964: Mr. STIVERS, Mr. CRIST, Mrs. MURPHY of Florida, and Mr. KEATING.
H.R. 1102: Mr. MOULTON and Mr. CICILLINE.
H.R. 1111: Mr. KHANNA.
H.R. 1144: Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN.
H.R. 1150: Mr. ESTES of Kansas.
H.R. 1272: Mr. COHEN and Mr. RASKIN.
H.R. 1291: Mr. CRIST.
H.R. 1300: Mr. PETERSON.
H.R. 1318: Mr. CALVERT and Mr. EVANS.
H.R. 1322: Mr. THOMPSON of California.
H.R. 1421: Mr. CARSON of Indiana and Mr. ROTHFUS.
H.R. 1439: Ms. GABBARD.
H.R. 1540: Mr. DAVIDSON.
H.R. 1563: Mr. LYNCH and Mr. KILDEE.
H.R. 1615: Mr. CAPUANO, Ms. GABBARD, Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHI, Mr. MOULTON, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. DELANEY, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. KIND, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Mr. NADLER, Mr. KILMER, and Mr. DESAULNIER.
H.R. 1661: Mr. CLYBURN.
H.R. 1759: Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 1776: Mr. KHANNA.
H.R. 1881: Mr. GOSAR and Mr. GOHMERT.
H.R. 1884: Mr. BOST and Mr. BEYER.
H.R. 1960: Mr. TAKANO, Mr. NADLER, and Mr. MOULTON.
H.R. 2049: Mr. WEBER of Texas.
H.R. 2234: Mrs. BEATTY.
H.R. 2267: Mrs. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. GARAMENDI, and Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico.
H.R. 2392: Mr. NADLER and Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 2401: Mr. GUTHRIE.
H.R. 2439: Mr. KHANNA.
H.R. 2472: Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California.
H.R. 2589: Mr. SMITH of New Jersey.
H.R. 2633: Ms. KELLY of Illinois.
H.R. 2651: Mr. SCHIFF.
H.R. 2840: Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Ms. SÁNCHEZ, Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico, and Mr. RICHMOND.
H.R. 3124: Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York.
H.R. 3239: Mr. RASKIN.
H.R. 3270: Mr. GOSAR.
H.R. 3272: Ms. FUDGE, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, and Mr. COLLINS of New York.
H.R. 3303: Ms. SINEMA.
H.R. 3325: Mr. CARTER of Georgia, Mr. KENNEDY, and Mr. LATTA.
H.R. 3395: Mr. CLEAVER.
H.R. 3473: Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California and Mr. SERRANO.
H.R. 3530: Mr. LOEBSACK and Mr. SCOTT of Virginia.
H.R. 3602: Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York and Mr. CAPUANO.
H.R. 3608: Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia.
H.R. 3635: Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas.
H.R. 3671: Mr. EVANS and Mr. HASTINGS.
H.R. 3751: Mr. DELANEY.
H.R. 3798: Mrs. LESKO and Mr. GRIFFITH.
H.R. 3919: Mr. ROUZER.
H.R. 3960: Ms. DELAURO.
H.R. 3984: Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York.
H.R. 4022: Mr. PAYNE, Mr. UPTON, and Mr. PERLMUTTER.
H.R. 4077: Mrs. LOVE and Mr. CAPUANO.
H.R. 4107: Mr. WILLIAMS, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. CURBELO of Florida, Mr. HARPER, Mr. POSEY, and Mr. QUIGLEY.
H.R. 4229: Mr. BERGMAN.
H.R. 4382: Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 4444: Mr. YOUNG of Iowa.
H.R. 4454: Mr. KILMER.
H.R. 4556: Mr. WELCH.
H.R. 4691: Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 4693: Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 4732: Mr. STIVERS.
H.R. 4944: Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 5011: Mr. GUTIÉRREZ and Mr. MOULTON.
H.R. 5037: Mr. BUDD.
H.R. 5138: Mr. SMUCKER.
H.R. 5145: Mr. SIRES.
H.R. 5155: Mr. HIMES, Mr. KIND, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Mr. CONNOLLY, Miss RICE of New

York, Mr. PETERS, Mr. POLIS, Mr. BERA, Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire, Mr. SCHRADER, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. O'HALLERAN, and Mr. SUOZZI.

H.R. 5304: Mr. SWALWELL of California.

H.R. 5365: Ms. SINEMA.

H.R. 5372: Mr. BARR.

H.R. 5389: Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico.

H.R. 5500: Mr. BUTTERFIELD.

H.R. 5506: Mr. YOUNG of Iowa.

H.R. 5508: Mr. SUOZZI.

H.R. 5561: Mr. KILMER and Mr. COHEN.

H.R. 5595: Mr. LABRADOR, Mr. GROTHMAN, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. GUTHRIE, and Mr. BROOKS of Alabama.

H.R. 5671: Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. GROTHMAN, Mr. LOBIONDO, Mr. HIMES, and Mr. KIND.

H.R. 5818: Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHI, Mr. ESPAILLAT, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, and Mr. VISCLOSKY.

H.R. 5922: Mr. ESPAILLAT.

H.R. 5963: Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. CUELLAR, Mrs. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. GOTTHEIMER, and Mr. STIVERS.

H.R. 5977: Mr. SCOTT of Virginia.

H.R. 5988: Mr. DAVIDSON.

H.R. 6016: Mr. CARTWRIGHT and Mr. SUOZZI.

H.R. 6031: Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Mr. KATKO, Mr. THORNBERRY, and Mr. AMODEI.

H.R. 6043: Mr. HUNTER and Ms. PINGREE.

H.R. 6071: Mr. VISCLOSKY.

H.R. 6080: Mr. SMITH of Washington.

H.R. 6086: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. CUMMINGS, and Mr. LAWSON of Florida.

H.R. 6097: Mr. BLUMENAUER.

H.R. 6145: Mr. LEWIS of Georgia.

H.R. 6166: Ms. SINEMA.

H.R. 6179: Mr. MITCHELL, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. GIBBS, and Mr. PALMER.

H.R. 6220: Ms. CLARKE of New York.

H.R. 6239: Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD and Mr. SMITH of Washington.

H.R. 6263: Ms. STEFANIK.

H.R. 6265: Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN.

H.R. 6267: Mr. KILMER and Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ.

H.R. 6274: Mr. POLIS and Ms. NORTON.

H.R. 6275: Ms. WILSON of Florida.

H.R. 6287: Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. POLIQUIN, Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. KATKO, Ms. NORTON, Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. COLE, and Mr. COLLINS of New York.

H.R. 6326: Mr. ESPAILLAT, Ms. SÁNCHEZ, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, and Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.

H.R. 6337: Mr. COHEN and Mr. COLE.

H.R. 6340: Mr. KHANNA.

H.R. 6360: Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN of Puerto Rico.

H.R. 6378: Ms. STEFANIK and Ms. SPEIER.

H.R. 6396: Ms. SINEMA.

H.R. 6409: Mr. FORTENBERRY, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. BABIN, Mr. NORMAN, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. GIBBS, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. HULTGREN, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, Mr. YOHO, and Mr. CHABOT.

H.R. 6410: Mr. HECK, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mr. RUIZ, Mr. THOMPSON of California, and Mr. WELCH.

H.R. 6417: Ms. CHENEY, Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana, Mr. PITTENGER, and Mr. BISHOP of Georgia.

H.R. 6430: Mr. DONOVAN.

H.R. 6435: Mr. DESAULNIER, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Ms. NORTON, Mr. POCAN, Mr. COHEN, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. COOPER, Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California, Ms. ESHOO, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. MEEKS, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, and Mr. HASTINGS.

H.R. 6450: Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, and Mr. ALLEN.

H.R. 6451: Mr. MEADOWS, Mr. FLEISCHMANN, and Mr. POE of Texas.

H.R. 6455: Mrs. COMSTOCK.

H.R. 6458: Mr. NORMAN and Mr. ROGERS of Alabama.

H.R. 6463: Mr. FRANCIS ROONEY of Florida.

H.R. 6469: Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee.

H.R. 6474: Ms. VELÁZQUEZ.

H.R. 6476: Mr. GIBBS.

H.R. 6482: Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. RICE of South Carolina, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. POSEY, and Mr. LAMBORN.

H.R. 6495: Mr. HECK.

H. Con. Res. 72: Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Ms. JACKSON LEE, and Mr. BARTON.

H. Con. Res. 110: Ms. BORDALLO and Mr. WILSON of South Carolina.

H. Res. 69: Mr. VELA.

H. Res. 624: Mr. LAWSON of Florida, Mr. RUTHERFORD, and Mr. DUNN.

H. Res. 745: Mr. UPTON, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Mr. RUSSELL, and Mr. SHIMKUS.

H. Res. 757: Ms. WILSON of Florida.

H. Res. 763: Mr. CURT AND MR. LOBIONDO.

H. Res. 910: Ms. FRANKEL of Florida and Mr. SENSENBRENNER.

H. Res. 967: Mr. CHABOT, Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana, and Mr. ROE of Tennessee.

H. Res. 981: Mr. WILSON of South Carolina.

H. Res. 1005: Ms. JACKSON LEE.

H. Res. 1008: Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. COHEN, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California, Ms. TITUS, Mr. RASKIN, Ms. JACKSON LEE, and Mr. DEUTCH.

H. Res. 1010: Mr. GALLAGHER.

H. Res. 1018: Mr. HIGGINS of New York, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. KIND, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. DOGGETT, and Ms. SÁNCHEZ.

DELETION OF SPONSORS FROM PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were deleted from public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 2069: Mr. LANGEVIN.

H.R. 5957: Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana.

United States of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 115th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 164 WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, JULY 25, 2018 *No. 125—Book II*

Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable TOM COTTON, a Senator from the State of Arkansas.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

O God, You are our God. We can stay composed even in a storm because of Your presence. We need You and stay thirsty for You, for Your power and glory uplift us.

Give our lawmakers the gift of Your steadfast love, blessing them beyond all that they can ask or imagine. May they praise Your Name each day. As they depend on You, empower them to confront life's challenges and hardships, knowing that they are never alone. Lord, satisfy their souls with good things, transforming the mundane into the meaningful. Purify their hearts, revealing to them Your plans for the prosperity of our Nation and world.

We pray in Your loving Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer 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.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, July 25, 2018.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable TOM COTTON, a Senator from the State of Arkansas, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ORRIN G. HATCH,
President pro tempore.

Mr. COTTON thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I spoke yesterday about the bipartisan cooperation that has made it possible for us to return to a regular appropriations process. Collaboration got the four measures we are now considering through the subcommittee and full committee process, thanks to the efforts of Chairman SHELBY, Senator LEAHY, and the subcommittee leaders, Senators MURKOWSKI, COLLINS, HOEVEN, and LANKFORD.

On the floor, bipartisanship let us turn to legislation by consent and kick off the amendment process with several votes yesterday. If we can keep it up, we will soon take four more big steps toward our goal of funding the Federal Government the right way and avoiding another omnibus.

Yesterday, I mentioned that the legislation before us addresses two pressing national needs: rebuilding America's infrastructure and bolstering the fight against opioids. But that is far from the whole story. These measures cover about one-eighth of the total discretionary spending for next year. They fund a long list of key services that Americans depend on every day—everything from food safety inspections to child nutrition programs, to the Forest Service and national parks. Communities in all 50 States are connected to this legislation.

Here are a few of the provisions that will be particular cause for celebration in my home State of Kentucky: $37 billion toward rural development, including support for rural businesses, and loans and grants to improve rural infrastructure for electricity, telephone, and broadband internet in communities in Kentucky and all across the country; another $1 billion in grants to help communities invest in highways, bridges, and other infrastructure projects, with a guarantee that 30 percent of this funding would go into rural areas; more funding for the Abandoned Mine Land Pilot Program, which helps communities reclaim abandoned coal mines and put that land to better use; more funding and a sharper Federal focus on controlling the evasive Asian carp that threaten local prosperity and water safety in Kentucky Lake and Lake Barkley in Western Kentucky; and more help for the Kentuckians who battle the scourge of opioids every day.

The legislation funds the FDA's efforts to intercept illegal drugs, the DEA's program for high-intensity trafficking areas, and increased training for first responders.

It also contains a provision I secured directing the Department of Housing and Urban Development to encourage more access to transitional housing opportunities for individuals recovering from substance abuse disorder.

I could go on. The ways the bill before us would assist families and communities across Kentucky are practically countless, and the same is true for every State in our country.

That is why every Member understands the importance of appropriations. Funding the Federal Government—matching resources with urgent challenges—is one of Congress's most important responsibilities. I am proud of the appropriations process that is underway, and I am especially proud of all of the ways the resulting legislation will deliver for the American people.

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

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JOB GROWTH

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, on another matter, we are discussing the difference between rhetoric and results when it comes to our economy. Yesterday, I described how my Democratic friends spent the Obama years talking about the importance of rebuilding American manufacturing. They talked about it, but it is the actions of this united Republican government that have made it easier for manufacturers to expand and hire.

It is on our watch that optimism among U.S. manufacturers has hit the highest level that one survey has ever recorded. Well, it turns out that there are quite a few areas where this Republican government is helping to deliver victories that our Democratic friends spent 8 years talking about.

In his 2010 State of the Union Address, President Obama proclaimed that job growth would be the No. 1 focus of the coming year. He said that ''the true engine of job creation in this country will always be America's businesses'' and that government's role was to ''create the conditions necessary for businesses to expand and to hire more workers.''

Recognizing American job creators as the true engines of prosperity and giving them room to succeed sounds good to me. It sounded good to almost everyone, in fact.

But once again, the policies didn't match the rhetoric. Instead, the Obama administration twice set all-time records for the number of pages in the Federal Register, and those pages had consequences. By constantly moving the regulatory goalposts, government eroded the certainty businesses need to invest and to hire.

Washington, DC, restricted farmers' and ranchers' control over water on their own property. Bureaucrats overwhelmed small banks and credit unions with a rule book designed for Wall Street, and an outdated Federal Tax Code held back job creation and made America much less competitive.

On Democrats' watch, Americans had to wait out an economic ''recovery'' that was insufficient, slow, and left whole parts of the country way behind.

Remember the rhetoric and then remember the facts. Republicans have always agreed that job creation must be a top priority, but we have a better idea about how to actually help make it happen. The Republican Congress has used the Congressional Review Act to slash 17 burdensome regulations. That is on top of the administration's own Executive actions. We have passed, and the President has signed, major changes to Obamacare and to Dodd-Frank, and we passed generational tax reform that puts more hard-earned money in the pockets of working families and gives job creators more flexibility.

So what is happening on our watch? Just a few days ago, the number of Americans newly filing for unemployment benefits hit the lowest level in more than 48 years. Let me say that again. Newly filing for unemployment benefits hit its lowest level in more than 48 years. Here is how CNN characterized the Labor Department's most recent jobs report:

> The U.S. economy keeps adding jobs at a blistering pace. . . . The job market is so good, many people who had previously given up looking are starting to look again.

According to Gallup, the percentage of Americans saying now is a good time to find a quality job hit its highest level in 17 years. That is not just rhetoric but actual results, due to the hard work of American workers and job creators, with an assist from this Republican government.

Unfortunately, this pro-growth agenda hasn't gotten much support from across the aisle. Not a single Democrat—not one—voted for the tax reform that helped to turn rhetoric about jobs into actual jobs.

There was hardly any Democratic support for the regulatory housecleaning that has given job creators more confidence to stay on American soil, grow their businesses, and add jobs.

So all of us agree with the rhetoric, but not everyone supported the policy agenda that has helped to deliver these results for the American people.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, FINANCIAL SERVICES, AND GENERAL GOVERNMENT APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2019

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 6147, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

> A bill (H.R. 6147) making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes.

Pending:

> Shelby amendment No. 3399, in the nature of a substitute.
>
> Murkowski amendment No. 3400 (to amendment No. 3399), of a perfecting nature.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, we are officially on day No. 2 of the second tranche of an appropriations package. We have before us the Interior Subcommittee's appropriations bill, the Financial Services, the T-HUD—Transportation, Housing and Urban Development—and Agriculture. So it is a good combination. It is a good package. It is a strong package. It is a series of appropriations bills that moved through the full Appropriations Committee several months back. Most of these bills advanced either unanimously, as the Interior Appropriations Subcommittee's bill did, or with a strong bipartisan show of support out of committee.

For those who have followed the appropriations process over the years, you know it is somewhat unprecedented to be able to advance these spending bills through the full committee process, much less to do so in a manner that surely shows the bipartisan approach this committee has taken in this fiscal year.

I acknowledge and recognize the work of Chairman SHELBY and his vice chairman, Senator LEAHY from Vermont, for the truly collaborative process they have encouraged all of us to work toward.

There was an agreement, an understanding, that our appropriations process had not been the model of good governance, of legislating, that we would have liked it to have been, that we would expect it to be, and that our colleagues—much less the American public—would expect it to be.

With a very determined effort, the group of appropriators who came together earlier made a very strong and firm commitment that we were going to get this process back on track. With the leadership of the chairman and the vice chairman, that is exactly where we are. We were able to move a smaller minibus, if you will, a month ago. That is now moving through that conference process. It is not an easy process, we recognize, but nothing around here is easy. If it is worth doing and doing well, it is going to take a little bit of work. We have done that work, and to be here on the 25th of July—to be at a place at which the Senate is poised to advance seven of the appropriations bills out of the Senate—is really quite unprecedented.

In my remarks on the floor on Monday evening, I noted that this was the first time since 2010 we had seen an Interior Appropriations Subcommittee's bill being brought to the floor of the U.S. Senate. That is a long time. That is too long a time not to have had a fulsome process, a process wherein we not only demonstrate the good work that we as appropriators have done but wherein our colleagues who are not on the committee also view that good work, weigh in, offer their thoughts, offer their amendments, and are a part of the broader, whole process.

How did we get here from there—from a point at which we, effectively, were not legislating as we knew we were capable of doing?

There was an agreement, a commitment, that we were going to stand down on some of the more controversial riders—in other words, those initiatives that were not actual appropriations but were more in line with authorizing within the appropriations bill.

There has been a history around here of seeing a level of authorization, and sometimes that level of authorization on an appropriations bill has created enough controversy that it has ground the whole process to a halt. So standing down on some of these initiatives, on some of these riders, has been an important part of how we have come to be where we are today.

We talk about the need to keep out the poison pills. We have joked—it is not really a joke; it is the reality—that one Member's priority is another Member's poison pill. So how do we work our way through that process?

We will have an opportunity to take up, at least for discussion, some of those priorities that may be significant, and Members have a great deal of desire to see them advance. Members on the other side will look at that and say that is too toxic—you can't go there; you can't do that. How we navigate through that will take a little bit of legislating.

I would ask Members—I would urge Members—to please come to us as their bill managers, whether for the Interior appropriations issues or for the Financial Services issues. Senator LANKFORD is the chairman of that committee. Go to Senator HOEVEN on Ag and to Senator COLLINS on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development—T-HUD. I would urge Members to come to us with their issues, their concerns, their amendments. Let's work through them. Let's get them through the process.

Yesterday, we were able to advance four amendments. Some might say, well, that is not very much, but I would suggest to you that we are getting started. We are getting started in a good way, in a positive way, in an encouraging way, and we want to encourage that good, forward activity.

We all know the most prized commodity around here is time and floor time. We don't have unlimited time on the floor to take up this package of measures. So help us get to the point at which we can work through those issues that we need to in order to bring to the floor that which will require a vote. We will help you and do so in a way that, I think, will do honor to the appropriations process, do honor to the legislative process—again, what we know around here to be regular order.

Unfortunately, I think we have seen that regular order has been less and less regular. It has become extraordinary because we just don't practice it enough. We want to get back to that, and we have the opportunity to do so. We have demonstrated that with one package, and we are in the midst of demonstrating that this week. I look forward to the full cooperation of Members as we advance.

I see my friend and colleague, the vice chairman of the Appropriations Committee, is on the floor. Again, I acknowledge his great leadership in working with the chairman of the full committee, in really getting us back to a place where we can be proud of our process.

With that, I yield to my friend, the Senator from Vermont.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I simply say to the Senator from Alaska, in my having had the honor of serving here with both her father and with the former chair of the Appropriations Committee, Senator Stevens, that I hear her saying things that are very similar to what I had heard both of them say. Perhaps Senator Stevens—rest his soul—would have said it with a little bit more emphasis, especially if he had been wearing his ''Incredible Hulk'' tie, but the Senator from Alaska is one of those who believes in the Senate working the way it should and getting things done, and I compliment her efforts.

Senator SHELBY and I made a pact that we would try to get these appropriations bills through, which is something that had been stalled for years. The Senator from Alaska has been essential, as have been a number of Senators on both sides of the aisle, in our getting that accomplished. We have gotten our bills through. Almost all of them have passed the Appropriations Committee unanimously. I joke that sometimes you can't get a unanimous vote around here that the Sun will rise in the East, but here is a case in which we have shown that it can.

The Senator from Alaska is absolutely right in that one person's poison pill may be another person's essential, but we have worked it out. If we can get the appropriations bill through—and I realize the other body is going on a 6-week vacation, but I hope there will be some who stay around. We are going to be here. We could conference some of these bills and get them passed. I think it would encourage the country to see both bodies do what we have done here in the Senate. It would improve how the government runs.

I share the frustration of heads of Departments, whether here in this administration or any other administration, who never know whether their appropriations are going to pass. How do they plan? How do they spend money? Where do they go?

We can make this process work the way it is supposed to work.

I see the distinguished Democratic leader on the floor, but I do want to compliment the Senator from Alaska for her efforts in making this possible.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Democratic leader is recognized.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I thank my friend and colleague from Vermont for yielding and my colleague from Alaska, as well, for allowing me to interrupt their very important and bipartisan debate.

NOMINATION OF BRETT KAVANAUGH

Mr. President, 8 years ago, when Elena Kagan was nominated to the Supreme Court, Senate Republicans said: We must get all of her documents from the Clinton Library and have enough time to analyze them so that we can determine whether she should be a Justice. The Republican leadership did not say some of the documents; they did not say a subset of the documents; they did not say the documents for just one administrative job; they said all of her documents.

I showed this letter yesterday to my friend who is now the chairman of the Judiciary, Senator GRASSLEY. He said it is totally different. He is a man of integrity, but I know there are times he gets twisted by his leadership and the President to do things that aren't consistent, and this is one of them.

The Republicans didn't ask only for certain documents. They asked for all, and we are asking for all. This is one of the most important positions in the world and certainly in America. Shouldn't we know everything? It is not just some of the stuff and some of the stuff that the White House wants us to know—but everything.

Our friends on the other side of the aisle demanded all of the documents for Justice Kagan. The Democrats agreed. It was the right thing to do. And because Elena Kagan had nothing to hide, she went happily forward and said: Go right ahead. Now Republicans ought to do the same thing for Judge Kavanaugh, particularly if he has nothing to hide.

For the last week, Senator FEINSTEIN has been ready to jointly request the same documents of Judge Kavanaugh that Republicans demanded of Justice Kagan, but our Republican colleagues are dragging their feet and refusing to agree. They are the reason this whole activity has been slowed down. It is not Democratic obstruction. It is the Democrats' desire for transparency and openness that the Republicans are blocking. They are being the obstructionists.

The Republicans' rationale is—they are downplaying Judge Kavanaugh's role as White House Staff Secretary. They argue that we don't need to see documents from that part of his career, although they have no argument against it. They think we don't need them. We think we do. Why not show them to us?

Here is what Judge Kavanaugh himself has said. He said that ''my 3 years as Staff Secretary for President Bush—were the most interesting and in many ways the most instructive.''

Kavanaugh himself said that the very documents we want to see and Republicans are blocking us from seeing are the most instructive. Shouldn't the American people see the writings of what their own nominee calls the most instructive?

As Staff Secretary, Kavanaugh said he ''participated in the process of putting together legislation.'' He drafted and revised Executive orders. He consulted on judicial nominations, including the replacement of Chief Justice Rehnquist. Isn't that something we want to know—what his thoughts were about who should be a Justice? Wouldn't that really inform us of what kind of Justice he might be?

He was one of the most senior officials in the Bush White House, 1 of only 17 out of hundreds of Presidential aides who were paid the maximum White House salary. I am sure he deserved it. That is not the issue. The issue is that he was an extremely high-ranking official there. This is not looking at when he was some clerk. It was a major, defining part of his career.

So here we go. Once again, Republicans are against transparency and are against the full record for one of the world's most powerful positions, which will last a lifetime. All of this stonewalling on getting Judge Kavanaugh's records from his time as Staff Secretary raises these looming questions: What are Judge Kavanaugh and the Republicans hiding? Why are Republicans hiding his full record from the Senate and the American people? What don't they want us to see? What don't they want the American people to see? Is there something there so damning that it might defeat Judge Kavanaugh's nomination? If there is, we are entitled to see it. If there is not, then what is the problem with moving forward?

Just last week, we saw our Republican colleagues defeat a judicial nomination based on something that nominee wrote in college. Are they really going to turn right around and say that the nominee for the highest Court in the land doesn't need to release documents that he wrote far later in his career when his views were far more formed?

This is about transparency. This is about making sure the Senate does its job in the right, complete, and open way. Democrats have made a completely reasonable request for documents—the same request we agreed to when the shoe was on the other foot. We are being consistent. Our Republican colleagues are being hypocritical. What was good for them in the minority when President Obama nominated someone is good for us in the minority when President Trump nominates someone. I will repeat the old saying from the Farmers' Almanac and elsewhere: What is good for the goose is good for the gander. It applies so, so well in this situation.

Our request is eminently reasonable. The quickest way to get this nomination moving forward is to get the documents and records, and it is for Leader MCCONNELL and Chairman GRASSLEY to agree to our request.

Mr. President, parenthetically, just today, we saw that the White House doctored the transcript and, supposedly, the tape of what Mr. Putin said right after the President and he met. It was sort of like an autocratic country, a nondemocracy. That is what dictators do; they change the facts and change the record. Are our Republican colleagues—so many of them who have stood for transparency—going to join this coverup of records and truth because they don't like the results? That is not America. That is not the America the American people know and love.

FARMER BAILOUT

Mr. President, on the farmer bailout, yesterday, President Trump announced a $12 billion bailout for farmers who have been hurt by the President's economic policies. Obviously, the farmers are hurting or the President wouldn't have done this.

The drawbacks of this particular policy aside, the bailout is another example of the President chasing his own tail. It is becoming a leitmotif in this administration: President Trump's impulsiveness and incompetence, his lack of thoroughness and study of an issue, lead him to act impulsively. He creates a massive problem, and then he is forced to hastily contrive a way to make it look as if he is saving the day.

The irony of this policy should not be lost on anyone. The President's bailout is like a Soviet-style program in which the government props up an entire sector of the economy. That characterization is one that I spoke of this morning to several colleagues, and I have now been told one of my Republican colleagues used the same characterization—Soviet-style program. The Freedom Caucus, the Koch brothers—this is not what even the hard right in America stands for.

Knowing this administration, they will design a bailout to help only massive agribusinesses that will use the money for stock buybacks. Knowing this administration, family farmers are likely to be left to suffer.

It was not so long ago that our Republican friends complained bitterly about picking winners and losers in the market. What is the President doing here? He is picking winners and losers.

The President's policies have hurt scores of Americans. He proposes a massive bailout in this case but tries to slash health insurance for tens of millions of middle-class Americans. He pushes a bailout in this case, but his budgets continue to decimate infrastructure, education, healthcare, environmental protection, and more. I would say that is picking winners and losers.

The President's bailout is another example of President Trump lighting the fire and grabbing the nearest thing off the shelf to douse it and then patting himself on the back as to what a great guy he has been. It is not good policy, it is not good politics, and it is incredibly telling of this administration's failure to anticipate the consequences of its decisions.

One more point: If you talk to our farmers, they would rather have long-term contracts and good markets. A bailout and storing all these agricultural products on the shelves will lower prices and cause the people we sell to overseas to find other suppliers and sign contracts with them. In the long term, it is going to make things worse.

Where does the bailout stop? What about people who use steel and aluminum? What about other goods that have been targeted by our foreign competitors? Are they going to get bailouts too? Is it going to go up from $12 billion to $50 billion to $100 billion? Amazingly, are our Republican colleagues—this is so against their principles—going to go along? We shall see.

RUSSIA

Mr. President, there is one more point on Russia. After President Trump's inexplicable behavior in Helsinki last week, many of us were forced to wonder whether President Putin had something on President Trump because his behavior was so obsequious in front of Putin.

Well, now it seems it is not just a few Democrats who are wondering. Yesterday's Quinnipiac poll showed that 51 percent of Americans believe that the Russian Government has compromising information about President Trump. That is astounding. Our leading enemy has information, compromising information, and then our President acts obsequiously. Whoa, where are we in this country?

Let me repeat that poll. A majority of Americans believe the Russian Government has something on President Trump. That is astounding. The fact that millions of Americans are wondering if our President is compromised by our leading adversary is a message to the White House: America wants you to be tough with President Putin.

The President will say: Oh, this is fake news. This is made up.

Well, President Trump, if Putin has nothing over you, why aren't you being tough with him? The best way to show that Putin has nothing over you is for you to stand up to him—not to be so obsequious and fawning and not to invite him here to the White House this fall.

There should be no more accepting of Putin's denials over a consensus of American intelligence, no more bending over backward to avoid criticizing Putin for interfering in our election, and no more one-on-one meetings with Putin where no one else—not the intelligence community, not our military leaders, not the Congress, and not the least of which, the American people know what was said or agreed to.

The writing is on the wall for the White House. This White House keeps reaching new lows. The American people, so disturbed by the President's

posture toward Russia, believe that President Trump may be compromised by our biggest enemy. I don't think that has ever happened, certainly in my memory, in my lifetime, and I can't remember an incident in history where this has happened this way.

President Trump ought to reverse course immediately. He can start by revoking his invitation to President Putin to visit the White House this fall.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ZIMBABWE DEMOCRACY AND ECONOMIC RECOVERY AMENDMENT ACT OF 2018

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 499, S. 2779.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2779) to amend the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act of 2001.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Foreign Relations, with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Amendment Act of 2018''.

SEC. 2. RECONSTRUCTION AND REBUILDING OF ZIMBABWE.

Section 2 of the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act of 2001 (Public Law 107–99; 22 U.S.C. 2151 note) is amended by inserting ''to enable Zimbabweans to reconstruct and rebuild Zimbabwe and come to terms with the past through a process of genuine reconciliation that acknowledges past human rights abuses and orders inquiries into disappearances, including the disappearance of human rights activists, such as Patrick Nabanyama, Itai Dzamara, and Paul Chizuze'' before the period at the end.

SEC. 3. FINDINGS.

Section 4(a) of the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act of 2001 is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking ''costly deployment of troops to the Democratic Republic of the Congo'' and inserting ''private appropriation of public assets''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(6) In October 2016, the Government of Zimbabwe cleared a small hurdle in its long-standing public sector arrears with the IMF.''.

SEC. 4. PROVISIONS RELATED TO MULTILATERAL DEBT RELIEF AND OTHER FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.

Section 4(b)(2) of the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act of 2001 is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), by striking ''to propose that the bank should undertake a review of the feasibility of restructuring, rescheduling, or eliminating the sovereign debt of Zimbabwe held by that bank'' and inserting ''to support efforts to reevaluate plans to restructure, rebuild, reschedule, or eliminate Zimbabwe's sovereign debt held by that bank and provide an analysis based on reasonable financial options to achieve those goals''; and

(2) in subparagraph (B), by striking ''dollar'' and inserting ''currency''.

SEC. 5. ADDITIONAL CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR ASSISTANCE.

Section 4(d) of the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act of 2001 is amended—

(1) by amending paragraph (2) to read as follows:

''(2) PRE- AND POST-ELECTION CONDITIONS.—The following pre- and post-election conditions are met:

''(A) Establishment and public release, without cost, of a provisional and a final voter registration roll.

''(B) The Zimbabwe Electoral Commission is permitted to entirely carry out the functions assigned to it in section 239 of Zimbabwe's 2013 Constitution in an independent manner, and the chairperson meets with and consults regularly with representatives of political parties represented in the parliament of Zimbabwe and those parties contesting the elections.

''(C) Consistent with Zimbabwe's 2013 Constitution, the Defence Forces of Zimbabwe—

''(i) are neither permitted to actively participate in campaigning for any candidate nor to intimidate voters;

''(ii) are required to verifiably and credibly uphold their Constitutionally mandated duty to respect the fundamental rights and freedoms of all persons and to be nonpartisan in character; and

''(iii) are not permitted to print, transfer, or control ballots or transmit the results of elections.

''(D) International observers, including from the United States, the African Union, the Southern African Development Community, and the European Union—

''(i) are permitted to observe the entire electoral process prior to, on, and following voting day, including by monitoring polling stations and tabulation centers; and

''(ii) are able to independently access and analyze vote tallying tabulation and the transmission and content of voting results.

''(E) Candidates are allowed access to public broadcasting media during the election period, as provided in Zimbabwe's Electoral Act, and candidates are able to campaign in an environment that is free from intimidation and violence.

''(F) Civil society organizations are able to freely and independently carry out voter and civic education, and to monitor the entire electoral process, including by observing, recording, and transmitting publicly-posted or announced voting results, including at the ward, constituency, and all higher levels of the vote tallying process.'';

(2) by redesignating paragraphs (3) and (5) as paragraphs (8) and (9), respectively;

(3) by striking paragraph (4);

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

''(3) PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION.—Zimbabwe has held an election that is widely accepted as free, fair, and credible by independent international and domestic civil society monitors, and the president-elect is free to assume the duties of the office.

''(4) UPDATING STATUTES.—Laws enacted prior to passage of Zimbabwe's March 2013 Constitution that are inconsistent with the new Constitution are amended or repealed or are subject to a formal process for review and correction so that such laws are consistent with the new Constitution.

''(5) UPHOLDING THE CONSTITUTION.—The Government of Zimbabwe—

''(A) has made significant progress on the implementation of all elements of the new Constitution; and

''(B) has demonstrated its commitment to sustain such efforts in achieving full implementation of the new Constitution.

''(6) ECONOMIC REFORMS.—The Government of Zimbabwe has demonstrated a sustained commitment to reforming Zimbabwe's economy in ways that will promote economic growth, address unemployment and underdevelopment, and restore livelihoods, including significant progress toward monetary policy reform, particularly with the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe, and currency exchange reforms.

''(7) ROLE OF TRADITIONAL LEADERS.—Traditional leaders of Zimbabwe observe section 281 of the 2013 Constitution and are not using humanitarian assistance provided by outside donor organizations or countries in a politicized manner to intimidate or pressure voters during the campaign period.''; and

(5) in paragraph (8), as redesignated by paragraph (2) of this subsection, by striking ''consistent with'' and all that follows through ''September 1998''.

SEC. 6. REMOVAL OF AUTHORITY TO PAY LAND ACQUISITION COSTS.

Section 5(a) of the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act of 2001 is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2), by striking '', including the payment of costs'' and all that follows through ''thereto; and'' and inserting a semicolon;

(2) in paragraph (3), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(4) identify and recover stolen public assets.''.

SEC. 7. INCLUSION OF AUSTRALIA AND THE UNITED KINGDOM IN CONSULTATIONS ABOUT ZIMBABWE.

Section 6 of the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act of 2001 is amended by inserting ''Australia, the United Kingdom,'' after ''Canada,''.

SEC. 8. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON ENFORCEMENT OF SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY TRIBUNAL RULINGS.

It is the sense of Congress that the Government of Zimbabwe and the Southern African Development Community (referred to in this section as ''SADC'') should enforce the SADC tribunal rulings from 2007 to 2010, including 18 disputes involving employment, commercial, and human rights cases surrounding dispossessed Zimbabwean commercial farmers and agricultural companies.

SEC. 9. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON THE UNITED STATES-ZIMBABWE BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP.

It is the sense of Congress that the United States Government is optimistic about the possibility for a stronger bilateral relationship with Zimbabwe, including in the areas of trade and investment, if—

(1) the Government of Zimbabwe takes concrete, tangible steps outlined in paragraphs (2) through (6) of section 4(d) of the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act of 2001, as amended by section 5 of this Act; and

(2) takes concrete, tangible steps towards—

(A) good governance, including respect for the opposition, rule of law, and human rights;

(B) economic reforms such as respect for contracts and private property rights; and

(C) identification and recovery of stolen private and public assets within Zimbabwe and abroad.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported amendment be withdrawn, the Flake amendment at the desk be agreed to, and the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The committee-reported amendment in the nature of a substitute was withdrawn.

The amendment (No. 3541) 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 ''Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Amendment Act of 2018''.

SEC. 2. RECONSTRUCTION AND REBUILDING OF ZIMBABWE.

Section 2 of the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act of 2001 (22 U.S.C. 2151 note; Public Law 107–99) is amended by striking ''and restore the rule of law'' and inserting ''restore the rule of law, reconstruct and rebuild Zimbabwe, and come to terms with the past through a process of genuine reconciliation that acknowledges past human rights abuses and orders inquiries into disappearances, including the disappearance of human rights activists, such as Patrick Nabanyama, Itai Dzamara, and Paul Chizuze''.

SEC. 3. FINDINGS.

Section 4(a) of the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act of 2001 is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking ''costly deployment of troops to the Democratic Republic of the Congo'' and inserting ''private appropriation of public assets''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(6) In October 2016, the Government of Zimbabwe cleared a small hurdle in its longstanding public sector arrears with the IMF.''.

SEC. 4. PROVISIONS RELATED TO MULTILATERAL DEBT RELIEF AND OTHER FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.

Section 4(b)(2) of the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act of 2001 is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), by striking ''to propose that the bank should undertake a review of the feasibility of restructuring, rescheduling, or eliminating the sovereign debt of Zimbabwe held by that bank'' and inserting ''to support efforts to reevaluate plans to restructure, rebuild, reschedule, or eliminate Zimbabwe's sovereign debt held by that bank and provide an analysis based on reasonable financial options to achieve those goals''; and

(2) in subparagraph (B), by striking ''dollar'' and inserting ''currency''.

SEC. 5. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON THE UNITED STATES-ZIMBABWE BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP.

It is the sense of Congress that the United States should seek to forge a stronger bilateral relationship with Zimbabwe, including in the areas of trade and investment, if the following conditions are satisfied:

(1) The Government of Zimbabwe takes the concrete, tangible steps outlined in paragraphs (1) through (4) of section 4(d) of the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act of 2001, as amended by section 6 of this Act.

(2) The Government of Zimbabwe takes concrete, tangible steps towards—

(A) good governance, including respect for the opposition, rule of law, and human rights;

(B) economic reforms that promote growth, address unemployment and underdevelopment, restore livelihoods, ensure respect for contracts and private property rights, and promote significant progress toward monetary policy reforms, particularly with the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe, and currency exchange reforms; and

(C) identification and recovery of stolen private and public assets within Zimbabwe and in other countries.

(3) The Government of Zimbabwe holds an election that is widely accepted as free and fair, based on the following pre- and post-election criteria or conditions:

(A) Establishment and public release, without cost, of a provisional and a final voter registration roll.

(B) The Zimbabwe Electoral Commission is permitted to entirely carry out the functions assigned to it under section 239 of Zimbabwe's 2013 Constitution in an independent manner, and the chairperson meets and consults regularly with representatives of political parties represented in the parliament of Zimbabwe and the parties contesting the elections.

(C) Consistent with Zimbabwe's 2013 Constitution, the Defence Forces of Zimbabwe—

(i) are neither permitted to actively participate in campaigning for any candidate nor to intimidate voters;

(ii) are required to verifiably and credibly uphold their constitutionally-mandated duty to respect the fundamental rights and freedoms of all persons and to be nonpartisan in character; and

(iii) are not permitted to print, transfer, or control ballots or transmit the results of elections.

(D) International observers, including observers from the United States, the African Union, the Southern African Development Community, and the European Union—

(i) are permitted to observe the entire electoral process prior to, on, and following voting day, including by monitoring polling stations and tabulation centers; and

(ii) are able to independently access and analyze vote tallying tabulation and the transmission and content of voting results.

(E) Candidates are allowed access to public broadcasting media during the election period, consistent with Zimbabwe's Electoral Act and are able to campaign in an environment that is free from intimidation and violence.

(F) Civil society organizations are able to freely and independently carry out voter and civic education and monitor the entire electoral process, including by observing, recording, and transmitting publicly-posted or announced voting results at the ward, constituency, and all higher levels of the vote tallying process.

(4) Laws enacted prior to the passage of Zimbabwe's March 2013 Constitution that are inconsistent with the new Constitution are amended, repealed, or subjected to a formal process for review and correction so that such laws are consistent with the new Constitution.

(5) The Government of Zimbabwe—

(A) has made significant progress on the implementation of all elements of the new Constitution; and

(B) has demonstrated its commitment to sustain such efforts in achieving full implementation of the new Constitution.

(6) Traditional leaders of Zimbabwe observe section 281 of the 2013 Constitution and are not using humanitarian assistance provided by outside donor organizations or countries in a politicized manner to intimidate or pressure voters during the campaign period.

SEC. 6. CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS.

Section 4(d) of the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act of 2001 is amended—

(1) in paragraph (3), by striking ''consistent with'' and all that follows through ''September 1998'';

(2) by striking paragraph (4); and

(3) by redesignating paragraph (5) as paragraph (4).

SEC. 7. REMOVAL OF AUTHORITY TO PAY LAND ACQUISITION COSTS.

Section 5(a) of the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act of 2001 is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2), by striking '', including the payment of costs'' and all that follows through ''thereto; and'' and inserting a semicolon;

(2) in paragraph (3), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(4) identify and recover stolen public assets.''.

SEC. 8. INCLUSION OF AUSTRALIA, THE UNITED KINGDOM, THE AFRICAN UNION, AND THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY IN CONSULTATIONS ABOUT ZIMBABWE.

Section 6 of the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act of 2001 is amended by inserting ''Australia, the United Kingdom, the African Union, the Southern African Development Community,'' after ''Canada,''.

SEC. 9. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON ENFORCEMENT OF SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY TRIBUNAL RULINGS.

It is the sense of Congress that the Government of Zimbabwe and the Southern African Development Community (referred to in this section as ''SADC'') should enforce the SADC tribunal rulings issued between 2007 to 2010, including 18 disputes involving employment, commercial, and human rights cases surrounding dispossessed Zimbabwean commercial farmers and agricultural companies.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading and was read the third time.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I know of no further debate on the bill.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. There being no further debate, the bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the bill pass?

The bill (S. 2779), as amended, was passed.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, FINANCIAL SERVICES, AND GENERAL GOVERNMENT APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2019—Continued

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I will just take a few moments as we are waiting for greater discussion about our appropriations package that is on the floor.

TRIBUTE TO MARGE MULLEN

Mr. President, the community of Soldotna, AK, in South Central Alaska—what we call the Kenai Peninsula—is going to be celebrating their Progress Days this weekend. On Friday, we have a homestead community barbecue, where a very special individual will be recognized as the first female homesteader in Soldotna.

Now, when most of us around here think about homesteading, we might go back to when President Lincoln signed the 1862 Homesteading Act. This enabled over 1.6 million people to stake their claim on Federal lands. Perhaps, if you are an Alaskan, you recall that homesteading became legal back in 1898. That was when President McKinley signed legislation to extend homesteading to what at that time was still the District of Alaska. It was not until decades later that we became a State.

What most people do not realize is that while the days of the wild West are certainly over here in the lower 48, the tradition of homesteading is still very, very much alive, and certainly we see that in Alaska.

So I would like to take just a couple of minutes this morning to share the story of an Alaskan homesteading icon, Marge Mullen. Again, it is Marge who will be recognized this weekend at Progress Days in Soldotna. In fact, on July 27, she will be recognized by the mayor of Soldotna, Mayor Anderson. July 27 will be recognized as ''Marge Mullen Appreciation Day.''

Marge was born in Chicago in 1920. According to the Peninsula Clarion, the local newspapers there on the Kenai Peninsula, Marge claims that she remembers seeing an article on Alaskan homesteading in the Chicago Daily News back in 1947. The idea must have seemed really appealing to her because after she read that article, she and her husband Frank, who was a pilot during World War II, bought a small plane, and they headed north to plant their roots. That was quite a trek back in the late 1940s, to fly in a small aircraft.

They landed in Alaska. They walked 65 miles through some pretty tough terrain. They then settled their homestead on Soldotna Creek, making Marge the first woman to live in Soldotna under the Homestead Act.

It wasn't too many years after they arrived in Alaska that, sadly, Marge lost her husband Frank to polio. It certainly would have been easier at the time for her to just pack up and head back to Chicago, but Marge was a pretty independent, strong-headed woman, and she made that brave choice to remain on her homestead.

Just to kind of paint a picture of what we are talking about back in the early 1950s, to make sure everybody understands the significance of a decision like that, you can either stay out there in some pretty open and still very wild areas or you can go back to Chicago. Homesteading has always been a lifestyle that is based on self-sufficiency. You have to be able to handle things on your own. It is a difficult task anywhere. It was difficult, as we saw, for the initial homesteaders around the lower 48 States, but there are some additional challenges, perhaps, in Alaska. There are some pretty tough winters that people go through. Temperatures are somewhat unforgiving in the winter months, as we know.

Marge faced a cost of living that was three to four times higher than she knew down in the lower 48. When you are out there, you live every day knowing that wildlife is just right outside your door, and that if something goes wrong, there is not a lot of help. There is no aid in the event of an emergency. So whether it is a bear that has threatened you and your family or whether it is just the rigors of living on your own with no assistance and no help, it can be a lonely life, but it can be a very life-building experience, and Marge certainly developed that.

Marge learned to hunt on her own, to chop wood, carry water, and grow food to safeguard the health, the warmth, and the safety of herself and her four children.

Trust me when I say that Marge overcame challenges that many of us—even some hearty Alaskans—could not imagine. But she overcame those challenges in an Alaska that was far less modern than the Alaska our visitors see today.

While Marge is widely known as a pioneer homesteader, she is also known throughout the community of Soldotna for many other contributions. She began the town's first roadside litter pickup program. She was involved at a lot of different levels. She served as the chair of the local planning commission. She helped to establish the Kenai Peninsula Conservation Society. She eventually became its president. In 2010, Marge was honored for her accomplishments when she was rightly inducted into the Alaska Women's Hall of Fame.

Marge's contributions continue today. She is 98 years old. She is revered as Soldotna's unofficial historian. She acts as the chair of the local historical society. You have to figure that she knows everything that went on in the region. She was part of everything that went on in the region. She is really history in the flesh, bringing the early days of Soldotna to life through her teachings and digital lessons.

Again, as I mentioned, the Soldotna city mayor has proclaimed July 27 as ''Marge Mullen Appreciation Day.'' As the community of Soldotna comes together to celebrate Marge's legacy, I think it is only appropriate that we in the Senate should come to know a little bit of her history as well and join in the recognition.

I offer my thanks and my best wishes to Marge Mullen as she continues influencing her community and the State of Alaska.

I thank my colleagues for letting me share this tribute this morning.

I see that no Members are on the floor yet. Again, I would encourage folks to take a look at the bills that we have in front of us—the Interior, the Financial Services, the Agriculture, and the T-HUD. Let's have an opportunity to consider the amendments that we can take up and allow for the process to go forward in a fulsome and a constructive way.

With that, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SULLIVAN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

RUSSIAN ELECTION INTERFERENCE

Mr. REED. Mr. President, as we consider the appropriations minibus this week, I rise to emphasize once again the importance of acknowledging and addressing the threat of interference in our election systems. In particular, Congress must address the continuing threat of Russian hybrid attacks against our democratic institutions.

It is difficult to overstate the need to shore up support for democratic institutions here, and around the world, in light of President Trump's recent foreign policy failures. In the last week or so, the President has attempted to derail the NATO summit by insulting our allies and demanding that they immediately double their contributions, thrown a wrench into Brexit negotiations and seemingly endorsed a new Prime Minister for the United Kingdom, and then embraced Russian President Vladimir Putin in Helsinki.

President Trump stood shoulder to shoulder with President Putin, while the world looked on, and chose to take the word of an autocrat and KGB agent over the assessments of the American Intelligence Community on Russia's interference in our elections. By indulging President Putin's fabrications, he also gave credence to Putin's propaganda on Crimea and Syria, Russia's use of chemical agents against civilians, and its violations of its arms control obligations. This failure to stand up for America's interests and those of our allies and partners was a dereliction of the President's responsibilities that will continue to undermine our national security.

President Trump's erratic and divisive actions are undermining that which makes us strong. Our Nation, our allies, and our partners around the world benefit from the world order that the United States created after World War II. We draw strength from our allies and from participation in international institutions. We are not weakened by them; we are strengthened by them.

While the President later took low-energy steps to walk back and obfuscate his words on Russian interference, he soon took to Twitter again to aggressively attempt to discredit the investigations into Russian election interference and into his own campaign.

Regardless of what President Trump may say or tweet, we must be absolutely clear: The threat of Russian interference in our democracy is not a ''hoax'' or a ''witch hunt,'' and Congress and the States must act now to

address the real threat of another foreign intrusion into our elections.

Indeed, the findings of the intelligence community's assessment were clear, and I quote:

> We assess Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered an influence campaign in 2016 aimed at the US presidential election. Russia's goals were to undermine public faith in the US democratic process, denigrate Secretary Clinton, and harm her electability and potential presidency.

This problem is not behind us. Indeed, President Trump should listen to the national security officials whom he appointed and a Republican-controlled Senate confirmed. The Director of National Intelligence, former Republican Senator Dan Coats, issued multiple public warnings this month, including stating that the warning signs about Russian cyber attacks ahead of our midterm elections are, in his words, ''blinking red again,'' akin to before 9/11. Last week, FBI Director Christopher Wray stated: ''Russia attempted to interfere with the last election and . . . continues to engage in malign influence operations to this day.'' When asked last week whether Russia is still targeting the United States, Department of Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen said: that the United States ''would be foolish to think [the Russians] are not. They have the capability. They have the will. We've got to be prepared.''

The private sector also validates these concerns. At last week's Aspen Security Forum panel, Tom Burt, Microsoft's Vice President of Customer Security and Trust, told an audience that Microsoft already has detected cyber attacks against three candidates running for Congress this fall. These attacks looked very much like those phishing attacks that Russian agents used against Democrats in 2016.

This Chamber faces a stark choice: We can listen to the American Intelligence Community and nonpartisan experts, acknowledge the indictments and guilty pleas of 32 people and 3 companies by the special counsel, and heed the ongoing warnings of Republican national security official—all of whom agree that our democracy is under attack. Or we can trust the words of Vladimir Putin, online trolls and conspiracy theorists, and President Trump—who insist in the face of evidence that Russia is not attacking our democracy. For my part, I don't think that is a very difficult choice.

Securing our elections should not be a partisan issue. Election security is national security, and the States need our help to defend our elections against these attacks. The fiscal year 2018 omnibus included $380 million in State election security grants, and all 55 eligible States and territories requested funding. To date, 100 percent of the funds have been requested and 90 percent of the funds have been disbursed. Yet concerns remain.

On Monday, 21 state attorneys general, including the Attorney General of my home State of Rhode Island, wrote to the House and Senate to ask for additional assistance to secure the 2018 midterm elections against cyber attacks. I understand Senator LEAHY intends to offer an amendment to the Financial Services and General Government title of the minibus legislation this week that would provide $250 million in additional State election security grants. These grants could provide States additional and much needed resources to update voting equipment and secure election systems. I am a cosponsor of this amendment and believe that Congress should pass it and continue to listen to the States and take further steps to ensure that our foundational democratic institutions are secure against foreign actors.

With that, Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. 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.

NOMINATION OF BRETT KAVANAUGH

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, earlier this month, President Trump announced his choice to fill the vacancy left by the retirement of Justice Anthony Kennedy, and he told us that nominee would be Judge Brett Kavanaugh of the DC Circuit Court of Appeals.

During this short period of time—just a little over 2 weeks—we have seen some of our friends across the aisle attempt to tank Judge Kavanaugh's confirmation before it really has a chance to get started, certainly before they have a chance to meet him. Five of our colleagues across the aisle announced their opposition to any Supreme Court Justice President Trump might nominate—anybody; fill in the blank. Then, once the President chose Judge Kavanaugh, 15 more fell into lockstep with the first 5, so now we have 20 of our Democratic colleagues, before they have even had a chance to meet the judge, who have announced their implacable opposition.

I thought that would pretty much take the cake until I saw reported this morning that one of our colleagues across the aisle said that to support Judge Kavanaugh would make you complicit in evil. It is hard to take statements like that seriously. To me, that is completely unhinged and detached from any reality. This is the same judge who was confirmed in 2006 by a substantial bipartisan vote to what many have called the second most important court in the Nation. My advice to some of our friends across the aisle who are engaged in this kind of super-heated rhetoric is, get a grip. Get a grip.

The strategy we have seen on the other side hasn't worked too well. They have targeted the nominee's character, but then they have had to deal with the fact that this nominee is a standup guy and a good father. Multiple fact-checkers debunked claims regarding his legal views, as well as the timing of his confirmation, so it seems like our colleagues have moved on.

Now it seems like it is all about the paper. It is all about documents. We have heard from some of our colleagues requesting that every email, every memo, every document that ever crossed Brett Kavanaugh's desk be disgorged and produced in the course of this confirmation proceeding. Ignore the fact for a minute that when he was confirmed to the DC Circuit Court of Appeals, they didn't request any of the documents from when he was Staff Secretary for the President of the United States, but now, for some mysterious reason, they could well be hiding the smoking gun they will use to derail his confirmation—or at least so they are acting.

In the course of my legal career—I served for 13 years as a judge on the trial court and appellate courts in Texas—I have seen phishing expeditions before, and this is the very definition of a phishing expedition.

I agree with our colleagues who say all relevant documents need to be produced—and should be and will be produced in a perfectly normal part of confirming a judicial nominee. But that is the key—the documents need to be reasonably related to the confirmation process.

Our friend the minority leader from New York sees things differently. There is no surprise there. Yesterday, he scolded me personally, as well as other Republican colleagues. He said that we are guilty of applying an enormous double standard when it comes to producing documents in a judicial confirmation hearing. He compared the confirmation of Justice Kagan to Judge Kavanaugh's.

Let's rewind the clock. It is true that Republicans wanted to see Justice Kagan's documents and review them before holding a hearing on her confirmation for the Supreme Court, but it wasn't the range of documents we are talking about with Kavanaugh. Her situation was dramatically different.

First, she had never served as a judge before, as Judge Kavanaugh has. He has a vast judicial record—300 opinions, 12 years on the DC Circuit Court of Appeals. He has a vast record when it comes to his activities as a judge. You would think that would be a good place to start. We thought it was important to review relevant records for Justice Kagan at the White House because we didn't have judicial opinions to review. For Justice Kagan, we needed materials to understand her legal philosophy and style of reasoning, and we had to use what actually existed at the time.

I will say that the Solicitor General files—she was Solicitor General of the United States and represented the U.S.

Government in front of the Supreme Court. Virtually none of that was touched. We recognize that those attorney-client communications should be respected.

Second, for Justice Kagan's confirmation, Republicans and Democrats alike agreed that not every single executive branch document was relevant and important to her confirmation process. In that respect, I will tell my friend the minority leader that is not a double standard; that is the same standard. It should be the same standard.

Republicans and Democrats got together in the case of Justice Kagan and agreed that records from her time at the Solicitor General's Office were too sensitive and privileged and that they shouldn't be made available to the Senate in connection with her confirmation. Instead, the Senate decided it was more appropriate to focus on records from Justice Kagan's time at the White House Counsel's Office and the Office of Domestic Policy. So, too, we would say that Brett Kavanaugh's documents that he authored, that he contributed to at the White House Counsel's Office, subject to any privileges that might pertain, should be fair game. So there is already well-worn precedent when it comes to executive branch records—which should be on-limits and which should be off-limits. We observed that in the case of Justice Kagan, and we would argue that the same consideration should be applied to the Kavanaugh nomination.

Third, in the past comment of mine Senator SCHUMER was referring to yesterday, I was talking specifically about tens of thousands of documents in reference to Justice Kagan. In the end, 173,000 documents were produced on her behalf. By the way, that is nowhere close to the ''gazillion'' that the junior Senator from Alabama has alleged was produced during the Kagan confirmation. It wasn't a gazillion; it was 173,000. It might have seemed that way because that is a lot of documents. The stacks of paper were stacked high. But the truth is, much fewer than a gazillion were produced—173,000. Compare that to the document production for Justice Gorsuch when he was confirmed. That was roughly 182,000 documents. That is a high number as well, but it pales in comparison to what our Democratic friends are asking for in the case of Judge Kavanaugh.

The truth is, our friends across the aisle are picking numbers out of the air, talking about potentially millions of documents. The senior Senator from California has named 1 million as her magic number, and that is the minimum amount of documents she said she expects to be produced.

As I said, we all know that Judge Kavanaugh, in addition to serving as a judge on the DC Circuit Court of Appeals and in addition to working in the White House Counsel's Office, served as Staff Secretary to the President. Many documents crossed his desk while he worked in that job. But the effort to insist on every document that he touched from the time he was at the Bush White House as Staff Secretary is ludicrous. It is ridiculous. It is nothing less than a phishing expedition designed to delay his confirmation until after the Supreme Court reconvenes in early October.

Do our colleagues really seriously need to see every piece of paper that crossed his desk? Is what President Bush had for dinner 14 years ago relevant to how Judge Kavanaugh will serve on the Court? I am sure there is a copy of the White House mess menu as part of those documents, but those aren't his documents in the sense that he didn't create them, he didn't contribute to them. He was sort of a traffic cop—a very important traffic cop—in terms of the documents that went across the President's desk.

Our friend, the senior Senator from Connecticut, for example, seemed to suggest that every piece of paper that crossed his desk is important. He said he wants to see any documents that have Judge Kavanaugh's name on them, whether he was a direct recipient or a sender or he was copied.

If somebody sent a document to him, how is that relevant to Judge Kavanaugh's qualifications, something sent to him by somebody else that he didn't contribute to and he didn't author?

Well, based on that rationale, if Judge Kavanaugh were cc'd on an email about somebody's birthday party down the hall, apparently some of our friends across the aisle think that information is absolutely crucial to this confirmation hearing. Well, that is just not right, and it is ridiculous.

Just as the Judiciary Committee quickly processed Justice Kagan's nomination in 2010—somebody who spent a number of years at the Clinton White House—I am confident we could do the same if we got together and worked at it in the case of Judge Kavanaugh.

Under Chairman GRASSLEY's leadership, the Judiciary Committee will work to produce hundreds of thousands of documents for Members to conduct a thorough review. I am confident of that.

We met with the White House Counsel yesterday to talk about the strategy for producing the documents that are relevant to the confirmation process, but there is no better evidence of exactly what kind of judge ''Justice Kavanaugh'' will be than the opinions he has written on the DC Circuit Court of Appeals.

The committee will receive thousands of documents that are relevant and important to the confirmation process. Senators and their staff will be able to review them, and Senators will be able to ask questions. I guarantee Chairman GRASSLEY will hold a full and fair hearing before the Judiciary Committee when we convene for the purposes of the confirmation hearing.

We will be able to ask—all of us—on a bipartisan basis, the hard questions everybody wants to ask, and at the end of the process, which I am hopeful will take place this September, the Senate will act, and Judge Kavanaugh will become Justice Kavanaugh.

Beyond the document production, there is another wrinkle in the confirmation process that has emerged, and it hinges on the nominees's views on Executive power. I spoke a little bit about that yesterday, but there is just another thing to mention.

I am referring to a 1999 transcript of a panel discussion in which Judge Kavanaugh discussed the case United States v. Nixon, which forced then-President Nixon to turn over the Watergate tapes. It was a significant event in our Nation's history.

My friend the minority leader has provocatively questioned whether Kavanaugh would have let Nixon off the hook. Well, no, he wouldn't, and neither did the Supreme Court of the United States—just the contrary. That is what we expect from the courts: independent legal judgment, whether it is the most humble among us or whether it is the President of the United States.

In a speech in a law review article, Judge Kavanaugh praised the unanimous ruling in the Nixon case. His views have been further confirmed by those who have worked closely with him over the years. They have said that to Judge Kavanaugh, Nixon was one of the most significant cases in which the judiciary stood up to the President.

So enough already. Enough with all the distractions, the hyperventilation, the fishing expeditions, and let's get to work. Let's keep this process moving forward on a bipartisan basis. Let's roll up our sleeves. Both Justices Sotomayor and Gorsuch were confirmed in 66 days. If you applied that standard to Judge Kavanaugh, that would mean we would vote on his nomination on September 13, but we will have plenty of time to vet this nominee and to review the relevant documents that have some bearing on his qualifications and his experience and fitness to serve as a member of the Supreme Court.

I hope our Democratic colleagues will take advantage of the opportunity to meet with Judge Kavanaugh and to talk to him for themselves and see that he is an accomplished jurist and, perhaps even more importantly, an entirely decent human being. He is one who will faithfully and fairly apply the laws written and uphold our Constitution.

I know the senior Senator from West Virginia has agreed to do that, and I express my personal appreciation to him for breaking up this boycott, which has, I guess, been commanded by the highest authorities—the Democratic leader—to not meet with the judge until we get all the documents we are asking for.

Well, in addition to the Senator from West Virginia, the junior Senator from Delaware has also said he will meet with the judge, as has the senior Senator from Indiana, and I appreciate that. I think they will find a lot of comfort in meeting with the judge, and they will be able to get some answers to their questions.

I look forward to continuing our vetting process and voting to confirm Judge Kavanaugh this fall.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

TRIBUTE TO CHANDLER MORSE

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. President, in January of next year, when I cast my final vote and look back on 18 years in the House and the Senate, one of the things I will value most are the friendships made during my time here.

I have been fortunate to have an incredible staff to work with for every year that I have been here: from the interns who answer the phone calls, not all of those phone calls pleasant, mind you, to the staff assistants who make constituents and visitors feel welcome in my office and in the Capitol; to office managers who make things run smoothly and build comradery among the staff and the team; to legislative correspondents who skillfully explain the nuances of bills and resolutions I have sponsored or those I have avoided; to legislative assistants who delve deep into the issues, much deeper than I have the time or sometimes the inclination to dig into; to a press shop that tries and often succeeds in making me look better and more thoughtful than I am; to legislative directors who try to focus my attention on issues where I might make a bit of a difference; to schedulers who gently remind me, without judging, of family birthdays and anniversaries and who keep me out of the middle seat more often than not; to expert staff in Arizona who endure protests and provide skilled outreach, sometimes to lonely posts across the State; to caseworkers who work to solve Medicare, Social Security, veteran, and immigration issues for constituents who later thank me in the grocery store for tireless work that I scarcely knew was done.

Now, to keep this ship moving in the right direction, there has to be a leader at the helm who is accomplished and skilled, equal parts firm and kind. It has been my good fortune that Chandler Morse has filled that role for many years. Chandler will be leaving for greener pastures at the end of this month.

Chandler first came to my House office in 2005 as a legislative assistant. I remember looking at his resume and wondering if his background at the National Association of Homebuilders would lend itself to working on a broader legislative agenda. But as soon as I met Chandler, I knew that he had the intellect and the work ethic to do whatever I asked of him. I have never been disappointed.

Chandler moved from legislative assistant to legislative director to deputy chief of staff and, eventually, to chief of staff here in the Senate. Along the way, he has handled natural resource issues, trade issues, homeland security issues, U.S.-Cuba policy issues, and, perhaps most difficult and vexing of all, immigration issues.

The Members and staff making up the Gang of 8 in 2013 relied heavily on Chandler's work and expertise during months of negotiations that led to the successful passage of a good bipartisan bill.

I would like to think that Chandler has enjoyed climbing aboard the Marc train in Baltimore to come to work in Washington every day. I would like to think that, but about this I am certain: He is much happier climbing back on that train every night because he knows that his beautiful wife Annie and his precious kids, Parker and Talie, are waiting for him to come home.

I know that as much as he likes drafting good amendments, blocking bad legislation, or crafting lame puns about earmarks or wasteful spending, Chandler would prefer to be hiking or camping with his family or taking in the outdoors in his beloved Maine. This speaks well for his priorities.

When Chandler Morse takes his leave at the end of next week, this institution will lose a loyal public servant. My Senate office will lose a leader and a mentor, but as for me, I will retain a friend for life, and for that I am grateful.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. ERNST). The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

NOMINATION OF BRETT KAVANAUGH

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I want to start today by sharing a story that is very personal to me and that has informed my work and my values ever since it happened. When I was in college, a friend of mine—we were close and lived together in the dorm—went out on a date. She was raped. She got pregnant. She didn't know where to get a safe abortion, and she wasn't wealthy. So she knew she couldn't afford it, either. The botched procedure she ended up having left her, at a very young age, unable to bear children.

I saw my friend hurt and frightened, alone and unable to get the care she needed because someone else's beliefs mattered more under our laws than her health and her future. That impacted me a lot, and it has stayed with me to this day.

Let me tell you a few other stories. This is the story of a woman I met just a few weeks ago. When she was 23, fresh out of college, she became pregnant while living paycheck to paycheck in what she described as ''an extremely unhealthy and volatile relationship.''

She and her partner realized they were not ready to be parents and couldn't afford to raise a child, so they drove to a Planned Parenthood a few miles from her apartment. There, she was informed of her options. She was treated with respect and kindness and got a safe, legal abortion. Today, she is a writer and an editor and the mother of an adorable little boy, with another child on the way.

Here is another story. This young woman became pregnant in her first semester of college after a contraceptive failure. Having a baby would not only have meant dropping out of college but returning to an abusive home. She was grateful to be in New Jersey when this happened, where she could get an abortion without a waiting period and where there are a number of providers. She wrote that abortion access was ''critical in allowing me to determine my life path'' and in escaping the abusive household she had grown up in.

Finally, there is the story of a partner in a major law firm who was already the mother of a 3-year-old child. She was thrilled to find out she was pregnant with another child. But headed into the sixth month of her pregnancy, she and her husband were told that because of a rare heart defect, there was, in the best case scenario, just a 10-percent chance of the pregnancy making it to term, and there was less than a 1-percent chance of their baby making it to its first birthday—with no hope of a reasonable quality of life.

There is no right answer when it comes to decisions like these. Some women, some families choose one way; some, another. But this woman and her husband made the decision to end the pregnancy. It was their family, their future—her choice. She says she knows she did the right thing for her and her family, as difficult as it was.

A year later, she gave birth to a healthy son. She wrote: ''I have shared my story with my children and hope that should my daughter ever find herself in a position similar to mine, she will enjoy the same rights that were available to me.''

There are decades between my college friend's story and the three I just told and the historic ruling in Roe v. Wade, which affirmed that our Constitution protects a woman's right to control her own healthcare decisions. Roe and the rulings that have upheld it make clear what women across the country know at their core to be true—that reproductive freedom is essential to a woman's ability to control her future, plan her family, and contribute to

her community in all the ways she may choose to, as those three women were able to.

Reproductive freedom means women are more able to participate equally and fully in our country. And while I can't adequately express how frustrating it is to have to assert this in the 21st Century, we are stronger today because women in the United States are treated more equally than we were in the 1970s. In fact, former Federal Reserve Chair Janet Yellen—the only woman to hold this position in the Reserve's 100-year history—has said that our country's economic growth in the last half-century was in large part due to women joining the labor force, and to continue the growth we have seen, we will need to do more to ensure that more women have a level playing field in the workplace and in society as a whole.

But the progress women have made—and the prospect of future progress—truly hangs in the balance. Today, I want not only to emphasize how real this threat is but also to paint a picture of how much more unequal life would be for women in the United States of America should Judge Kavanaugh be confirmed and add a fifth vote on the Supreme Court for overturning Roe v. Wade and rolling back reproductive rights women have had for more than four decades.

Let me say it again. The threat to women's reproductive rights is frighteningly real. It is real because, unless Democrats and Republicans come together, President Trump will follow through on his promise to overturn Roe.

On the campaign trail, Candidate Trump assured extreme, anti-choice special interest groups that he would implement their agenda if elected. He established a litmus test for Supreme Court nominees and released a list of potential picks, each of whom had demonstrated opposition to a woman's right to choose.

He said that under his Presidency, Roe would be overturned automatically once he had the opportunity to appoint Justices because they would all be pro-life. He said that women should be punished for having abortions. He chose a Vice President, MIKE PENCE, whose views on women and women's health are about as antiquated as smelling salts—and far more damaging.

Candidate Trump aligned himself unequivocally with those who want to roll back women's rights. And while President Trump has broken promise after promise to workers and families, he has never once wavered in following through for those anti-choice special interests.

He has done virtually everything he can to chip away at women's constitutionally protected reproductive rights from the Oval Office, whether it is proposing a domestic gag rule that would allow the government to interfere in provider-patient relationships, attempting time and again to defund Planned Parenthood, or trying to allow virtually any employer to decide to exclude birth control coverage from their employer-sponsored coverage.

I could go on.

Anyone who says President Trump isn't applying an anti-choice litmus test in this nomination or thinks it is unclear where President Trump's allegiance lies when it comes to women's health should take a look at what he has said and done. Unless they willfully ignore the facts, they will quickly realize that the President, far beyond any modern President, has championed the anti-choice cause and has found exactly what he is looking for in Judge Kavanaugh—a fifth vote to overturn Roe v. Wade.

The best evidence that Judge Kavanaugh would overturn Roe is that extreme, anti-choice groups vetted his likelihood to do exactly that and sent him straight to President Trump.

But I do want to address a few aspects of Judge Kavanaugh's records that, to me, expose how unqualified he is to make decisions that will impact women from all backgrounds for generations to come. When I examine the record and history of a Supreme Court nominee, I hope to see a breadth of life experience, the ability to walk in someone else's shoes. Judge Kavanaugh has not demonstrated either of those qualities.

In expressing support for Justice Rehnquist's dissent in Roe—where the Justice argued for allowing restrictions on women's reproductive rights—Kavanaugh agreed with the idea that if a right is not explicitly stated in the Constitution, it must be ''rooted in the traditions and conscience of our people.'' But he made clear that he does not believe a woman's right to choose is rooted in the traditions or the conscience of our people.

I am deeply concerned about who Judge Kavanaugh thinks about and trusts when he imagines the traditions and conscience of our people and makes those decisions accordingly.

His opinions from the bench only heighten my concern. In one opinion, Judge Kavanaugh ruled to allow the Trump administration to block a pregnant 17-year-old who arrived alone at our borders from accessing an abortion until the government could place her with a sponsor. He felt she needed a ''support network'' around her before she was capable of making that decision, even though she had been seeking an abortion for months and had already met State level requirements.

In another opinion, he expressed the belief that if a woman's employer doesn't believe in birth control, that employer shouldn't even have to fill out a one-page form to allow the woman to get birth control coverage directly from her own insurer.

The ''traditions'' and ''conscience'' Judge Kavanaugh referred to may be, in his mind, that of historically powerful, very wealthy White men—first in powdered wigs and then in suits—who never faced the challenges women in these cases face. These women matter, too, and they deserve a Justice who accounts for their rights and liberties in his or her decisions.

Unfortunately, Judge Kavanaugh's opinions indicate he will not do so. Instead, they display a fundamental lack of trust in women's abilities to make their own healthcare decisions. They also show something more: a very poor understanding of the unequal economic and social realities women continue to face in our country, despite the progress we have made, and the degree to which these differences make it all the more important that women be trusted and treated equally under the law, independently, and in their own right.

If an employer tries to deny his employee affordable birth control because he thinks he knows better or if a politicized Federal agency is detaining a young woman in hopes that it can impose its beliefs on her or if a woman does not want to carry her rapist's child to term, our Nation's laws must affirm her autonomy because our laws are her place of last resort.

But under Judge Kavanaugh's vision for our country, based on his assessment of traditions and conscience, women wouldn't have that last resort. Instead, a woman's ability to get reproductive healthcare would overwhelmingly depend, as it did before Roe, on whether she could afford it and, therefore, disproportionately on her race and ZIP Code as well.

Our country as a whole would see outcomes like those we are already seeing in States like Texas and Mississippi, where abortion access is heavily restricted under policies Judge Kavanaugh has referenced approvingly. While women with resources have more options, women without resources see the providers where they had received affordable contraception and healthcare closed down because of anti-abortion politics.

Reproductive healthcare—from sex education, to birth control, to abortion—becomes a privilege for the wealthy, rather than the right of every woman, regardless of who she is. That isn't fair. It is not right, and it truly isn't what people in this country want.

President Trump said that Roe is a ''50–50'' issue in the United States. He is wrong. People in our country—Democrats, Republicans, women and men of all ages and backgrounds—overwhelmingly understand that abortion is a deeply personal decision, one our laws should allow women to make, just as every American's bodily autonomy should be their own concern and not their government's. Despite what the White House would have us believe, this is not a country that wants to follow President Trump, Vice President PENCE, and five male Supreme Court Justices back to 1972.

The only way to stop this from happening is for people to take action. I urge anyone who is concerned right

now—women or men—to make that clear, loudly and immediately. If you have a story that shows why reproductive rights matter in our country, share it. If you haven't signed up to vote—or told your friends to—do it.

One year ago this week, three of my Republican colleagues stood with Democrats and stopped President Trump's effort to enact TrumpCare, which would have gutted protections for patients with preexisting conditions, ended Medicaid as we know it, and more. That happened because people across the country knew what was at stake and spoke up, despite how long the odds seemed. That is what we need now. I am confident we can succeed again if people who care show it.

The last story I will tell is one I hope women and men today will be able to tell their daughters and their granddaughters decades from now, should they ever need to hear it. It is that our country went through an extremely frightening time when one of the many rights on the verge of being taken away was a woman's right to choose. We thought about them—our daughters and granddaughters—and how important it is that each one of them be treated equally under our country's laws and have the opportunity to achieve the goals they set out to achieve. We did everything we could to fight back, and we didn't let it happen on our watch. I hope we make that our story.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

OPIOID EPIDEMIC

Ms. WARREN. Madam President, this week, we hit a milestone, but not the kind of milestone you celebrate. Nearly 1 year ago, the Commission appointed by President Trump to examine the opioid crisis recommended that the President declare a national public health emergency to help combat the epidemic.

The Commission, led by former Republican Governor Chris Christie, said:

> The first and most urgent recommendation of this Commission is direct and completely within your control. Declare a national emergency.

Yet the President dragged his feet. While he twiddled his thumbs, thousands of Americans continued to die from drug overdoses—over 115 people a day. Finally, in October of 2017, the President formally declared what we already knew—that the crisis was a public health emergency worthy of Federal action.

The first declaration the President issued lasted for 90 days, but during those 90 days, nothing changed. The President didn't take action. Americans continued to suffer, and more people died day, after day, after day. On January 24, 2018, the first emergency declaration expired. So the President had his HHS Secretary sign a second one. Then, before another 90 days ran out, on April 24, the administration signed a third one.

Yesterday, another 90 days later, on July 24, 2018, we began the fourth consecutive period of public health emergency due to the opioid crisis—9 months since the original declaration, 9 months during which more than 30,000 people have likely overdosed and died, all while the President and his administration have given us a lot of talk but no action.

Our communities are on the frontline of this epidemic, and they are working hard to fight back, but they can't do it alone. They need funding, support, and new tools. I have worked with my Democratic colleagues to make sure that communities have what they need in this fight.

Time and again, we have pressured congressional leadership for additional funding to help States and local communities address this epidemic, and the pressure has worked. I have secured millions of dollars, not just for opioid addiction and prevention and treatment but for increased mental health services, including the biggest increase in funding for the community mental health services block grant in history.

I have passed bipartisan legislation to reduce the number of unused opioids that sit in medicine cabinets. Since that legislation has become law, I have continued to work across the aisle, with Senator CAPITO, to make sure it has actually been implemented, and we are still working on that today.

I have also introduced legislation to send $100 billion in extra resources to fight this epidemic—right to the communities and Tribes that need the help the most.

I am in this fight because communities in Massachusetts and all across this country deserve it. Yet President Trump is not in this fight. The President has made a lot of promises about the opioid crisis, but time and again, this President has broken his promises. Take the first time he declared the crisis an emergency. The President held a big event and talked a big game. Then he produced no tangible plan and no new commitment of Federal money beyond meager funds that were left over from responding to other public health emergencies and disasters.

Declaring the crisis a national emergency was the top recommendation of the President's opioid commission, but it was not the only recommendation. The Commission's final report included 56 recommendations that it asked the administration and Congress to implement as soon as possible. Nearly all of those recommendations required the administration's involvement and leadership.

So what has come of those 56 recommendations?

Who knows. At best, maybe a few have been implemented. The majority seems to have just been ignored.

Even members of the Commission itself have called out this administration's shameful lack of action. Former Congressman Patrick Kennedy stated that the Commission's work has been turned into a ''charade'' and a ''sham.''

Why is the Trump administration refusing to take this crisis seriously? Why?

To start, it doesn't help that the administration has put people in charge of addressing this emergency who lack the relevant experience in public health or addiction. Apparently, Kellyanne Conway is running the show, but she is also, apparently, running multiple other shows at the same time. Not only is the opioid crisis not Ms. Conway's full-time responsibility, but she has also reportedly pushed aside drug policy experts and made comments about addiction that are not evidence-based. James Carroll, President Trump's nominee to run the Office of National Drug Control Policy, or ONDCP, also appears to have no experience in public or behavioral health policy.

Let's not forget that the ONDCP is the agency that President Trump has, essentially, proposed to eliminate by cutting 95 percent of its funding. This is also the agency with such a high staff turnover that, earlier this year, a 24-year-old with no public health experience was promoted to Deputy Chief of Staff while the position of Chief of Staff remained unfilled. This is also the agency that has not released its required annual drug strategy for the last 2 years running.

That is a lot, but as if that is not enough, the Trump administration has taken repeated steps to undermine the very programs that are critical to fighting the opioid crisis.

The President has tried to slash the healthcare coverage for millions of Americans who have preexisting conditions—conditions like addiction issues. He has tried to cut hundreds of millions of dollars out of Medicaid, which provides coverage for two out of every five non-elderly adults who have opioid addictions. He has proposed slashing funding for health workforce programs, for the Prevention and Public Health Fund, and for mental health programs—all critical in addressing the epidemic.

Time after time, I have asked the administration to explain the work it is supposedly doing on this crisis. I have asked John Kelly for clarification about Kellyanne Conway's role—no response. I have asked Ms. Conway directly about her role—no response. I have asked the administration about its progress on implementing the opioid commission's recommendations—no response. To me, it looks like a whole bunch of nothing—just empty words and broken promises.

While the President plugs his ears and closes his eyes, Americans are dying. There were 42,000 people who died of drug overdoses in this country in 2016. From July 2016 to September 2017, across the country, emergency room visits for opioid overdoses, on average, jumped 30 percent, but only 1 in 10 individuals in need of specialty addiction treatment is actually able to access it.

There is no shortage of steps we could take right now in tackling this crisis. We have confronted large-scale public health crises before, and we have made a difference.

Back in the 1980s, the death toll from a poorly understood and stigmatized disease grew larger and larger. For years, the Federal Government refused to act as Americans died. That disease was HIV/AIDS. Yet activists and their loved ones demanded action, and in 1990 the Federal Government finally made a meaningful investment by passing the Ryan White Comprehensive AIDS Resources Emergency Act. The AIDS epidemic isn't over, but HIV is no longer a death sentence. Thanks to the Ryan White CARE Act, all who need treatment and support can get it regardless of their ability to pay.

With Representative ELIJAH CUMMINGS, I have introduced legislation that is modeled on the very successful Ryan White CARE Act, and we will apply it to fighting the opioid epidemic. The Comprehensive Addiction Resources Emergency Act would invest $100 billion over the next 10 years to ensure that every single person who deals with addiction can get the help they need, period.

If President Trump wanted to prioritize this problem and make a difference in the opioid epidemic, he could do it. He has the power. He could implement his own Commission's recommendations. He could send meaningful budget requests to Congress. He could appoint qualified, hard-working people to tackle the problem. Yet he will not do any of those things as he is all talk, no action. While he keeps extending meaningless emergency declarations, Americans are dying.

People with addictions—and their families—deserve more. Our communities demand more. It is time to stop nibbling around the edges and to get to work on this problem.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, it is time for the Senate and the U.S. Department of Education to get serious about the student loan crisis in America.

This is a crisis in Illinois. It is a crisis in Iowa, in Nevada. You pick the State. Student loan debt is now a larger debt in the United States than credit card debt. Add up all of the debt that Americans owe on credit cards, and it will not reach the amount of student loan debt that is carried by students and their families.

More than 44 million Americans have student loan debt. The total amount is $1.5 trillion. As I mentioned, it is larger than America's cumulative credit card debt—second only to the mortgages that we owe on our homes across the United States.

An American who graduated from college in 2015, with a 4-year degree, owed an average of $30,100. That debt is often much higher for many Americans if they decide to go on to graduate school or if they are unfortunate attendees at the for-profit colleges and universities. Across the United States, there are many of these for-profit institutions. You should remember them. It is 9 percent of young people who come out of high school who end up at for-profit colleges and universities, while 33 percent of all of the college students who default on student loans come out of the same schools—for-profit colleges. This is 9 percent and 33 percent. Why?

It is that they are so darned expensive—dramatically more expensive than are community colleges or other universities. No. 2, they don't care if you finish. They would just as soon you didn't. No. 3, if you finish, you get a worthless diploma and can't find a job. So there you are, stuck with your debt.

Yet this is about student loans in general, not just about for-profit victims.

I hear from students, young and old, who have had to forgo homeownership and hold off starting families because of their massive student loan debts. Increasingly, I have been hearing from parents and grandparents who, in gestures of goodwill and kindness, cosign on the loans on behalf of those children or grandchildren who are students. Guess what. Grandma and Mom are now trying to pay off that student loan debt because the student can't.

Earlier this year, Chairman Jerome Powell of the Federal Reserve said the student debt crisis absolutely could hold back economic growth in America—the student loan crisis. We need to take action on it. We rarely even try, but today I am going to try.

Earlier this year, in March, I tried to offer an amendment on the Senate floor to help student borrowers. At that time, the Senate had a bill up to provide regulatory relief—breaks—to banks. I thought it was only fair that the Senate also consider taking a look at the student debt crisis. I was blocked from getting a vote on my amendment. I am not giving up.

I am filing an amendment today to the Financial Services and General Government bill that is part of this appropriations package pending on the floor of the Senate. My amendment deals with an important part of the student loan problem—the treatment of student loans in bankruptcy.

If you borrow money for a vacation house, lose your job, and have no money, you file bankruptcy, and your mortgage is discharged. If you borrow money for a car, and you can't pay off the car—you lose your job—you file for bankruptcy, and your auto loan is discharged. How about a boat? If you take out a loan to buy a boat and file for bankruptcy, it is discharged.

I will tell you that there are only a handful of things you can borrow money for that you cannot discharge in bankruptcy no matter how bad things get, and one of them is student loans. Currently, most types of debts can be discharged in bankruptcy but not student loans.

Up until 1976, all student loans were fully discharged in bankruptcy, but since then, the law has been changed. Now if you have student debt, you are going to carry it to the grave. You cannot discharge it in bankruptcy.

In 1998, Congress determined that Federal student loans would be nondischargeable in bankruptcy unless the borrower could demonstrate that he or she faced an ''undue hardship''—that is a quote, ''undue hardship.'' But we didn't define it; we left it up to the courts. That is a problem.

Most students don't even try to pursue the undue hardship exception because of the difficulty and expense of meeting the standard of proving undue hardship in bankruptcy court.

Listen to what the Wall Street Journal said last month. It found that in 2017, only 473 student loan borrowers in the United States out of 44 million asked for relief from their student debt in bankruptcy—473 out of 44 million. The Journal found only 16 bankruptcy cases that year where a judge actually ruled on student loan debt—16 cases out of 44 million borrowers—and in only 3 of those cases did the judge cancel the debt. What do you think your odds are in taking your student loan debt to bankruptcy court when 3 out of 473—out of 44 million—actually had their debt discharged?

A big reason the undue hardship path is difficult for student borrowers is because the Department of Education contracts out the collection of the debt to companies like Educational Credit Management Corporation. This is a student loan guaranty agency that collects on defaulted Federal student loans. This company is notorious for aggressively challenging and appealing borrower claims of undue hardship in bankruptcy court because it doesn't want to see the loans discharged. So many students don't even try to fight them because they know they are going to lose.

Here is what my amendment does. My amendment would bar the use of Federal funds to pay contractors, such as the one I named, to contest undue hardship claims in bankruptcy court when the claims are brought by specific categories of borrowers who face severe undue hardship.

Let me tell you the categories I am trying to protect. These are people who are deeply in debt with student loans and are coming to court asking for relief from their student loans. You tell me whether you think these Americans deserve a break when they go to bankruptcy court on their student loans. The first category is veterans who have

been deemed unemployable because of a service-connected disability; No. 2, family caregivers of a veteran or an elderly or disabled family member; No. 3, people who are receiving Social Security disability or whose only income is Social Security; and No. 4, borrowers who have finished school but have spent at least 5 years with an income of less than $24,000 a year. Those are the four categories.

Wouldn't you agree that you would start with groups just like these and say: Give them a break. This disabled veteran has reached a point where he can't pay back this loan. Don't have these agencies hounding this poor fellow for the rest of his life.

By stopping these Federal loan guaranty agencies from contesting and litigating these undue hardship claims in bankruptcy court, we can at least give these hard-hit student borrowers a chance to seek an undue hardship discharge in bankruptcy.

My amendment also includes a provision preventing Federal funds from being provided to a for-profit college if the college receives more than 85 percent of its revenue from Federal sources, including the Department of Veterans Affairs GI bill and Department of Defense tuition assistance funds.

Currently, for-profit colleges are able to receive 90 percent of their revenue from Federal sources—the most heavily subsidized, private, for-profit companies in America. They can add the GI bill in on top of it, to add insult to injury. It makes no sense. It incentivizes for-profit colleges to aggressively recruit veterans and servicemembers in order to get extra money from the Federal Government and provide very little in return.

Not only would this provision help protect students, it would result in long-term cost savings to the Federal Government.

I say to my colleagues, I bet you have all given a speech on student loans. Haven't we all? When young people come in, burdened with debt, and say ''I don't know what to do with myself. I can't pay off this debt. I can't even buy a car. I am living in my parents' basement. I thought I was supposed to be a college graduate with a big life ahead of me. What are you going to do about it, Senator?'' if you say ''Well, I wish there were something we could do,'' you will get your chance today. There is something you can do. It is the amendment I am offering.

This issue of student loan debt is challenging. Let's not run away from it. Let's face it honestly. Let's give at least these four groups, including disabled veterans and the caregivers who watch them, an opportunity to get their student loans discharged so they can get on with their lives.

I am going to keep at this and keep raising this issue until we get the positive change the students and their families deserve.

I yield.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 3093

Mr. TILLIS. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 477, S. 3093. I ask unanimous consent that the bill 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. Is there objection?

The Senator from Hawaii.

Ms. HIRONO. Madam President, reserving the right to object, this bill being offered by my colleagues on the other side of the aisle is a partisan, political stunt designed to distract the American people from the crisis created by Donald Trump's zero tolerance policy.

Almost 3,000 children have been ripped from the arms of their parents and traumatized by the President's cruelty. This bill would allow the Trump administration to continue to traumatize children by forcing them, possibly indefinitely, into so-called family detention centers.

By offering this proposal, our colleagues are calling for the extended incarceration of children. This bill would invalidate the Flores settlement, which has ensured the humane treatment of children for decades. It offers no specifics on what constitutes adequate detention conditions and no mechanism for monitoring them. The bill says the families will be given ''suitable living accommodations'' and ''access to drinking water and food'' and that services will be offered that are ''necessary for the adequate care of a minor child,'' but it does not say who determines what is suitable, whether adequate nutrition will be offered to the children, and who will decide what is necessary. These so-called standards are not good enough when the welfare of children is involved.

This bill would also authorize the Border Patrol to separate families for the most minor offenses that have nothing to do with parenting or the safety of the children. It puts form above substance and gives DHS no discretion about when detention is most appropriate or when alternative means, such as ankle bracelets or other monitoring programs, might be better.

The so-called family unit residential centers in the bill are essentially family jails.

We have heard from the American Academy of Pediatrics and other experts about how these children will be traumatized for life. We should be listening to these experts and stop giving the Trump administration a free pass to harm immigrant children.

I look at the policies of this administration and at bills like this one, and I wonder how my colleagues are able to stomach our government treating families in these awful ways. And we have witnessed this kind of treatment in America over the last several weeks.

The President refers to families of children fleeing war, gang violence, and poverty as ''infesting'' our country. I hear echoes from the darkest parts of America's past when African-American slaves were depicted as monkeys, Chinese laborers in the 1870s were referred to as ''pouring forth'' from their ''Asiatic hive,'' and Japanese Americans penned up like animals for the crime of their heritage during World War II.

This mindset of viewing these immigrant families as subhuman does not exist in a vacuum; it has a history and a context we cannot shy away from. It is because of that history that I have continued to demand not just an end to the detention of children and families but also to demand accountability from Donald Trump's government.

Last week, the Judiciary Committee had a closed-door briefing with officials from the Departments of Justice, Health and Human Services, and Homeland Security. We didn't get straight answers to our questions—mainly, why is this happening in our country in the first place? Why were these children separated from their parents? Why do we have ICE agents taunting these already traumatized children? Why? Why? Why?

We need and indeed we should demand to hear from these officials in public and under oath. I urged Chairman GRASSLEY to have a public oversight hearing on this issue with all of the relevant agencies. The chairman has now scheduled this long-overdue hearing for July 31 with representatives from the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of Health and Human Services, and the Department of Justice.

It is critical that we hear from the witnesses because after separating nearly 3,000 children from their families, they are now chaotically scrambling to comply with judicial orders to reunite these families. The administration would not be reuniting these families without being forced to do so by the court. They continue on their cruel path, undermining American values, and along this path, they have traumatized thousands of children and their families, likely forever.

This administration needs no further tools to continue these cruel policies. To continue to enable Donald Trump to pursue his anti-immigrant agenda makes us all complicit in his cruelty and injustice.

For these reasons, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Ms. HIRONO. I yield to the Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I would like to ask the Senator from Hawaii a question through the Chair.

When the Senator is referring to the number of children who are currently forcibly separated from their parents by our government, is the Senator referring to the 2,551 children between the ages of 5 and 17 who were reported

by this administration as of this past Monday?

Ms. HIRONO. Yes, I am.

Mr. DURBIN. Is the Senator referring to the fact that 1,634 families are possibly eligible for reunification, according to this administration?

Ms. HIRONO. Yes, I am.

Mr. DURBIN. And that leaves 917 families with children forcibly separated by our government from their parents, who, according to this administration, may not be eligible for reunification?

Ms. HIRONO. That is correct.

Mr. DURBIN. We are also told there are some 463 parents who are ''not in the United States''—children taken away from them, and they have been sent out of the United States?

Ms. HIRONO. Yes.

Mr. DURBIN. Incidentally, the administration reported 37 children in its custody who have not been matched with a parent?

Ms. HIRONO. Again, correct.

Mr. DURBIN. And we are being asked to reduce the standards of care for these children by this unanimous consent request?

Ms. HIRONO. Exactly. It is a continuation of the cruelty and the dehumanization of children.

Mr. DURBIN. I thank the Senator from Hawaii.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. TILLIS. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that Senator HELLER and Senator CORNYN may join in a colloquy with myself.

Mr. DURBIN. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. TILLIS. Madam President, I want to talk about my motivation for offering this unanimous consent request.

The people listening to the debate may not understand, but we have a courtesy in the Senate where we make colleagues on the other side of the aisle aware of our intent.

Before I do that, I yield the floor to Senator DURBIN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 3263

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I have a unanimous consent request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator will state it.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I am making clear to my friend from North Carolina, as well as to the other Members on the floor, that I would like to have this colloquy. I would like to make a formal unanimous consent request, and then we can enter into debate or colloquy, as the Chair would allow, if I may proceed.

I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. 3263 introduced earlier today; that the bill be considered read a third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

This is a bill which embodies the Keep Families Together legislation by Senator FEINSTEIN, A Fair Day in Court for Kids Act by Senator HIRONO, and additional measures which I will then describe later when we go to colloquy and debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. TILLIS. Madam President, Reserving the right to object, I first wish to acknowledge that Senator DURBIN has worked hard to address the DACA issue. I don't think there is a lot of daylight between Senator DURBIN and me on the need for a path to citizenship and having the DACA legislation move forward. I think there are voices trying to come together to try to come up with a just solution to a myriad of immigration issues.

However, this particular unanimous consent request is in reference to, I think, a bill that was introduced earlier today, and we have not had an opportunity to study it. I think it is another positive step in the process of maybe bridging the gap, but in the absence of being able to analyze it and reconcile it against the bill I am actively involved in that the Senator mentioned, I have to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. TILLIS. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that Senator HELLER, Senator CORNYN, and I be allowed to enter into a colloquy.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, reserving the right to object, I would like there to be some exchange, something even perilously close to a debate on the issue. I would be happy if the Senator would reframe his unanimous consent request for that purpose, and I would be happy to agree to it under those circumstances.

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, is there an objection?

Mr. DURBIN. I object to the original unanimous consent request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. TILLIS. Madam President, I was trying to explain to those who are watching this what is going on. What is going on is, we actually have a very collegial environment, where we come to the floor and ask unanimous consent on something, and if somebody doesn't object, the bill moves out of the Chamber. We don't surprise people. We inform them so they are able to come to the floor and register their objection, which is exactly what Senator HIRONO did today. So you could ask yourself, why would I come down here and offer up something I knew was going to be objected to and not move forward? Because I think it is pretty important for people to understand we are making progress, and it is pretty important to keep this issue and this discussion active in the U.S. Congress because Congress needs to act.

Regardless of where you are on the Trump administration's position, it is Congress's job to set long-term clarity. It is our job to set policy that can't move based on who happens to be in the White House. It is our job to fix the immigration problem, not the President's. This is the first step, in a number of things we need to do, to fix the failed immigration system in this country and to fix what I think are legitimately some injustices going on.

I have to disagree—I think it is interesting—and I look forward to reading the measure Senator DURBIN put forth for unanimous consent. In his comments, he said a part of the baseline language came from a bill I have been working on with Senator FEINSTEIN, the Keep Families Together and Enforce the Law Act.

What we are trying to do is figure out a reasonable, fair way to keep families together, to have families prioritized so they can go before a judge and determine whether they have a legitimate asylum claim, and to move as expeditiously as possible.

So this bill—if you heard Senator HIRONO, you would think it is some heartless, uncaring—I think the words were ''partisan political stunt.''

Let me just tell my colleagues briefly—and I know Senators HELLER and CORNYN will speak as well—this bill has agreement on most of the provisions. We want to make absolutely certain that if the families have to be kept together while they are going through the adjudication process, that it is in proper facilities. We want to make sure that if the parents want their children with them while they are being detained—which is, on average, about 40 to 60 days before they get their case cleared—then they can.

We also want that time period to be reduced, which is why we agree that we need to add an aggregate of about 700 judges to draw the backlog down, but until the backlog gets drawn down, parents with children get to the front of the line. We want to make sure there are an adequate number of attorneys—about two and one-half to every one judge we are adding—so we don't get clogged up in the courts.

This discussion about indefinite detention is just simply patently false. We are talking about a matter of 40 to 60 days. We want to draw that backlog down even further. We want to make sure these images of people being held in tent cities never occurs. We want to make sure we have adequate family facilities while they are being detained going through a legal process.

We want to also do the one thing I heard in Senator HIRONO's comments—I am not an attorney, I believe Senator HIRONO is—but it is false. The fact is, there is a court order that actually prevents children from being detained

for more than 20 days. So now we have this catch-22, where you detain the parents because they crossed the border illegally. They are being detained to process their immigration case, and they happen to have children, but you can't keep children for more than 20 days, so that is why the separation is occurring.

We are not talking about eliminating the whole Flores agreement. What we are saying is, we need to have very clear language that allows us to keep these children with their parents who are being detained pending court procedures. These are not unaccompanied children who would still be subject to Flores and who would be placed in the community within about 20 days, but there are other reasons—including some of the 2,500 or so whom Senator DURBIN mentioned—we may need to keep them a little bit longer.

For example, what if their parent or guardian has been convicted of human trafficking or child abuse or some other charge, and we need to make sure it is the right setting for that child to go to? We are holding the same standards for these guardians or these parents that we do for any American citizen when we are trying to determine whether that child is going to be in a safe setting. Those are the sorts of things we put into place within narrowly tailored language, which is, my understanding right now, the only sticking point.

I came to the floor today to propound this unanimous consent request so we can start having this discussion in front of the American people, and we put pressure on ourselves to solve this problem.

This is not a problem for the President to fix. It is Congress's problem for the President to fix, and then it is the administration's responsibility to act on the will of Congress.

So I am going to continue to work with people on both sides of the aisle to do everything I can to eliminate the partisanship, the polarizing rhetoric, and fix this problem for these children who deserve and must be—should be—with their parents and put them in a setting that I think is respectful and safe.

I yield the floor to Senator HELLER.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

Mr. HELLER. Madam President, I begin by thanking Senator TILLIS for his leadership on this issue. I also thank him for bringing this to the Senate floor so we can have this discussion, so we can bring to the forefront this issue and try to solve it.

I also thank and acknowledge the leadership of the majority whip in his efforts. I know being here today, the opportunity to have this discussion, is based on his efforts and his concern for this very issue also.

Let me begin by saying nobody wants to see children separated from their families—period. I don't think there is anybody in this Chamber who enjoys or does want to see that occur. So that is why I am joining my colleagues to call up and pass the Keep Families Together and Enforce the Law Act.

While America is a nation of laws, we are also a nation with heart, and Nevadans have a lot of heart. I heard from over 3,500 of my constituents from across the State sharing their concerns about these families being separated. My constituents spoke to families split apart at the border, and some were held in southern Nevada, and they were, frankly, asking for help. So their being unified with their children is a top priority.

As my colleagues probably know, I am a father, and I am also a grandfather. I understand why parents want to be and should be with their children. There is nothing more important than keeping a family unit together.

Now I, like many of my colleagues who are on the floor today, support border security as part of any type of immigration reform, but I also strongly believe our country has a rich history because we have always been a nation of immigrants. Our culture is rich because so many families have come to the land of opportunity seeking a better life.

In fact, in my Washington, DC, office, I have two staffers who are naturalized citizens, who came here as children with their families seeking better opportunities. These individuals who immigrated to our country came from parents who worked hard to provide their children with opportunities. We are, after all, the land of opportunity.

While we are just, we are also fair. The Keep Families Together and Enforce the Law Act ensures that families will not be separated at the border. Specifically, the legislation allows the Department of Homeland Security to keep accompanied children under the age of 18 with their families in residential centers.

It also would prioritize family immigration cases and would add 225 new immigration judges to expedite proceedings for families who have been apprehended at the border.

In addition to keeping children and their parents together, the legislation ensures that any family who has been separated will be reunified.

Unlike other proposals—which I believe risk making our current immigration problem worse—this legislation actually solves the problem by keeping families together, while also ensuring the integrity of our immigration laws.

I look forward to this bill being signed into law to make permanent the policy of keeping families together and reunifying these families, while still ensuring that our immigration laws are enforced.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, there is an important difference between legal and illegal immigration, and they shouldn't be confused. We should all, as Americans, celebrate legal immigration. In fact, the United States is the most generous country in the world. We naturalize almost 1 million new citizens each year, many of whom serve in the military and otherwise serve their newly adopted country and are rewarded, in part, by an expedited path toward legalization, toward naturalization.

As a result of the deadlock in the U.S. Senate, the drug cartels that traffic in illegal drugs and other contraband—they traffic in migrants, they traffic in children—are celebrating today because we have a big problem that apparently we are unable to solve, and the status quo is simply unacceptable. It is dangerous, it is deadly, and it is killing people—not only the people who attempt the perilous journey from Central America up through Mexico and into the United States but also the drugs that are sold by these same criminal organizations that are, in the words of one expert, ''commodity agnostic.''

This is part of their business model. This is how they make money, and they are celebrating today because the very reasonable solution that our colleague from North Carolina has proposed has been rejected out of hand with no real alternative being suggested.

This is the same mentality, I fear, that calls for the abolition of ICE. You might as well ask for the abolition of the Austin Police Department or the Dallas Police Department or the San Antonio Police Department. It is an invitation to lawlessness. Unfortunately, there are some who believe that the status quo is better than the very reasonable, rational solution offered by our colleague.

Let me explain why objecting to this commonsense legislation imperils the life and well-being of children. Under the current law, unless this very reasonable solution is embraced, children are sent across the border unaccompanied by their parents because the traffickers know and the parents know that if they pay thousands of dollars to these criminal organizations, their child will be transported from Central America across Mexico and into the United States, and if they make it here under the current law, the Border Patrol needs to process this child—some of whom are 17 years of age and older, and for all practical purposes they are young men.

They need to be handed over to Health and Human Services for placement with a sponsor here in the United States. Recently the New York Times pointed out that the United States had lost track of 1500 of the children that had been placed with sponsors. Nobody knows what happened to them because, under the current law, the government doesn't have to do a criminal background check. The sponsor with whom this child is placed doesn't have to be a citizen, and there is simply no infrastructure in place and no system in

place to monitor the status of these children in the hands of these adult sponsors to make sure they appear at their subsequently noticed immigration hearing so that they can present a legitimate claim, if they have one, to asylum or some other immigration benefit.

All President Trump has said is that we are going to enforce our laws against illegal immigration. So if you come into the country as a parent with a child, the parent, being legally responsible, is going to be prosecuted. That is what the law calls for as passed by Congress and signed by the President.

The child will be protected under the law that I mentioned earlier. They will be placed with a sponsor if the parent or the person who claims to be a parent is going to be prosecuted. Part of what we have been struggling with is the refusal on the part of some of our colleagues to actually try to solve this problem, to keep those families together so that they can be kept in a humane, clean family detention facility pending a hearing in front of an immigration judge. If they have legitimate claims, then those can be rewarded.

The status quo guarantees that the criminal organizations that profit from transporting people, drugs, and other contraband across the border win. That is guaranteed by the status quo. It is also that we don't fix the problem associated with unaccompanied minors or minors who come with somebody who claims to be their parent.

So let's say we put the families back together, which is our goal. Everyone agrees with that goal. We don't have detention facilities for those individuals to be detained pending a hearing in front of an immigration judge, so they are released and told to come back for a hearing months, maybe years, in the future. Well, it shouldn't surprise anybody that the vast majority of people don't show up for their hearings. They simply use this flaw in our immigration system and the status quo in order to exploit gaps in our legal immigration system, and it is dangerous.

I regret that rather than embracing a solution, there has been an objection to this very reasonable proposal, which would add additional immigration judges and move these families to the head of the line so that they can present their case before the judge, rather than just releasing them into the vast American landscape. Many of them will never be heard from again. I think it is a terrible lost opportunity.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic whip.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, let me try to give this some perspective. Let me start with something I hope we all agree on. There are three things about immigration that Democrats and Republicans can agree on. Let's see if we can say those three things and all agree.

We need border security in the United States. We cannot have open borders; we need border security.

No. 2, if someone coming into America is dangerous, we don't want them here, and if there is someone undocumented in America who is dangerous, we want them to leave. Those two things I think both parties can agree on.

The third thing really gets to the heart of it. We need comprehensive immigration reform. It is not a matter of solving the issue of the day; it is a matter of looking at all of our immigration laws and making them work.

The Senator from North Carolina has probably heard what I have heard from our friends in agriculture. Whether it is ranching or dairy or picking fruit, they need migrant labor. Americans are many not stepping up to take that backbreaking work, and they need help. That is one example.

We need comprehensive immigration reform. Let's take a look at the whole package.

I spent 6 months with Senators JOHN MCCAIN, CHUCK SCHUMER—four Democrats, four Republicans. We wrote a comprehensive immigration reform bill. From start to finish, it was a bipartisan bill. It passed on the floor of the Senate with 68 votes 5 years ago, and the Republicans refused to consider it in the House of Representatives.

We still need comprehensive immigration reform. We ought to be working on that together. We ought to take that bill, reintroduce that bill, and make that our starting point.

The last point I want to make is about the current issue we face. Let's put this issue into perspective. First, I am sorry, but I disagree with my friend from North Carolina and the Senator from Texas, who say that this is our job to fix or, as the Senator from Texas said, we created this problem in Congress. That is not true.

The zero-tolerance policy that has led us to this moment of debate was created by President Trump, Attorney General Sessions, Stephen Miller, and others. It went into effect in April. We decided then, as official policy stated by the United States, that we would physically, forcibly separate children from their parents.

We argued that they are all criminals if they show up at the border. That is not the case. Some people legitimately come to our borders seeking asylum status. They are not criminals, per se, and to treat them as such and take their kids away is unwarranted. But that was our policy.

So 3,000 children were forcibly removed from their parents starting in April, and what happened next? These children were sent off into the system. The parents were sometimes held, sometimes tried, sometimes deported, and there was a furor that rose across the United States. People said: What are we doing? Why did we take that nursing child away from the mother? Why did we take that little toddler away from his father? What are we doing here? What is our goal?

The opposition from both political parties—Republicans and Democrats—got so intense that this President did something he almost never does. He reversed his position. He said: We are not doing the family separation policy anymore. That is the end of it.

But it wasn't soon enough. There were 3,000 kids at that point separated from their parents and spread across the United States. There was one I knew of in Chicago. A woman from the Congo was being held in California. Her 6-year-old daughter had been sent to Chicago. That is how I learned about the case. There are cases like that all over the United States.

Then a Federal judge stepped in. We are here today because that Federal judge said: Enough—we want these parents reunited with their kids now.

He set some deadlines. Four weeks ago, he said: All kids under the age of 5 need to be reunited with the parents they were taken away from. He set that goal with a deadline of 2 weeks ago. Our government identified only 103 out of the 3,000 who were under the age of 5, and they reunited fewer than 60 of them. As for the rest of them, it is uncertain what is going to happen to those kids under the age of 5 who were separated from their parents.

Now there is a vast number beyond that; 2,500-plus kids are out there, and this judge from San Diego stated that as of tomorrow, July 26, all of those kids are to be reunited with their parents too.

Guess what. We are in a position where that is not going to happen. It physically can't happen. Our government can't do it. Here is the heartbreaking secret that we now know: Our government separated these children from their parents without any means of reuniting them, without keeping information about where the parents were going to be, where the children are going to be when the day would come that the mother would get her baby back in her arms. We have no process for that. That, to me, is inexcusable and disgraceful.

If you order a package on Amazon this afternoon, they give you a tracking number. Tomorrow, if you want to know where it is, you go to Amazon, put in the tracking number, and you will know where your package is.

We sent infants, toddlers, and young kids all across the United States without a tracking number, and now we are trying desperately to reunite them. As I mentioned earlier to Senator HIRONO, there are 37 kids out there about whom this government has admitted: We don't know where the parents are. We can't put this back together again. What are we going to do with these kids?

That is why we are on the floor to talk about this current crisis. It wasn't a crisis created by Congress. It was created by the Trump administration with

a zero tolerance policy. Attorney General Sessions and others were so proud of it, as they took the kids away from the parents, and they didn't keep records. They tossed these infants, toddlers, and children out into the bureaucratic sea and said: Start swimming or sink.

I met some of these kids in Chicago. There were 10 of them. Kids will be kids. They looked like regular kids sitting around the table. Two little girls came in, and I thought at first they were twins because their hair was identical and they were about the same size. When I looked more closely, I saw that they weren't.

We asked in Spanish: Are you sisters? The little girl said: No, amigas. No, we are friends. These two little girls had attached themselves to one another. One was from Honduras and one was from Chiapas, Mexico. They were holding on for dear life to one another's hand as they walked around this place because that was their connection; that was all they had to hang on to. They were taken away from their parents. I don't know what happened to those two little girls.

As a grandfather of 6-year-old twins, I looked at those little girls and thought, I know kids just like them, and I love them to pieces. I can't imagine being physically, forcibly separated away from those kids by any government. That is what we have done.

So I say to the Senator from North Carolina, let's find some things we can agree on. Let me suggest some things. Let's increase the number of immigration judges. Let's do it on a merit basis so that we can get professional people who know what they are doing—not political appointments.

Secondly, let's say that every child who appears in an administrative hearing is going to have an attorney next to them. It is embarrassing to me as an American to think of a 6-year-old, 10-year-old, or 12-year-old standing before an administrative judge with an interpreter, trying to figure out what is about to happen to them. We are better than that in America. We ought to make sure we are going to do much better than that in America.

Beyond that, we have to talk about what we do that is humane—that follows the Flores decision. Just wiping it away—there are no standards for humane treatment for those kids. We have to have standards. We have to make sure that they will be placed in areas we can be proud of, that they will be treated fairly, humanely, in the right way, which I am sure you want and I want too.

Those are things we can work on. Several weeks ago, we met and sent a list of questions to the administration to start our bipartisan conversation. They never got back to us. I think it has been a month now. I think it is time.

If you want to rekindle this bipartisan conversation, count me in, but let's do it with the information, and let's try to do it with a common purpose.

The last point I will make is this. If you want to make sure that somebody shows up at a hearing, 95 percent of those who are supposed to show up for these hearings do show up if you do one of three things. If you provide them with an attorney who gives them advice, they will come back for the hearing. If you provide them with counseling services—for example, programs that have been run by the Lutheran family services or the Catholic family services—they will show up for the hearing. Or if you provide, in some cases, an ankle monitor, they will come back for a hearing. So it isn't a question of whether they are going to be lost in the system. We know this works. Let's make use of it. It is a heck of a lot more humane than separating families by thousands of miles.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HELLER). The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I rise today on another subject, but I want to touch on the conversation that has been going on here on the floor.

I agree with my colleague, my friend, the Senator from Illinois. Our country is better than this.

I had an opportunity to visit one of the facilities in Virginia where some of the children who had been separated were placed. It was a good facility, and they were well cared for, but it still begged the question of unaccompanied minors being separated from their families.

I saw on a news report today that some of the children have been reunited, but for close to 1,400 of these kids, the determination has been made that they should not be reunited with their parents. What does it mean to those kids? What does it mean to those families? What does it also mean, then, to our country's obligation to take care of these kids since we are now saying that we are not going to reunite them with their families? Not only from a moral sense, but does that mean that we pick up a long-term obligation on these children? If there had been a really thought-through policy, I think we would have had some of these answers on the front end.

So I join my colleagues on both sides of the aisle who want to get to a bipartisan solution set here. I think the images that have been etched on so many Americans' minds when they saw the images of children being separated from their moms and dads at such an early age actually led to a moral gag reflex. Regardless of what party Americans support, or even if they support the President, I think there was an overwhelming sense that this is not who we are as a people.

I am willing to meet anyone halfway to make sure that these kids who have been separated are reunited, but, more importantly, that our country is never again put in this circumstance where we are, in a sense, put on stage, not only for the American people but for the rest of the world. This is not who we are as Americans.

SUPPORTING FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

Mr. President, the reason I came to the floor today is on another subject that I think is of extreme importance. I rise today with great gratitude for the men and women all across our country who serve our Federal Government.

Virginia is home to 178,000 of these public servants. Also in Virginia we have over 90,000 Active-Duty members of our military. While many of our Federal employees in Virginia live in the DMV, or in the greater Capital region, the truth is that even in a State like ours, the Commonwealth of Virginia, 79 percent of our Federal workers live outside the beltway.

As someone who has spent longer in business and in management than I have as a Senator, I know one of the things that any good business leader does—or, for that matter, what I tried to do when I was Governor of the State—is how you treat your workforce, and that reflects in the quality of service that the workforce provides to its customers. In this case, the customers of the Federal Government are the American people.

The work of our Federal Government and the way our Federal Government invests in its workforce—the way we manage and invest in human capital—is not by any means a partisan matter. For that matter, coming from the Commonwealth of Virginia, a State with so many Federal workers, it is not by any means a parochial issue. This is an issue that impacts all Americans—all Americans who pay taxes, who follow our laws, and who expect the Federal Government to work for them and to work well and in an efficient manner.

That is why I also rise today with great concern about recent efforts by this administration to scapegoat and undermine the work of our Federal employees.

It started with hiring freezes that threw a wrench into the day-to-day operations of nearly every Federal agency. Frankly, this wrench was thrown in with no apparent benefit to the taxpayers at large. It continued with Executive orders undermining workforce protections for Federal workers and their ability to organize as part of a union and to have that collective voice heard in terms of representations with management. It culminated last month with the Trump administration's plan to freeze Federal employee pay and cut retirement benefits for 2.6 million Federal retirees and survivors—2.6 million Federal retirees and survivors having their retirement benefits cut. This is the thanks our Federal employees get for their service.

President Trump campaigned on a promise to drain the swamp, but the great irony is that the most glaring instances of failure and corruption at the Federal level in recent months have

not come from career Federal employees. They have come from appointees installed by this administration.

Look no further than the EPA, where the American people saw some of the most blatant examples of swamp-like behavior in the waste and abuse from former EPA administrator Mr. Pruitt.

We also saw that, with few exceptions, those at the EPA with the courage to stand up and say ''this is not OK'' were not appointees but were career Federal employees. For some, that meant they were either demoted or reassigned in retaliation, all because they had the courage to speak up and do what was right. This is the thanks that our Federal employees got for their service, for trying to protect taxpayer funds, for their service of trying to prevent waste and fraud, and for their service of trying to point out the swamp-like behavior of Mr. Trump and his appointee Scott Pruitt.

Unfortunately, these issues don't appear to be confined to the walls of one agency or one rogue administrator. We have seen disturbing reports of Trump political appointees purging career employees at the State Department and at the Veterans' Administration. These reports should concern all of us—Republicans and Democrats alike—who believe in good and honest government by and for the people.

Now, my hope is that we can stop this ongoing onslaught on our Federal workforce. We will have differences, but as somebody who has spent longer in business than I have in government, if you want your workforce to do well, you need to reward those who do well and challenge and penalize those who don't perform, but not take these broad brushstrokes that unfortunately have come out of this administration, frankly, undermining both the performance and the morale of Federal employees who serve day in and day out without a lot of recognition.

Before I close, I want to make another comment on this subject, because there is one part of our Federal Government, in particular, where naked partisanship threatens not only the functioning of the government but really the rule of law itself. I am speaking, of course, about the attacks—ad hominem, in most cases—against our Federal law enforcement agencies and our intelligence community.

The intelligence community, as we know, was founded 71 years ago tomorrow, when President Truman signed the National Security Act. That date, July 26, also marks the 110th birthday of the FBI, as well as Intelligence Professionals Day, a time to show our gratitude to those brave men and women who keep us safe every day—if only this gratitude, which I know is shared by people on both sides of the aisle, were shared by our current Commander in Chief.

Unfortunately, in the months since Russia attacked the very institutions of our democracy, we have seen some of the most bizarre reactions from the President and his allies. Instead of uniting our country behind the cause of defending democracy and bringing our adversaries to justice, this President has led an all-out attack on the credibility of the FBI, the Justice Department, and our intelligence community, demeaning career FBI officials who have saved countless American lives over their careers and impugning the motives of Special Counsel Mueller, perhaps the most respected Federal lawman of this generation.

Worst of all, we saw the President of the United States stand on stage with Vladimir Putin last week and publicly side with Putin over the career men and women of our intelligence community, many of whom risk their lives on a daily basis in order to keep our country safe. This is the thanks they get for their years of service, oftentimes—particularly folks in the intelligence community—without any recognition.

The men and women of the FBI, the Department of Justice, and the intelligence community deserve better. All of our public servants deserve better than what we have seen from this administration.

My advice for this President, if he is really serious about draining the swamp, is to leave our Federal employees alone and to take a good look at some of the folks he has appointed within his own administration.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

CALLING FOR THE RELEASE OF PASTOR ANDREW BRUNSON

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I am here again this week to fulfill a promise I made after becoming deeply involved in a situation involving a Presbyterian minister who has been held in prison since 2016 in the country of Turkey.

I have traveled to Turkey a couple of times, and I have met Pastor Brunson. He is from an area in Western North Carolina. He is actually a part of a church affiliated with the Reverend Billy Graham. He has been a missionary in Turkey for about 20 years. In October 2016, he was incarcerated and accused of being a part of plotting the coup attempt—an illegal act for which people who were involved should be held accountable, but he was not one of them—and, also, suspected of terrorist activities.

Back in the late winter, after almost 19 months in prison without charges, after the indictment was issued, he was concerned that the American people were going to look at this indictment and turn their back on him. I felt like I needed to be able to look him in the eye and tell him nothing could be further from the truth. So I traveled to Turkey and met with him in a prison outside of Izmir to tell him that I would continue to be his voice and that I spoke for a number of Senators who are also concerned with this. More than 70 signed onto a letter expressing their concern. This is not a partisan issue. This is about the illegal incarceration of a Presbyterian minister in a NATO ally, Turkey.

Pastor Brunson has been imprisoned 656 days, counting today. We just got word this morning that the Turkish authorities have agreed to release him on house arrest. So we are going to get him out of the situation he has been in for about 16 or 17 months, in a cell designed for 8 people that had 21 in it. Now he is at least going to be able to be under house arrest and held outside of prison.

For as long as I am in the Senate, I will come to this floor every week and advocate for Pastor Brunson and a number of other people who are detained in Turkey for what I believe are inappropriate reasons—reasons that wouldn't keep you in jail overnight in the United States.

Under the emergency authorities that President Erdogan had, they were swept up and some have been convicted. We have a NASA scientist who also has family in Turkey. He was arrested when he was over there, apparently for being a conspirator in the coup attempt. We have State Department staff and Turkish nationals who worked with our State Department and our Embassy over there who are in prison. We have to have a watchful eye on everybody.

I am glad that the Turkish Government is moving in the right direction with Pastor Brunson, but he is still effectively detained. Now it is under house arrest. So I will continue to work for Pastor Brunson's release, but I also want to make sure that the other people who are, in my opinion, illegally and inappropriately detained in the Turkish prison system also have a voice here in the U.S. Senate.

Again, I appreciate the Turkish officials taking this step to release Pastor Brunson and to put him on house arrest, but I will guarantee that, for as long as I am a U.S. Senator and there is somebody detained in Turkey, they will have a voice here in the U.S. Senate.

I hope that by next week or in the next couple of weeks Pastor Brunson is back in the United States, and I hope I don't have a reason to come to this floor and speak on his behalf and be his voice.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

NOMINATION OF BRETT KAVANAUGH

Mrs. ERNST. Mr. President, I rise today to voice my support for the nomination of Brett Kavanaugh to the Supreme Court of the United States.

As the final arbiter of the Constitution, the Supreme Court has a sacred duty of ensuring equal justice under the law to the American people. The Supreme Court wields the immense power of judicial review. Alexis de Tocqueville described this power of the Supreme Court when he called it ''a more imposing judicial power than was ever constituted by any other people.''

As Members of the Senate, it is not often that we get the opportunity to

give our advice and consent on the confirmation of Supreme Court Justices. It is even rarer that we get the opportunity to confirm someone as highly qualified and well-respected as Brett Kavanaugh.

I am especially impressed by Judge Kavanaugh's interpretation of the Constitution as it applies to the ever-encroaching power of Federal agencies. Even before the people of Iowa sent me to Washington, I was horrified by the impact increasingly burdensome regulations imposed on hard-working men, women, and businesses. This was imposed by unleashed Federal bureaucrats.

An excellent example of this is the infamous waters of the United States rule promulgated by the Obama EPA. The Obama administration's bloated definition of the waters of the United States would have put 97 percent—97 percent—of Iowa under EPA jurisdiction. Even a tire track filled with water on an Iowa farm would have been subject to Federal regulation.

Federal agencies have been allowed to implement such destructive regulations in part due to the Supreme Court giving them deference. While a certain degree of deference is needed, I am concerned that a too-broad deferential standard separates the people of the United States from Washington bureaucrats. It fails to place an adequate check on executive and administrative power.

Throughout his career as both a highly respected legal scholar and a judge on the esteemed DC Circuit Court of Appeals, Judge Kavanaugh has written critically of widening the scope of this already far-reaching deferential standard. He wrote in part that this deference ''encourages the Executive Branch to be extremely aggressive in seeking to squeeze its policy goals into ill-fitting statutory authorizations and restraints.'' This could not have been what the Founders intended when they developed our Constitution and our government. I could not agree more with Judge Kavanaugh's concerns. I look forward to the Judge's level-headed leadership and thinking on the Supreme Court.

In addition, I was proud to hear that Judge Kavanaugh has had the chance to work with Iowans. State Representative Mary Ann Hanusa, who represents the city of Council Bluffs, had the opportunity to work with Judge Kavanaugh when he served as Staff Secretary in the White House. Representative Hanusa describes Judge Kavanaugh as hard-working, dedicated, and impartial in his duties—all traits that I require in a Supreme Court Justice.

Under Chairman GRASSLEY's leadership, I believe that we will have a thorough, timely, and successful confirmation process, just as we did with Neil Gorsuch. I urge my colleagues to put aside partisan gimmicks and games and support the confirmation of Brett Kavanaugh.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

SUPPORTING FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, I want to thank a very dedicated group of folks—the Federal employees working for us, the American people. As Federal employees gather this week, I want to remind the country about the vital work being done each and every day by these hard-working public servants.

It is no secret that organized labor is under attack. The bargaining rights, the hard-earned benefits, the safe working conditions, and the fair pay of American workers are under attack from folks right here in Washington, DC, and in State capitols around the country. We aren't ones to run away from a fight. That is why, when the administration proposed to freeze hiring across Federal agencies, I and others pushed back. I knew that across-the-board freezes would hurt their ability to serve the American people and do the job within government that the American people expected. Then, when bad National Labor Relations Board nominees came before the Senate, I voted no. I have been proud to stand with our Federal workforce—our hard-working Federal workforce—as we fight to protect those government employees.

As ranking member of the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs, I have been working with them to address chronic workforce shortages that are plaguing veterans' clinics across the United States. While building capacity within the VA to ensure we uphold our commitment to those who serve, we need to staff those very facilities.

I have also been honored to work with our friends in labor to address disparities in Federal benefits and pay. Congress must make sure that whether you are a Border Patrol agent or a TSA worker, you get the same workforce protections as other members in our Federal forces.

I am committed to defending our workers, holding Washington accountable, and fighting for a stronger Federal workforce each and every day because that is what the American people expect.

With that, Mr. President, 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. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

NOMINATION OF BRETT KAVANAUGH

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, when President Trump nominated Brett Kavanaugh to serve on the Supreme Court, I believe he made an excellent choice. Judge Kavanaugh has served on the DC Circuit Court for 12 years. He has distinguished himself as a careful, independent, and very intelligent judge.

This was a headline in the Wall Street Journal on July 10, 2018. They took a look at his record, and this is what they predicted: ''Trump's Nominee Will Be an Intellectual Leader On the Bench.'' I had a chance to meet with him today, and that is exactly what I think. I think they got it completely right. The newspaper pointed out that he has written opinions that span nearly every significant constitutional issue.

Judge Kavanaugh has such a strong reputation that courts around the country actually have relied on his opinions. When you look at his whole record, he has written about 200 majority opinions for the DC Circuit Court, on which he serves. He has only been reversed one time by the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court has actually been much more likely to agree with Judge Kavanaugh. In at least 13 different cases over the dozen years he has served on the DC Circuit Court, they have adopted his legal reasoning in their own Supreme Court rulings. To me, that makes him a mainstream judge.

In one case involving the separation of powers, Judge Kavanaugh disagreed with the opinion of two other circuit judges. He looked at the text of the Constitution and at the original meaning of those words, which is, to me, what a judge ought to be doing. He wrote that the ''Framers of our Constitution took great care to ensure that power in our system was separated into three branches.'' That is one of the things he and I talked about today—the three branches of government the Founding Fathers created to separate the powers within our system. In that writing, Judge Kavanaugh went on to stress the importance of the Constitution's checks and balances—the fundamental principles on which our democracy was founded. The Supreme Court agreed with Judge Kavanaugh's reasoning, and the Court cited his work several times in reaching their own Supreme Court decision.

There was another case that dealt with a regulation that was written by the Environmental Protection Agency. Judge Kavanaugh found that the Agency exceeded its authority under the law when it wrote its regulation. He wrote: ''It is not our job to make the policy choices and set the statutory boundaries, but it is emphatically our job to carefully but firmly enforce the statutory boundaries.'' What are the boundaries? It is our job to enforce them, not to set them.

Again, the Supreme Court took a look at this, looked at his writings from the DC Circuit Court, and they agreed with Judge Kavanaugh's reasoning.

One constitutional scholar pointed out that ''Judge Kavanaugh commands wide and deep respect among scholars, lawyers, judges, and justices.'' Another legal scholar said that Judge

Kavanaugh is ''one of the most learned judges in America on a variety of issues, ranging from theories of statutory interpretation to separation of powers.'' A third law professor agreed. This professor called Judge Kavanaugh ''a true intellectual—a leading thinker and writer on the subjects of statutory interpretation and federal courts.''

Here is what we know about Judge Kavanaugh. It is clear that he is a person of strong character. We hear this from people who have known him in the community and people who have worked with him for years in the court. It is clear that Judge Kavanaugh has exactly the right approach, in my opinion, to being a judge. He said it very plainly in a speech last year. He said that a judge's job is to interpret the law, not to make the law or make policy. That is what judges are supposed to do. I think that is the standard Americans should be applying to anyone who is nominated to this high position.

Then you look at the endorsements from legal scholars, and you look at the number of times the Supreme Court has followed his opinions, followed his reasoning, followed his thought pattern. It is clear that Judge Kavanaugh has the incredibly strong intellect that we want in a Supreme Court Justice. When we see someone who commands this kind of respect from the experts, I think Senators need to take that into consideration.

I met with Judge Kavanaugh, as I said, early this morning. I enjoyed a long discussion on various topics relating to the law—the Constitution, the separation of powers. I hope my Democratic colleagues will meet with him as well.

I look forward to having a full and thoughtful confirmation process. I appreciate the opportunity to discuss this topic.

150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE WYOMING TERRITORY

Mr. President, I come to the floor today to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the creation of the Wyoming Territory. On July 25, 1868, Congress authorized the Territory that would become the State of Wyoming. Thousands of people were headed West along the new rail lines that were being built. In fact, the first territorial Governor noted that it was the first time America had carved out a new Territory as a result of the railroad coming through. People were eager to settle in the new Territory and build new lives, seek their fortunes, and raise their families.

What they found when they reached the Wyoming Territory was a place of incomparable beauty. An observer at the time talked about the fertile valley of rivers and streams. That continues today. This observer at the time praised the gorges of its majestic mountains.

It wasn't just the natural beauty of Wyoming that drew people there, however; it was the natural resources as well. When the Senate was debating the creation of the Territory, one of the things they talked about right here in this body, right here in this room, was the potential future for the area. These natural resources would help power America's expansion West. One Senator talked about the valuable springs of petroleum and about the abundant coal deposits. That was 150 years ago—valuable petroleum and abundant coal deposits.

These same natural resources still help power the American economy today, 150 years later. Wyoming is America's largest producer of coal, and we are one of the biggest in producing oil and natural gas. Over the past century and a half, the people of Wyoming have provided America with gold, diamonds, and uranium as well.

From the very beginning, from day one, scientists have flocked to Wyoming to explore our natural resources. Some of the first government-sponsored geological surveys took place in what is now Yellowstone National Park. Today students and scholars come from around the world to study at the University of Wyoming. Yellowstone is one of the world's most treasured places to visit. More than 4 million people visited there this past year.

Once Congress created the Wyoming Territory, we lost no time in organizing and setting ourselves up as a model for the rest of the country. One of the first acts of new territorial legislature was to actually grant equal rights to women for the first time in American history. That is why Wyoming today is still known as the Equality State. Women served on juries. We had the first female justice of the peace. We had the first woman elected Governor of any State.

We are a small State by population, but when you look at these things that we have contributed throughout our history, you can see why we are very proud to call Wyoming home. Wyoming has always been a place where people are driven by hope and by optimism about the future. This optimism is an essential part of who we are today.

The polling company Gallup found recently that Wyoming is the most confident State in the country when it comes to America's economy. People in Wyoming are cheerful, they are upbeat, and they are optimistic.

One hundred fifty years ago, the Wyoming Territory was the frontier. The people of Wyoming still have that same pioneering spirit today. We are patriotic Americans. We work hard to care for our families, for our neighbors, and for our communities. I congratulate all of the people in the State of Wyoming today on this historic milestone. One hundred fifty years ago today, Congress acted to create the Wyoming Territory. That spirit of Wyoming and the culture of Wyoming have sustained us this whole time, and they will continue for many years into the future.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

NOMINATION OF CHARLES RETTIG

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, last week, the Finance Committee met to consider the nomination of Charles Rettig to be the Commissioner of the Internal Revenue Service. Charles Rettig is a highly qualified man whom I have long believed had near universal support from the members of the committee.

I suppose it should not be surprising, but my colleagues on the other side of the aisle were finally able to find an excuse for why they couldn't support this well-qualified practitioner. My friends on the other side, including Ranking Member WYDEN, announced a newfound opposition to Mr. Rettig, based not on anything he has done, nor on anything he hasn't done. Instead, they decided to broadly oppose Mr. Rettig because of a recent regulatory change at the Treasury Department.

Now, some of you may be scratching your heads wondering how, if he hasn't been confirmed yet, does he have anything to do with this new regulatory change? I know it is puzzling. When you get into the weeds, it becomes clear that my friends have just been looking for an excuse to keep this well-qualified practitioner from heading up the IRS when our country needs him the most.

Democrats also raised extraneous news reports of a Russian person allegedly infiltrating the NRA and potentially infusing domestic organizations with so-called ''dark money.''

Interestingly, though, they seem not to be at all concerned with the subsequent revelations that the very same person had meetings with at least one Federal Reserve official and at least one high-level official in the Treasury Department during the Obama administration. Evidently, for Democrats, when it comes to activities that are quite concerning, the concerns vanish when the activities involve officials in a Democratic administration.

The point is, none of the Democrats' concerns or opposition have anything to do with Mr. Rettig, and as his nomination moves forward, I will continue to talk about his incredible qualifications to be our IRS Commissioner as we move through his nomination process.

Today, I want to take a minute to address the Treasury Department's actions. By way of background, the Treasury Department changed an outdated Nixon administration rule that required certain tax-exempt organizations to report the names and addresses of taxpayers who made substantial donations. This requirement did not arise out of a current statute, it isn't useful for tax administration, and it unnecessarily puts taxpayer information at risk. Cognizant of these issues, the Treasury Department changed that rule. Not such a dramatic change, but to hear my Democratic colleagues react, you would think the Department repealed the Bill of Rights or sold our democracy down the river.

That is why I think it is critical to note that, despite the rule change, the IRS still has access to this information should the agency need it. Of course, you would never know that when listening to my friends on the other side of the aisle as they cherry-pick their facts, but for the rest of us, I think we should all take a step back, take a deep breath, and consider what has actually taken place.

Back in 1969, Congress amended the Internal Revenue Code requiring 501(c)(3) charities to file an annual return that includes the names and addresses of substantial contributors. This rule makes perfect sense. After all, taxpayers receive a tax deduction for these donations, so the IRS needs to be able to verify that individual taxpayer has actually donated what they said they did. It is a great tax fraud prevention tool.

However, this taxpayer information is extremely sensitive and must be safeguarded from a data breach or other improper revelation. That is why Congress chose to prohibit public disclosure of this information.

Then, 2 years later, in 1971, President Nixon's Treasury Department issued further regulations extending this requirement to contributions made to 501(c)(4), (5), and (6) organizations.

For those who don't stay up late at night reading the Tax Code for fun, these organizations include social welfare, labor, and agricultural organizations, as well as chambers of commerce.

This regulation went beyond what is required by the statute and, thus, beyond what Congress wrote when requiring noncharity, tax-exempt organizations to disclose personally identifiable taxpayer information; namely, the names, addresses and donations for anyone who contributed $5,000 or more to that particular social welfare organization. Remember, these contributions are not tax deductible, so the IRS has less need for this information. It is key to remember that the law generally requires the returns of tax-exempt organizations be made publicly available.

Taken together, this means the IRS has been forcing the collection of information it doesn't need that can easily get leaked out and cause problems for the IRS, the organizations, the individual donors, and the American people generally. As such, and in order to avoid these important privacy issues, the IRS has had to spend very precious time and resources redacting this information; again, information the agency did not need to collect in the first place and that does no good in helping thwart tax evasion or fraud. In the end, this process has turned into a disproportionate amount of work and expense of taxpayer dollars with few benefits in return.

All of that, while not the most exciting topic for a dinner conversation, is what brings us to today. All of that is why the IRS has been looking at changing this requirement during and since the Obama administration.

The IRS has broadly noted three reasons for this change: First, as I mentioned, the IRS doesn't need the personally identifiable information of these donors to carry out its mission. While this information was helpful to administering the gift tax in 2015, the Congress changed the law on the application of the gift tax, so it is no longer relevant here, and that change was broadly bipartisan.

Second, requiring the reporting of donor information consumes a lot of time and money both at the IRS as well as the tax-exempt organizations. This directly conflicts with our goal of making the IRS more efficient and helpful for American taxpayers.

Third, schedule B returns with personally identifiable information of donors have a tendency to leak. This poses a risk to taxpayer privacy, it creates a liability for the IRS, and it erodes the trust of the American people in our tax collection agency. This risk is very real. Since 2010, the IRS is aware of at least 14 breaches that resulted in the unauthorized disclosure of this type of information. Mind you, those are cases we know of.

That is why, earlier this month, the Trump administration listened to the agency's concerns, contemplated the facts, and did what any sane government should do. It enacted changes that would help the IRS focus on what is important instead of needlessly risking resources and private taxpayer information.

The administration was wise enough to accept the idea that arose out of the Obama administration. That is just good government. Yet, if you have listened to my Democratic colleagues these past few days, you would think democracy, as we know it, has been destroyed. You might even think the IRS and the Trump administration have been bought and paid for by this nebulous so-called dark money.

The truth is, these attacks are just a partisan stunt because even if you believe in intricate weaving of a conspiracy theory, it ignores the plain fact that the IRS actually still has access to donor information if it wants it. Nothing is being deleted.

Instead, leaks of sensitive taxpayer information will be less common, the IRS is less likely to become a political beach ball smacked back and forth across the aisle, and this administration had the common sense to take up a Democratic President's work to eliminate pointless busy work for the IRS and tax-exempt organizations.

Honestly, if this isn't good government, I don't know what is. Let's ignore this pointless obstruction and get back to work. After all, there is a lot to do.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, it is always an honor to follow the President pro tempore of the Senate on the Senate floor.

I am here to talk about the work we are working through and what—for decades would actually be an understatement—for a couple of centuries was the principal work of the Congress, which was to set our priorities by how we spend the money people have entrusted us with.

Today I want to talk specifically about the importance of transportation, and the ag bill is in here, too—the agricultural bill. Certainly, those things come together in a way that allows us to be competitive or don't come together in a way that doesn't allow us to be as competitive as we would like to be.

There is no question that our Nation's infrastructure is not what it should be. The Interstate Highway System, built under the leadership of President Eisenhower, some of it is now over seven decades old, a lot of it over five decades old. It is not where it should be. It has outlived the projected life, and that is a good thing. The construction and repair are better than thought to be at the time, but they are not the kinds of things that are going to last forever.

It has been reported that we have a backlog of at least $836 billion in highway and bridge infrastructure, just that part of our infrastructure.

I am the chairman of the Commerce Committee's Subcommittee on Aviation. The Chair and I serve on that committee, and on that committee, we believe there is at least $100 billion in airport infrastructure projects. There are all kinds of airports all over the world that you can fly into or fly out of, and as you come back into the United States, you realize how far we are behind.

Location is important to us. In fact, Winston Churchill said at one time, talking about the United States, that the United States of America was the best located country in the world. We have the Pacific Ocean on one side and the Atlantic Ocean on the other. We have neighbors north and south whom we have learned to cooperate with and live with. We could turn to the Pacific, if that is where the opportunities were. We could turn to the Atlantic.

Winston Churchill pointed out that the Mississippi River, which runs through the center of our country, is maybe the greatest waterway in the world, in terms of the system that created transportation from the very start. The Mississippi River and all the tributary valleys there were incredibly well located.

But all of these things can benefit us if we make the most of them, but it is possible to make the least of them. If you get to the water or if you get to the river and you get on it and you can use it and it becomes an avenue of commerce, it is an opportunity. If you get to the water and you can't get on it, it is an obstacle.

That is sort of what all these things are when we talk about transportation. Are we going to talk about obstacles or

opportunities? What are we going to do with inadequate and deficient infrastructure that really does impact whether local communities can compete or not?

Back to the thoughts about the map of America and where our State is located, Missouri is really at the hub of where a lot of the natural infrastructure of the country come together, and also the No. 2 and No. 3 biggest rail yards in America are in our State. No. 2 is in Kansas City, and No. 3 is in St. Louis. The interstate highways come together there.

Chairman COLLINS and her committee worked on this part of the bill—a bill where all four committees have brought a product to the floor that we can vote for and that we get a chance to amend. We get a chance to talk about how this could have been made better and maybe find a way to make it better or maybe find a way to realize that, now that I understand the arguments, it is a better bill than I thought. That is the importance of getting that to the floor.

The bill provides $1 billion for BUILD Grants. Those were previously known as TIGER grants. At least 30 percent of that billion dollars is to benefit rural areas. This is particularly the kind of program we had benefited from. The program funded the Champ Clark Bridge over the Mississippi River in Louisiana, MO, and the bridge over the Missouri River at Washington, MO. They all benefited from TIGER Grants.

There is another $49.3 billion for critical highway infrastructure. That is an increase of $3 billion over the authorized level. This program will provide our State with $79 million more in Federal funding increases for roads, bridges, and freight programs. Highways and roads are generally still largely a State problem. This bill encourages States to do things that they might not quite be able to do otherwise.

We have 3,000 bridges in our State deemed structurally deficient. I think it is the highest number of bridges anywhere because we have more than 3,000 bridges that are structurally deficient and there are thousands of bridges more than that.

The bill provides $175 million in discretionary spending, combined with $140 million in mandatory spending to support Essential Air Service communities. Those communities can almost support their own commercial system, but not quite, and still have an argument that they need it. In Missouri, Joplin, Cape Girardeau, and Kirksville all benefit from that Essential Air Service Program. The airport in Columbia is benefiting right now with rehabilitating runways from that program.

The bill provides some capital investment grants that allow some help with transit projects.

As far as ag infrastructure is concerned, we have the chairman of the Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee on the floor right now. For ag to work, you have to have an infrastructure that works. The world price of grain is the world price of grain less what it costs you to get it there. The way you win that competition is to have a transportation network that works in a way that allows you to be more competitive than anyone else. If you could arrive with a quality product and get it there cheaper than anybody else can, you get that marketplace.

We don't want to forget broadband. As we think about rural America today, broadband is as important as the telephone was 70 years ago. We figured out how to get telephones to people that were a long way from the nearest telephone, or until they got a telephone, a long way from the nearest telephone pole. We figured that out, and we need to figure out rural broadband just as well. If you can't get the high-speed information you need, you may be doing something that you don't have to go to an office to do, like commodity trading, but you do have to have instantaneous information to do it effectively.

As for rural Missourians, we have 3 percent of the rural population in our State, and half of that population doesn't have access to high-speed internet. That is behind the rest of the country, and our State is trying to catch up. If we can take advantage of these broadband pilot grants that encourage everybody to catch up, we will catch up faster than we would otherwise.

This bill provides distance learning and telemedicine grants as part of our rural community development, and there are rural development community facilities grants in here. We are benefiting from that, and we hope to see that program continue. We received rural development community facilities grants for things like police facilities, road construction equipment, and healthcare facilities in Dent County, Scotland County, Livingston County, Grundy County, and Schuyler County. All of those kinds of things would still be out there to compete for if we pass this bill.

It includes $1.25 billion for the Rural Development Water and Waste Disposal Program to be developed in rural Missouri. We have eight communities right now benefitting from that. Every level of government—local, State, and Federal—as well as the private sector, really has to continue to recognize the importance of infrastructure—the infrastructure we see on top of the ground, the infrastructure we don't see below the ground, and the broadband infrastructure that some people have and other people don't. That is how we compete.

This bill largely is a bill about competition. Certainly, the transportation and ag parts of this bill are about competition. We need to do what we can to strengthen our overall infrastructure and our transportation network, to boost economic growth, to create jobs, and to be sure that we are more competitive where I live and where you live and all over our country. That is what this bill is about.

I am really pleased that, for the first time in a long time, every Member of the Senate has a right to come to the floor and say: Here is how we can spend this money better. Our goal should be to take what we have been entrusted with and spend it in the way that benefits the country in the most effective way. I think this bill goes a long way in the right direction to do that. I am certainly looking forward to supporting it when it comes to final passage and looking carefully at every amendment anybody offers to see if that is not a better idea than those of us on the Appropriations Committee had.

I see that my friend from West Virginia is here.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from West Virginia.

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. President, I am really pleased to be on the floor today to join my fellow Senator from Missouri to talk about, as a fellow member of the Appropriations Committee, what I think are the real highlights and the good parts about the fact that the process is moving but also what is contained within the process.

Senator BLUNT did a great job, I think, of explaining some of the more detailed areas that are important to the entire Country but also to his area. I am going to do the same for my State of West Virginia.

I want to commend the committee leadership, both the committee chairs and the ranking members, and our Senate leadership, both Senator MCCONNELL and Senator SCHUMER, for moving this process forward and for making good on the promise that we are going to return the appropriations process to regular order.

I tried it to explain it in a radio interview today. I found myself saying: Well, of course, we would be doing this every year, because appropriating money every year is one of the core missions of the Congress. It kind of hasn't worked out that way. This progress that we are making on these four bills and the three previous bills, I think, are an indicator that we will have overwhelming bipartisan support. Each of these bills was written under the budget agreement that we passed and President Trump signed into law.

These bills address a broad range of national concerns and priorities. They highlight areas that we found bipartisan agreement and support on. I am also happy that many of these bills not only have national priorities, but a lot of the national priorities are focused toward different States—rural America, urban America, agriculture America, highly technical jobs, et cetera.

Since my first days in the Senate, I have been committed to doing all that I can to advance the issues that help the Mountain State, including improving our economy and making room for

growth and development, fighting burdensome and overreaching environmental regulations that have crippled our coal industry, improving broadband access in our rural communities and across the States, and fighting the opioid epidemic that has disproportionately affected my State of West Virginia and is devastating so many families and communities not only in our State but across the country.

The bills under consideration today include resources and directions to address each of these priorities and many others.

In our Omnibus appropriations act of 2018, we made a significant investment in a pilot project at the USDA to improve rural broadband in unserved and underserved areas. The State of West Virginia is right in there in terms of lack of broadband deployment in our most rural areas. The Agriculture appropriations bill in this minibus builds on those investments and provides an additional $400 million into that pilot program.

Closing the digital divide has been one of my top priorities. I started my Capito Connect plan to talk about the progress that can be made. This pilot program will help us to build on that progress and connect areas that previously lacked service, making that the highlight of the bill for me.

We had a hearing today about 5G in the Commerce Committee and about how much faster speeds and more advanced technology can improve the economy and how it can be extrapolated to the numbers of jobs and the numbers of dollars into the economy. I am a firm believer that technology is going to drive this, but for those areas that are still left behind or are still on the wrong side of the digital divide, certainly, the program within the USDA is going to be a big boost.

I have already had several conversations with USDA to make sure they understand the unique challenges that we face in West Virginia when it comes to connectivity and so that they continue to keep these challenges in mind as they move forward on the pilot programs.

Every Senator here could make an argument on what their particular challenges are. One of the challenges that we face that some of our midwesterners don't face as much is our terrain. We are not called the Mountain State for nothing. It is hard to drive from one place to another without being in a mountain. If you don't live on a hill, you live in the valley. That creates challenges for connectivity that technology is going to drive. I am very encouraged about this. I am very encouraged, not just about the broadband part of agriculture but the rural development, water, and electricity infrastructure and about opposing cuts to several programs that have been very helpful to our rural communities.

West Virginia, as does every State, also has challenges and opportunities in the transportation sector. I see the chairman of the Transportation Subcommittee here, Senator COLLINS. She has done great work on the T-HUD appropriations bill. Some of these—certainly, the Airport Improvement Program and the Contract Tower Program—are very important to our smaller airports as well as to our cities, which receive the CDBG funding. They provide ways to improve communities and ways to move forward with the housing and development we need. Also, just in a smaller sense, they help the rail service by ensuring we have a ticket agent in Charleston for Amtrak. It sounds like a small thing, but it is good for tourism and good for our city and good that our Hinton Railroad days will be able to go on uninterrupted.

One thing that has been interrupted in the last several years is any kind of sustained economic progress in our coal and energy sectors—the result, I believe, of the previous administration's never-ending war on coal. Thanks to the new administration, that war is over. This bill will help us in making sure that what remains will give us a fair and even playing field.

The Interior portion of this bill ensures that the EPA returns to its core mission of environmental cleanup. The Interior bill, which, I should note, passed the subcommittee by 31 to 0—everybody voted for it in committee—also emphasizes the need to fund the deferred maintenance of our national parks. This is something for which I have long advocated. We are at a point at which we are really going to make a significant difference here.

The Secretary of the Interior is really devoted to this, as is the President. This is very much a bipartisan effort.

It restores proposed cuts to the Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds and grants programs that are tremendously helpful to States and localities. Some of these grants are not very large, but they make the difference of there being clean, drinkable water and water systems as opposed to having to bring your water in, which, in this day and age, in my opinion, in our country shouldn't be happening.

The bill also includes funding to continue a pilot program through the Abandoned Mine Lands Funds to invest in projects that will strengthen our local economies. Obviously, this has been very helpful in West Virginia and in Pennsylvania. We have a lot of abandoned mine land area that needs reclamation, that needs repurposing, and this program is very helpful for that.

The final bill is the Financial Services and General Government bill. I served as the chair of the FSGG bill in the last Congress, during the fiscal year 2018 budget. I was pleased that the funding levels we placed in fiscal year 2018 have remained and that some of the priorities have remained in fiscal year 2019, including a historic increase for the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas, called the HIDTA Program. This is out of the White House's Office of National Drug Control Policy, where you get a coordinated effort from your State, local, and Federal law enforcement to stop the illegal flow of drugs into our country, which is literally killing a generation and is killing a lot of our communities.

We have an increase in there for drug-free communities, something that is a ground-up program, where your communities get together and ask: How do we solve this problem we have in our small communities? This increase, I think, demonstrates a commitment to the Office of National Drug Control Policy and a rejection of the proposed elimination of the ONDCP.

In having been a Member who voted for the historic tax cuts and tax relief we passed in December, I want to make sure the IRS can implement this so we don't have a glitch or a hitch while people are getting more money back when filing their new taxes. The IRS needs these resources. It just so happens that a lot of those IRS workers actually live and work in the State of West Virginia, so this will have a great impact, I think, in my region.

As one can see, we are doing the people's business by taking up and debating these appropriations bills. I think the committee is functioning, and the Senate floor is already functioning with three bills having gone out and there having been the opportunity for everybody to have weighed in, yea or nay. That is kind of why we are sent here, isn't it? We are sent here to express an opinion, to vote, to make the thoughts of our constituents and our own thoughts known. I am even proud that a lot of the resources we are going to be addressing in these bills will help to address very important West Virginia priorities.

I look forward to the continuing debate on amendments, to the continuing openness of the process, and to the continuing cooperation and dedication of spirit to do the work we have been sent to do—to appropriate the money, to prioritize our tax dollars, and to show the efficiency and care that every single one of our taxpayers deserves. That is what we are doing today.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. HEINRICH. Mr. President, I just want to take a moment and, in particular, thank my colleagues from Kansas and Colorado, as well as my colleague from New Mexico, Senator UDALL, and especially Senator MORAN of Kansas, as well as Senator ROBERTS and Senator GARDNER and Senator BENNET, all for their efforts on behalf of the Southwest Chief line.

Long-distance passenger rail routes, like the Southwest Chief, literally connect millions of Americans from across the country who live in rural communities to the rest of the Nation. They do that culturally, and they do that economically.

Each year, the Southwest Chief in New Mexico, for example, brings thousands of Boy Scouts from all across our great Nation to the Philmont Scout Ranch and generates economic activity in every community along the way, whether it is in Las Vegas or Lamy or Albuquerque—you name it. In many cases, long-distance routes provide the only affordable transportation alternatives to highways for rural residents, particularly the elderly and the disabled.

I thank all of my colleagues from these States for standing up for long-distance passenger rail, for working to reject any proposals that would suspend long-distance rail service and literally send rural residents back to the back of the bus.

We have a disconnect in this country between the rural and the urban economies, between the center of the heartland and the coasts in this country, particularly economically. If we are going to combat this, we have to invest in the transportation infrastructure and the information infrastructure that can make a difference in rural communities.

This is not the time to be turning our backs on rural communities with regard to passenger rail and transportation. That would be an absolute travesty for small communities all through the heartland, whether you are talking about Kansas or Colorado or New Mexico—or, really, from one end of the Southwest Chief all the way to Chicago, to the West Coast, in Arizona and California.

I thank all of my colleagues who have been fighting for this issue. It is incredibly important to so many of my constituents in New Mexico. I urge everyone to support the Moran-Udall amendment. It is absolutely critical.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from New Mexico.

AMENDMENT NO. 3414, AS MODIFIED, TO AMENDMENT NO. 3399

Mr. UDALL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to call up amendment No. 3414, as modified with the changes that are at the desk.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from New Mexico [Mr. UDALL] proposes an amendment numbered 3414, as modified, to amendment No. 3399.

Mr. UDALL. I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment, as modified, is as follows:

(Purpose: To express the sense of Congress relating to the importance of long-distance passenger rail routes)

At the appropriate place in title I of division D, insert the following:

SEC. 1____. It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) long-distance passenger rail routes provide much-needed transportation access for 4,700,000 riders in 325 communities in 40 States and are particularly important in rural areas; and

(2) long-distance passenger rail routes and services should be sustained to ensure connectivity throughout the National Network (as defined in section 24102 of title 49, United States Code).

Mr. UDALL. Mr. President, I very much thank Senator HEINRICH for being down here and talking about what this really means. I know Senator MORAN is also on the floor.

Amtrak is designed to connect our communities. Whether we live in Raton, NM, Dodge City, KS, or Los Angeles, CA, it connects our communities. I am pleased to offer this amendment with my friends from Kansas and Colorado because the Southwest Chief connects our communities, and we will continue to work together to support this national service.

There is no doubt we will have a strong bipartisan vote to support our long-distance rail lines. If Amtrak thinks that replacing railcars with buses will solve its problems, well, that is no way to run a railroad. I hope Amtrak's leadership appreciates that we will not back down in our support of our rail network and that we can work together to find solutions to their problems.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I commend the Senators who are the authors of this amendment. The Senator from Kansas, Mr. MORAN, has discussed this issue with me many times, as have the Senators from New Mexico who feel very strongly about it as well. I know the Senators from Colorado are also cosponsors.

As chairman of the subcommittee with jurisdiction over the funding for Amtrak, I support this amendment. Amtrak's national network is vital for the hundreds of communities across the country it serves, particularly in the more rural areas of our country.

At a hearing I chaired this past May with the ranking member, Senator REED, Amtrak committed to not making service changes in advance of new authorizing legislation. It also committed to consulting with the communities it serves before making changes that would affect the residents of those communities. We fully expect Amtrak to stand by the commitments that were made at our May hearing.

This amendment conveys our longstanding support for long-distance passenger rail service, and I encourage my colleagues to adopt it.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I rise in support of this amendment.

Amtrak's Long-Distance Routes serve as critical connections on our national rail network in 39 States and the District of Columbia. In fact, they are the only intercity trains in 24 States where Amtrak operates. In many parts of the country, Amtrak is the only affordable option for long-distance travel, particularly for the elderly and people with disabilities.

Senator COLLINS and I have worked in a very bipartisan fashion to fund Amtrak's National Network at record levels over the past 2 fiscal years, and this bill provides $1.29 billion to continue those services.

Amtrak should use this funding to improve the quality and service of Long-Distance Routes around the country. I urge my colleagues to support this amendment.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Kansas.

AMENDMENT NO. 3433 TO AMENDMENT NO. 3399

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I call up amendment No. 3433.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report.

The assistant bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Kansas [Mr. MORAN] proposes an amendment numbered 3433 to amendment No. 3399.

Mr. MORAN. I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To prohibit the use of funds to revoke certain exceptions)

At the appropriate place in division C, insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to revoke an exception made—

(1) pursuant to the final rule of the Department of Agriculture entitled ''Exceptions to Geographic Areas for Official Agencies Under the USGSA'' (68 Fed. Reg. 19137 (April 18, 2003)); and

(2) on a date before April 14, 2017.

AMENDMENT NO. 3414, AS MODIFIED

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, before I make remarks on this amendment, I express my gratitude to my colleagues from New Mexico, to Senator REED, who is the ranking member, and to Senator COLLINS, the chair of the appropriate Appropriations subcommittee, for working so closely with me and my colleagues in regard to rail service, the Southwest Chief, from Chicago to Los Angeles, which transports people through Kansas and through Colorado and through New Mexico. We have had a bipartisan effort from the Senators of those three States to make certain that service continues into the future. I am very grateful for their support.

I ask my colleagues, the other Senators, to support the Moran-Udall amendment.

AMENDMENT NO. 3433

Mr. President, I rise to urge my colleagues to support my amendment to force the USDA to continue honoring its existing agreement between grain handling facilities and official inspection services.

Following the passage of legislation to reauthorize the U.S. Grain Standards Act, the Department of Agriculture amended its regulations and changed the treatment of grain facilities using inspection services located outside their defined, designated geographic areas.

The USDA's decision to alter the way it had been doing business has disrupted existing agreements and longstanding working relationships between grain handlers and grain inspectors. Also, the change has decreased the efficiency of inspections and reduced grain elevator operators' flexibility to coordinate with inspection services.

This amendment would not allow the USDA to revoke any additional agreements that are currently in place. To be clear, these grain elevators are still using USDA-sanctioned, official inspection agencies. The inspection agencies in question have agreed to perform inspections outside of the designated geographic areas.

The question we will soon be voting on is whether USDA ought to honor those exceptions already made to grain facilities and their inspectors. This is a commonsense amendment to make certain USDA does so—honors its commitments—and that grain facilities are afforded the best possible service from the Department of Agriculture.

I urge my colleagues to support this amendment.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the question is on agreeing to the Moran amendment.

Ms. COLLINS. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH) is necessarily absent.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 98, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 168 Leg.]

YEAS—98

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

NOT VOTING—2

Duckworth McCain

The amendment (No. 3433) was agreed to.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 3414, AS MODIFIED

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the question is on agreeing to the Udall amendment No. 3414, as modified.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN).

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

The result was announced—yeas 95, nays 4, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 169 Leg.]

YEAS—95

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	Roberts
Burr	Heitkamp	Rounds
Cantwell	Heller	Rubio
Capito	Hirono	Sanders
Cardin	Hoeven	Schatz
Carper	Hyde-Smith	Schumer
Casey	Inhofe	Scott
Cassidy	Isakson	Shaheen
Collins	Johnson	Shelby
Coons	Jones	Smith
Corker	Kaine	Stabenow
Cornyn	Kennedy	Sullivan
Cortez Masto	King	Tester
Cotton	Klobuchar	Thune
Crapo	Lankford	Tillis
Cruz	Leahy	Udall
Daines	Manchin	Van Hollen
Donnelly	Markey	Warner
Duckworth	McCaskill	Warren
Durbin	McConnell	Whitehouse
Enzi	Menendez	Wicker
Ernst	Merkley	Wyden
Feinstein	Moran	Young
Fischer	Murkowski	

NAYS—4

Lee	Sasse
Paul	Toomey

NOT VOTING—1

McCain

The amendment (No. 3414), as modified, was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, we are continuing to make progress on this package of appropriations bills. Speaking for the managers on this side of the aisle—the Republican chairman of the subcommittee—I request that our colleagues file amendments at the desk by 1 p.m. tomorrow.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I join my chairman, Senator COLLINS, in requesting that all of our colleagues file their amendments by 1 p.m. tomorrow afternoon so that we can continue to make progress on this bill. Again, I thank the chairman for her great leadership.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

(The remarks of Mr. JONES and Mr. ALEXANDER pertaining to the introduction of S. 3266 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mr. ALEXANDER. I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GARDNER). Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—H.R. 772

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of H.R. 772, which was received from the House. I ask unanimous consent that the Blunt substitute amendment at the desk be agreed to and 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. Is there objection?

The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, reserving the right to object to the Senator's request, families should have access to simple, straightforward information so they can make the food choices that are right for them.

I was very glad to see that after 7 years of delays and foot-dragging, 7 years of objections from Republicans who didn't want to allow this commonsense law to be fully implemented, in May of this year, we finally saw this law implemented—by a Republican administration, no less. Yet, today, before us now is a proposal—however well intended it may be—that would take us backward.

This bill would undermine nutrition labeling. It would punish businesses along the way that have already fully implemented the law and would carve out an entire category of businesses from providing labeling in their stores. It would bar the FDA from conducting the oversight we all count on it to do. It would weaken consumer protections

as well as protections for States and localities.

Frankly, why? This is a solution in search of a problem. Restaurants across this country are already providing labeling, and the FDA has made it clear that it intends to work with, not against, businesses in implementing the law. Furthermore, many States and localities have required caloric labeling for years, and not one restaurant chain has been sued.

So I am going to keep advocating for families being able to have access to clear, transparent nutrition information.

I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, in 2010, legislation passed that mandated national calorie menu labeling standards for chain restaurants and similar retail food locations, like grocery stores. Many of us know that there are many different ways that foods are prepared and sold to customers. We can see all kinds of examples by walking around the Capitol Complex itself, let alone through one's neighborhood grocery store. As a result, it would be almost impossible to have a one-size-fits-all rule.

Before I mention what the Blunt-Alexander-King substitute amendment would have done, to which the Senator from Washington State has objected, let me, first of all, address the House-passed bipartisan bill that has been pending on the Senate's calendar.

Senator KING joined me in introducing the bipartisan Common Sense Nutrition Disclosure Act here in the Senate—the same bill that has already passed in the House. The bill is not just bicameral but bipartisan, meaning Democrats and Republicans have sponsored legislation in the Senate and Democrats and Republicans have passed the same legislation in the House. My Democratic colleague from Missouri cosponsored the initial bill.

The House-passed bill would not exempt pizza delivery and it wouldn't exempt supermarkets or grocery stores or convenience stores or others from menu labeling requirements.

There are always all kinds of things that are talked about here. What the House bill and what the Blunt-Alexander-King bill would do, which is pending in the Senate, is recognize that there are unique differences in business types and product offerings to allow for more flexibility in different kinds of business models providing their customers with calorie information. This would still happen under our bill, but it would happen in a more effective way so that it meets the customers' needs. The goal here should be the customers' receiving the information rather than exactly where the information is placed in a one-size-fits-all or in a one-location-fits-all kind of format.

The campaign on this issue of misinformation has run pretty wild. There is a group saying that what we are trying to do is exempt restaurants and others from menu labeling. They clearly haven't read the bill that Senator ALEXANDER and I and Senator KING have introduced. I would like to go on record as saying what the amendment does.

First and foremost, it does not impact the delay of that menu labeling final rule that went into effect this year. Again, it does not impact the delay or stop the menu labeling final rule. The Blunt-Alexander-King amendment provides those who have to implement the rule with the regulatory flexibility to implement the rule and provide the information to their customers in the most useful manner. The amendment also provides protection against frivolous lawsuits. That is really all it does. Those are two big things, but they are two not very complicated things.

I have been working on this issue for a number of years. I am disappointed that we have been unable to move a commonsense measure here in the Senate.

I thank Senator KING for working with me on this issue, and I thank Senators MCCASKILL, HEITKAMP, and DONNELLY—all Democrats—along with Senator KING, for joining me as bipartisan cosponsors.

I also thank Chairman ALEXANDER, who is the chair of the authorizing committee, who has joined with me and others in finding a commonsense path forward to ensure we provide the information to consumers in the most effective way, while providing the flexibility in implementation and protection from lawsuits, not only on the information but on some highly technical piece of the rule that really wouldn't have an impact if anybody were to have the information or not. Senator ALEXANDER has been a leader on this. I know he is as disappointed as I am that we can't move forward with the House-passed bill, for I spent a lot of time on it.

I turn now to my friend Senator ALEXANDER, the chairman of the Senate HELP Committee, to make whatever comments he wants to make.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I thank Mr. BLUNT, the Senator from Missouri, for his leadership on these commonsense provisions that would help literally hundreds of thousands of restaurants, grocery stores, convenience stores, pizza stores, and other food retailers as they work to comply with the Food and Drug Administration's menu labeling rule.

I am very disappointed that some Democrats have blocked Senator BLUNT's commonsense legislation. He has worked hard on it and has taken a piece of legislation that had bipartisan support in the House of Representatives. He has worked with Senator KING of Maine in a bipartisan way. Nevertheless, there have still been objections.

When Democrats passed the Affordable Care Act in 2010, they included a provision that mandated nutrition labeling in restaurants and food retailers that have over 20 stores nationwide. The proposed rule was published in December 2014, and the final menu labeling rule went into effect on May 7, 2018. The final rule required restaurants nationwide to display calories on menus and menu boards and have additional nutrition information available upon request. Senators BLUNT and KING and I support consumers having access to nutrition information to make healthier, more informed dietary choices for themselves and their families.

While I commend the FDA for addressing concerns raised during the process in the final rule, a few significant problems remain unaddressed, including the following: employees being subject to criminal penalties for inconsistencies in calorie information; a clear amount of time for restaurants to correct violations before enforcement; restaurants being subject to frivolous civil lawsuits for minor violations; and flexibility for restaurants where a majority of orders are placed online.

To address those concerns, Senators BLUNT and KING, here in the Senate, and a bipartisan group in the House, as Senator BLUNT has outlined, introduced the bipartisan Common Sense Nutrition Disclosure Act. The idea was to make the menu labeling rule more workable for restaurants and to make access to information on nutrition easier for customers.

The act, led by Representatives CATHY MCMORRIS RODGERS and Loretta Sanchez, passed the House twice—both times with strong bipartisan votes and most recently in February with a vote of 266 to 157, with 152 Republicans and 32 Democrats in support.

However, after Senate Democrats raised concerns that the House bill would further delay the implementation of the rule, Senator BLUNT and I worked out a targeted solution to help give restaurants the flexibility and certainty they would need to comply with the rule without delaying its implementation or enforcement.

Our substitute provisions include the following:

No. 1, they clarify legal liability.

For example, if I am a 21-year-old manager at the Chick-fil-A in Chattanooga, I would be pretty hesitant to sign a statement, as is currently required by the rule, that could subject me to criminal and financial penalties if one of my employees were to put extra slices of cheese on a sandwich. Today, the rule requires a restaurant manager to certify that the restaurant makes menu items a certain way to meet the posted nutritional values.

Our amendment changes that. It no longer puts an individual employee on the hook for a meal item that doesn't match its posted calorie count. Our amendment maintains the requirement for restaurant headquarters to certify

that the nutrient analysis of menu items is complete and accurate.

It is nearly impossible for menu items to be prepared in precisely the same way every time, and individuals should not be at risk of criminal and financial penalties based on small differences in how menu items are prepared.

No. 2, they establish a clear timeline for corrective actions.

If the FDA finds a violation of a sign being out of place or discrepancies in the calorie content, it is reasonable for a store to have a clear timeframe to fully correct the violation without being subject to penalties. This provision would clarify that restaurants have 30 days to correct violations, and if, after 30 days it is not resolved, the FDA could move ahead with enforcement action.

No. 3, they protect restaurants from frivolous lawsuits for minor violations.

This provision clarifies, let's say, if a consumer determines that a chicken sandwich labeled as having 500 calories actually has 550 calories, the Federal, State, or local enforcement authorities could take action, but prevents the consumer from suing the restaurant for damages. This protects restaurants from facing frivolous lawsuits or class action lawsuits that result in years of litigation and settlements on minor discrepancies that rarely benefit the consumers.

No. 4, they allow access to nutrition information online.

If you are ordering a pizza for your family, there is a good chance that you are placing that order online or on a mobile app and that it is being delivered to your home. Restaurants with over 75 percent of orders placed online should not have to invest in maintaining and updating in-store menu boards only a small portion of customers will ever use.

To summarize, the intent of the FDA menu labeling rule was about increasing consumer access to nutrition information, not about finding minor problems to trigger fines and penalties on local businesses.

These provisions are based on bipartisan legislation introduced in both Chambers, passed twice in the House of Representatives, to accommodate the diverse business models in the food industry and provide certainty to restaurants and their employees.

These four provisions in the Blunt-King legislation were carefully negotiated to address concerns of Democratic Members, to ensure Americans will soon be able to access nutrition information, and will not delay or stop FDA's ability to implement or enforce the menu labeling requirements.

I am disappointed some of our Democratic colleagues rejected these commonsense provisions that would have helped restaurants provide calorie counts for Americans and that would have made it easier for those Americans to obtain that information.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, while our colleagues from Tennessee and Missouri are here, I just want to tell you that along with LISA MURKOWSKI and Tom Harkin, I worked on this issue when we were debating the Affordable Care Act.

As I recall, a provision on menu labeling was included not just in the Finance Committee version of the bill but also in the version that came through the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee. That was adopted out when we did the Affordable Care Act—I want to say around 2009, 2010, 2011—and it has taken a long time for the FDA and other regulatory bodies to figure out how to actually implement our legislation.

The reason we adopted legislation is that we spend a whole lot more money on healthcare in this country than many other developed nations. In the United States, we spend 18 percent of our GDP—18 percent. In Japan, they spend 8 percent of their GDP. If you look at people in Japan—I have lived there and worked there as a naval flight officer. When you look at the people in Japan, compared to us, they are less obese.

We have a huge problem. One out of three people in our country are overweight or obese, including kids. Hence, we decided we weren't in the business of telling people what they should eat or shouldn't eat, but the idea of trying to inform people what they were eating and to work with the restaurants and grocery stores and others to try to make this happen is something that was close to my heart and certainly close to LISA MURKOWSKI's heart and Tom Harkin's heart.

I am not one of the people who has objected to what I think Senator BLUNT is proposing, but I am still deeply interested in the issue and would welcome a chance to be involved with my colleagues from Mississippi and Tennessee going forward, if they would like, and I am sure Senator MURKOWSKI would feel the same way.

That is not why I came to the floor, but thank you very much and bon appetit.

Mr. President, what I did come to the floor for was to talk about something I think is important to almost all of us.

Back in the late sixties—actually early seventies—I served two tours in Southeast Asia during the Vietnam war, and the highlight for us every day was mail call. Every day, every week we looked forward to what we would get from our families and friends back home. We even welcomed getting credit card bills. Just having some connection to the mainland was always welcomed then.

Today we have troops scattered around the world. They still get mail call. It is not as important to them. It is not as meaningful to them. They still get packages and that kind of thing—letters, birthday cards, and so forth—but it is not as important to them as it was to us.

We communicate a lot differently now. Folks who are deployed around the world can use Skype. They can use the internet. They can use text messaging and all kinds of ways to communicate with their families, loved ones, and others.

Having said that, the Postal Service is still vital to an industry that supports about 8 million jobs in America. It is a trillion-dollar industry, and it is especially important in rural parts of our country.

We are a nation, where most of us live—I think something like 75 percent of Americans live within about 100 miles of one of our coasts. Think about that. Seventy-five percent of Americans or so live within 100 miles of our coasts. That means we have a lot of rural areas in the eastern part of our Nation, the central part of our Nation, and the western part of our Nation. For a lot of those folks, they don't have broadband—so they don't have internet connection—and so the mail is especially important for them.

There are places like Alaska where they even get their food by the mail, and there are places, I understand, in Maine, especially up along the Canadian border, where the mail service is enormously important.

So as we look at not just reorganization of our government, but as we look at the Postal Service, there are some people who are interested in privatizing, and the President has talked a bit about privatizing. There has been talk about that for years.

Senator COLLINS is on the floor. She and I have worked for a number of years to try to make sure the Postal Service has what it has and what it needs to be successful and vibrant, to be able to generate enough money to meet their obligations, to modernize their vehicle fleet—which on average is about 25 years old—and to be able to modernize the mail processing centers that used to handle mostly first-class mail. Now they handle just a lot of packages and parcels. We want to make sure they have the infrastructure to meet that opportunity today.

Today I am here to talk about an amendment that is important to the American people, to rural and small towns, and to our economy. However, apparently, some of our Republican friends will not allow a bipartisan amendment to be considered for a vote.

The amendment was offered by Senator HEITKAMP, Senator MORAN, and myself. The goal of our amendment is pretty simple, and that is to protect American taxpayers from misguided efforts to privatize the Postal Service.

Frankly, I think this amendment should be an easy vote for all of our colleagues. Yet a couple of our Republican colleagues are reluctant to tell their constituents that they support rural and small America losing their postal services.

We know privatizing the Postal Service would be a disaster, maybe not for

all American consumers but for a lot of them, especially in parts of America that I talked to, where there are not too many people but a lot of land, and people are separated by wide expanses in those States. But privatizing the Postal Service would be a disaster for a number of Americans, especially those in rural parts of America.

It would be a devastating blow to the trillion-dollar mailing industry, which persists around this country, which was built around this country, and which is built on the mailing industry.

It would put more than 8 million American jobs in jeopardy—not just jobs in the Postal Service but jobs across our economy. The number of people working in the U.S. Postal Service is down by at least one-third over the last 10 years—by at least one-third. The number of mail processing centers has been cut in half. The number of full-time post offices that are operating 5 or 6 days a week, let's say, from 8 in the morning to 5 in the afternoon, the number of those post offices that will have full service full time is down by at least one-third. The Postal Service has worked to rightsize their infrastructure and their distribution network to meet the demand for their services today, but you don't have to take my word for it because, for years, privatization efforts have been overwhelmingly opposed by stakeholders across the board. That is not just by the Postal Service, not just by people working in the Postal Service but by industry that uses the Postal Service, by small businesses—not just by big businesses but small businesses—by unions, and by the American people as a whole.

The Trump administration has just put forward a government reorganization plan that included a recommendation to privatize the Postal Service. Since the founding of this country and the creation of the Postal Service, we have maintained that every American should have equal access to the mail, regardless of whether the Postal Service were to be privatized. That will no longer be a promise we can make to Americans who do not live in urban centers. Yet we have companies, such as UPS and FedEx, that use the Postal Service to get to most homes in America for the final stretch of delivery. For a lot of folks who get service by UPS and FedEx, the folks who actually deliver the packages and the parcels the last mile are with the Postal Service, and that is a piece of their business. It is a constructive way for them to work with these other businesses to get the job done, almost as partners.

If we do privatize the Postal Service, the only places where it will be profitable will be where it retains mail delivery. Let me say that again. If we were actually to privatize the Postal Service, the only places where it will be profitable will be where it retains postal or mail delivery.

If we allow the Postal Service to be privatized, I can't imagine we will be able to maintain Alaska Bypass mail or delivery to Hawaii or to rural mail routes around the Canadian border in Maine because, for a private company, the costs would outweigh the profits, and they are in business to make money.

We cannot let that happen. Everyone, regardless of location, age, race, gender, should have equal access to what is an essential American service.

For any colleague of mine—of ours—who wants to help rural communities, who wants to protect the rights of American consumers, and who wants to bolster our economy, this should be a no-brainer.

With that, I yield the floor.

I see the Senator from the State of Iowa—which has great mail service—who knows of which I speak.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

NOMINATION OF BRETT KAVANAUGH

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, this morning I listened to the remarks by Senator SCHUMER, the minority leader, and for a minute, while listening to him, I was worried that Senator Harry Reid was back disguised as Senator SCHUMER. After all, I used to hear a lot of false comments about the Judiciary Committee's work from the misinformed former minority leader.

This year, the minority leader first fretted that this Senator, as chairman of the Judiciary Committee, would be ''twisted by leadership'' in the course of reviewing Judge Kavanaugh's nomination to the Supreme Court. Of course, that is false, but it was strange to hear a complaint about leadership intervening in committee business from a Democratic leader who appears to be doing just that.

As far as his other comments on the Supreme Court confirmation process, I would like to reiterate a few points I made over the last couple of weeks.

The Senate Judiciary Committee will have a thorough, modern, and efficient process for reviewing Judge Kavanaugh's qualifications. As I explained yesterday, Senators already have access to Judge Kavanaugh's 307 opinions that he offered over a 12-year period of time when he was a DC Circuit Court judge, the hundreds more opinions he joined, and of course the 6,168 pages of materials he submitted as part of his Senate Judiciary Committee questionnaire.

For the benefit of the public, if you want to get into the weeds on this stuff, you can go to the Judiciary Committee's website and get all of this information that I just mentioned. These materials are the most relevant to assessing Judge Kavanaugh's legal thinking.

We expect to receive more than 1 million pages of documents from Judge Kavanaugh's time in the White House Counsel's Office and the Office of Independent Counsel. This will be the largest document production in connection with a Supreme Court nominee ever. By comparison, we received only about 170,000 pages of White House records for Justice Kagan.

Democratic leaders want gratuitous and unnecessary paper from Judge Kavanaugh's time as White House Staff Secretary. This is an unreasonable request, and I think they know it.

Democratic leaders are already committed to opposing Judge Kavanaugh. We have minority Leader SCHUMER himself saying he would fight Judge Kavanaugh ''with everything he's got.''

Yesterday one colleague said that supporting Judge Kavanaugh is ''complicit'' and ''evil.'' That is quite an offensive statement. It doesn't sound like they are interested in assessing Judge Kavanaugh's qualifications in the way everybody ought to approach this—with an open mind.

Their bloated demands are an obvious attempt to obstruct this confirmation process.

It gets worse. The Democratic leaders are even demanding to search each and every email from other White House staffers that even mentions Judge Kavanaugh while he served in the White House. That is beyond unreasonable. Such a request would not help us understand this nominee's legal thinking. And shouldn't that be what we are concentrating on? If you want to know what kind of a Justice a person is going to be on the Supreme Court, that involves his approach to all of the legal matters that he has to confront now and if he gets on the Supreme Court.

The Obama administration, with Senate Democrats' strong backing, refused to approve such records for Justice Kagan's confirmation. And this stunning demand is clear evidence that the Democratic leaders aren't interested in anything but obstruction.

Democratic leaders insist on all of these extra documents because the Senate received Justice Kagan's relevant White House records in 2010. But let me point out to my colleagues that there is a significant difference between this nominee, who has served 12 years already on the court and Justice Kagan, who was not a judge. Of course, with Justice Kagan not being a judge, there was no judicial track record for us to follow. She was an esteemed dean of the law school at Harvard University. That is very prestigious and shows a lot of high qualifications, but it is not the record of a judge for us to look to.

There was a higher need for additional information that might shed light on her legal thinking then. Judge Kavanaugh, by contrast, has offered more than 300 opinions and joined in hundreds more.

The Staff Secretary is undoubtedly an important and demanding position, as Judge Kavanaugh himself and many others have said. But Staff Secretary documents are not very useful in showing Judge Kavanaugh's legal thinking. His primary job as Staff Secretary at the White House was not to provide his own advice. Instead, he was primarily

responsible for making sure that documents prepared by other executive branch offices were presented to the President.

In addition to being the least relevant to assessing Judge Kavanaugh's legal thinking, the Staff Secretary documents contain among the most sensitive White House documents. They contain information and advice sent directly to the President from a wide range of policy advisers.

Democratic leaders now say they want to follow the so-called ''Kagan standard,'' but they seem to forget how we approached that nomination. Republicans and Democrats alike agreed to forgo a request for her Solicitor General documents because of their sensitivity.

Senators LEAHY and Sessions, because they were the ranking Republican and chairman at the time, came to that agreement, even though Justice Kagan had no judicial record to review. And they agreed to these terms despite Justice Kagan's own statement that her tenure in the Solicitor General's office would provide insight into the kind of Justice she would be.

Obviously, with his long record on the DC Circuit, Judge Kavanaugh doesn't have this problem. There is plenty of paper for people to observe the kind of person we could expect him to be on the Supreme Court.

The need for confidentiality is substantially higher for documents passing through the Staff Secretary's office than the Solicitor General's office. Under the precedent set by Justice Kagan, we shouldn't expect access to Staff Secretary records. We already have access to a voluminous judicial record, and we will have access to the largest document production for a Supreme Court nominee ever.

The Democrats' demands for even more documents are unreasonable and clearly intended to obstruct this confirmation process.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ROUNDS). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

PLASTIC GUNS

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, if we didn't have enough to worry about, as the Presiding Officer and this Senator have to worry about cyber security in our capacity on the Armed Services Committee; if we didn't have enough to worry about, with all that is happening where Americans are being threatened to be exchanged—some of our diplomats—for questioning, which, in effect, would be putting them outside of the United States and suddenly subjected to being scooped up and kidnapped, to be put into the Russian criminal situation; if we didn't have enough to be worried about, with everything the American people are facing every day, including a trade war that is starting to hurt the economies of hard-working American families; if we didn't have enough to worry about, wouldn't it be nice that we would only have to worry about that? But now we have to worry about 3D printing—printing hard plastic guns that cannot be detected by all the detectors at the airports that we are frequently encountering as we go through TSA. And that is not even speaking of all of the protections that are around this building, right here, in trying to keep harm from being done to otherwise hard-working Americans, a lot of them right here in this Capitol complex. But replicate this throughout all of the governmental entities, including courthouses, city halls, obviously airports, seaports, the entrances into military bases, and it goes on. How about courtrooms—it goes on and on.

Now there is the capability of 3D printing, and the blueprints for putting together a 3D printed gun are now going to be allowed to go up on the internet on August 1. I don't understand why that is being allowed.

It is true that there are plans that are out there, because when there is anything, it is going to get out there on the internet. But to say as a matter of governmental policy that we are not going to try to stop something that we try to stop every day in our activities, such as going into an airport or a government building, and we are going to suddenly put the plans out there so that people can go around and manufacture, with hard plastic, a gun that looks like this or some variant thereof. If you grab the handle here, you can see, there is the trigger. If you do that, you suddenly have a lethal weapon that can't be detected by a metal detector.

What are we coming to? It is hard to overstate how dangerous these plastic guns can be. And you say: Well, maybe it is just like the Clint Eastwood movie about 25 years ago that depicted the Secret Service protecting the President. You say: Well, you could catch the bullet, even though that bullet got through, disguised as a keychain.

Now you don't have to have metal bullets because you can create such a hard plastic that it would serve the same purpose, and we are going to put up on the internet plans on how to put this together and to manufacture it.

It goes without saying that the metal detectors can't detect plastic, which means that a person concealing a deadly weapon could sail through security screenings without setting any alerts off.

So with everything we have invested in TSA—we have aviation as our jurisdiction on the Commerce Committee, of which Senator THUNE is the chairman—people can walk onto airplanes with deadly plastic guns. People could walk into schools.

What have we been doing since there have been all of these shootings in schools? We have been talking about hardening schools. It wouldn't do any good if people could walk into schools with deadly plastic guns. We wouldn't know about it. Somebody could come into this building. Somebody could be sitting right up there in that Senate Gallery, and we wouldn't know about it.

Many of us have recognized this danger for years. It was prophetic in that Clint Eastwood movie. In fact, we have a law on the books that requires all firearms to be manufactured with a metal part recognized by metal detectors. But there is a loophole in that law. Manufacturers can skirt the rules by simply attaching a removable metal piece to a plastic gun, and the consumer can remove that metal removable part.

So this Senator will file a bill that would close that loophole by requiring at least one major component of the gun be made with enough metal to be detectable by a standard airport security screener. That is just common sense.

But that doesn't get to the greater problem of putting the plans out on the internet. These plastic guns are a clear and present danger to the security of our communities, and the Trump administration has just acted to make it easier for people to manufacture these plastic guns in private, endangering everybody.

Last week, the Justice Department and the State Department abruptly settled a 3-year-long battle to prevent a self-proclaimed anarchist from posting blueprints on how to make 3D printed guns, including an AR–15 semiautomatic rifle, online for the public to access and download.

Let me say what that was. The U.S. Department of Justice and the U.S. State Department abruptly settled a legal battle to prevent that. The administration's decision in that settlement paves the way for the man to post his blueprints online on August 1. Once those blueprints go live, we will never get them back. When the genie gets out of the bottle, you can't stuff him back in.

The administration's decision is inexplicable, and it is dangerous. That is why this Senator and, I suspect, some other Senators have written to the Department of Justice demanding answers from the AG as to why his lawyers capitulated, after years of winning in the courts, to the deranged demands of plastic gun designers hell-bent on fundamentally undermining American security. I can't say it any clearer or any blunter.

That is why I am speaking out today, and that is why I am speaking with the Administrator of TSA tomorrow to urge him to consider how in the world he is going to catch these at the airports. That is why I am filing a bill as soon as possible to severely restrict the

publication of detailed, technical schematics for these deadly 3D-printed firearms. We already impose strict restrictions on posting bomb instructions online. If you can't post bomb instructions, why in the world should you be able to post instructions on how to manufacture that?

So this Senator from Florida is here urging the Trump administration to suspend that settlement immediately. Our colleagues are going to fight tooth and nail to prevent these blueprints from getting published, but the power to stop the blueprints before August 1 rests squarely with the Trump administration.

I never thought I would have to come to the Senate floor to make a speech like this, but this is no-fooling time, and the clock is ticking. This is July 25, and the deadline for when those prints will go up on the internet is August 1.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

SUPPORTING FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, first, I want to thank Senator COLLINS for her generosity on time. I know we are trying to schedule a vote, and I am appreciative of that.

I am joined on the floor by Senator CARDIN, one of the best advocates for people in this body and especially for Federal workers, who have contributed so much, and we will talk about that. Senator HIRONO, from Hawaii, is also joining us. Senator VAN HOLLEN, Senator MURRAY, Senator KAINE, and Senator CORTEZ MASTO will join us a little later in a different venue, and Senators TESTER and WARNER spoke earlier today.

We stand here on behalf of dedicated public servants who get up every day to work for the American taxpayers. They are men and women who support our Armed Forces and support our veterans. They make sure that Social Security checks go out and Medicare is taking care of seniors. They ensure that our food, medicines, and drinking water are safe. They protect our national security. They work in institutions like the NIH, the CDC, and NIOSH, or the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, in Cincinnati. They are in community-based outpatient clinics. They are in VA centers. They are in Social Security offices in most of our States.

These are American workers who have dedicated their lives to service. They serve Republicans and Democrats. They serve Commanders in Chief, regardless of party. Many of these workers are in Washington, but millions more are in the 50 States.

We have 52,000 Federal workers in Ohio contributing to our State and local communities. Nearly one-third of those workers are veterans. The Federal Government makes special allowances to hire veterans, especially at hospitals in Chillicothe, Dayton, Cincinnati, Columbus, and Wade Park in Cleveland, and at the community-based outpatient clinics in places like Mansfield, Springfield, Zanesville, Akron, and Parma.

These are workers doing their jobs on behalf of the American people, but, shamefully, these are public servants under attack from this administration—as if Federal workers are not Americans, as if Federal workers are not people, as if Federal workers are just a cost to be minimized. The administration has issued Executive order after Executive order to restrict those workers' freedoms to advocate for themselves and for taxpayers in the workplace.

They made it easier for short-term political appointees to retaliate against nonpartisan career public servants. Think about that. This President has brought in lots of very ideologically charged political appointees who have retaliated against nonpartisan career public service—people who make sure that Social Security checks go out, who serve veterans, who make sure we do public health the way we should as a nation.

These decisions create an atmosphere where whistleblowers who report fraud fear being punished and fear being fired for shining a light on abuse. In the past, workers have had flexibility to use their time to benefit taxpayers, but these Executive orders severely limit workers' ability to discuss problems at the workplace, including ways of improving efficiency in the workplace and including inefficiencies and waste.

This is all part of a larger attack on workers in this country, a larger attack on the labor movement. We know that the White House, more and more, is looking like a retreat for corporate executives of some of the largest companies in the country who center their attacks on workers and the labor movement.

Corporate special interests have spent decades stripping workers of their freedom to organize for fair wages and benefits they have earned.

My colleagues talk about freedom all the time. How about the freedom to band together and speak as one stronger voice in the workplace to get better treatment, better wages, and better benefits?

Make no mistake. An attack on public service unions is an attack on all unions, and an attack on unions is an attack on all workers—and I mean all workers. Whether you punch a timesheet or swipe a badge, whether you make a salary or earn tips, whether you are on a payroll or whether you are a contract worker, whether you are a temporary worker, working behind a desk, on a factory floor, or behind a restaurant counter, the fact is that all workers across this country are feeling the squeeze, and hard work doesn't pay off.

For decades now, we have seen what happens when workers have no power in the workplace. Corporations view American workers as a cost to be minimized instead of as a valuable asset to invest in. We know that workers are more productive than ever. We know that corporations are making more profit than ever. We know that executive compensation has exploded through the roof, but we know that workers' wages have stagnated and workers' benefits have declined. We know that. The last thing we should be doing is spreading that mindset—those attacks on workers—to attacks on public servants.

Workers power our economy. They make the government work for taxpayers. We need to stand up for the American workers—whether it is a Federal worker, a restaurant private sector worker, somebody working at NASA Glenn Research Center in Cleveland, somebody waiting tables in Dayton, or somebody working in an office in Mansfield—not make it harder for them to do their jobs.

I thank my colleagues for standing with these women and men who do tough jobs on behalf of the American people.

I yield the floor for Senator CARDIN from Maryland.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, first, let me thank Senator BROWN for his extraordinary leadership on behalf of not just the Federal workers but on behalf of all Americans. Our Federal workers are the frontline of public service. I applaud their work. Our Federal workforce is the best national public workforce in the world. They do their work more professionally.

They are civil servants, which means that they are immune from the politics, favoritism, or patronage, and they do their work with great pride. I am very proud of the Federal workforce in my State of Maryland. There are many reasons I am proud, along with Senator VAN HOLLEN, to represent the State of Maryland, but one of the reasons is that we proudly represent almost 136,000 Federal workers who live in the State of Maryland. They do incredible work.

They are the doctors at NIH, who are discovering how to deal with the diseases of the world and how to make us healthier and safer. They are the scientists at Goddard Space Flight Center, who are discovering the mysteries of space and how we can use that not only to discover what is happening in space but also to use that technology here at home. They are the professionals at the Social Security Administration, who are helping our seniors get the benefits they so much depend upon. They are the professionals at the FBI, who are keeping us safe.

I can go through all of the different Federal agencies. There is the FDA, which deals with food safety and drug safety, and the work being done at EPA for cleaner air and cleaner water. These are the frontlines that provide the services to the people of our Nation. They do it at great sacrifice. It is not easy, as we all know, to serve in the public sector today.

There has been an all-out assault by the Trump administration on our Federal workforce. They are not only hurting our Federal workforce, but they are hurting our country. The pay freezes, the hiring freezes, and the proposed cuts to benefits say to those who want to serve their Nation in public service: Maybe this is not the right field for you.

We are seeing a hollowing out of our Federal workforce. It is becoming older. Let me point out that when you look at the Federal workforce in Maryland, it looks like the demographics of the State of Maryland. That is not true for all of our employers. The gender is basically 50–50. Over 40 percent of the workforce are minority.

As Senator BROWN pointed out, a much larger percentage of veterans are in our Federal workforce than in the general workforce, and, yes, they are providing services to our veterans, and it is public service also. So it is a representative group.

We are finding that the President's policy is one of the most anti-government policies that we have ever seen from any President. I went through some of the specifics that concern us; that is, the fact that our Federal workforce has already contributed greatly to the deficit in tens of billions of dollars they have been asked to contribute. Even though they did not cause the deficit, they have contributed to it.

They have had to go through sequestration and government shutdowns, with the uncertainty that comes with those issues. Just recently, in May, there were the President's Executive orders, and they need to be brought out. They are absolutely outrageous—three Executive orders. There was a court hearing today that was held, and I am hopeful the courts will intervene. They deal with so-called official time, collective bargaining rights, and the rights of our employees to some form of due process, all of which are jeopardized.

As I said earlier to some of our Federal workers, this is not just about trying to bust unions. This is about busting democracy. I say that because the civil service laws were passed for a reason. We don't want to see cronyism and corruption with patronage in our Federal workforce. That is why we have a civil service law. In order for the employees to be protected, they have the voluntary right to join together in a union. Those unions don't have all the full rights you would normally have in private sector employment, but they do have rights. There are collective bargaining agreements.

Part of their responsibility, for example, is that their representatives represent all of the employees, not just those who choose to join the unions. That is why on official time, they can take care of their responsibilities as it relates to the entire workforce, but they are prohibited, as always, to use official time for union activities.

What does President Trump do in his Executive order? He tries to restrict the official time for official work. He tries to restrict the ability for Federal workers to join unions. He tries to make it more difficult to protect the rights of the workers. It not only violates collective bargaining agreements, but it violates Federal law. We need to speak out against that type of action.

I want to mention one other point, if I may. The administrative law judges are one of our frontline defenses against abuses in our agencies, where you can get an independent review of findings. One of the major concerns that we see coming up is that there is a politicizing of the ALJ judges by this administration, in that what they are attempting to do is to influence the selection of ALJ judges by the agency and that the removal can be done for political reasons. This violates the basic protections that we have in our system.

Our Federal workforce is the frontline of public service in this country. All of us are very proud of what we do as elected officials, but the frontline is really the Federal workforce out there doing the public work. As I said earlier, they are the best in the world at providing governmental services. They deserve our thanks and support, not the type of action that has been suggested by the Trump administration.

I am proud to stand with my colleagues on the floor today to say thank you to our Federal workforce. We are going to stand with them to make sure they are treated fairly by the Federal Government.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CRUZ). The Senator from Hawaii.

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, I thank Senator BROWN for his continued leadership in the fight to protect our Federal workforce and for organizing this time for us to speak on such an important issue.

Over the past year and a half, Donald Trump and his administration have launched a concerted attack on Federal workers and the unions that fight on their behalf. There appear to be no lengths to which Donald Trump and the anti-union, moneyed interests who support him will not go to attack and try to eviscerate protections for working people.

Here are some examples. In one of his first acts in office, Donald Trump instituted an across-the-board Federal hiring freeze that impacted the work of critical agencies such as the Veterans Administration, the State Department, and the Department of Defense.

Then the President appointed Neil Gorsuch to join the anti-worker majority on the Supreme Court. This decision paid off when Justice Gorsuch provided the decisive vote intended to gut public sector unions in Janus v. AFSCME.

As a side note, Mark Janus—the public employee who served as the front man for the Koch brothers in the landmark Janus case—has left his job with the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services and now works for the Koch brothers. Is that a coincidence? I think not.

The administration has demoted or reassigned dozens of senior agency leaders tasked with serving our veterans and protecting our environment.

The President has left thousands of critical positions across the government unfilled. He has presented a legislative program as well. The President's fiscal year 2019 budget proposes to freeze Federal workers' wages, slash their benefits, and undermine their rights in the workplace.

In late May, as mentioned, the President issued three Executive orders that weaken longstanding—longstanding—and hard-won rights and protections for our Federal workers. Each of these actions is part of a focused radical—radical—effort to shrink the Federal Government and limit its ability to help hundreds of millions of people across our country.

Donald Trump and the Republican Party obviously do not recognize the service and commitment of our more than 2 million Federal workers, but in Hawaii, and, indeed, across the Nation, we see the impact of their hard work every single day.

In Hawaii, Federal workers provide critical healthcare for the tens of thousands of veterans living in our State. Federal workers service and repair our naval fleet at Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard. Federal workers stand watch at the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center. Hundreds of Federal employees across 17 agencies are even now helping our Hawaii Island community respond to and recover from the impact of the ongoing volcanic activity at Kilauea on the Big Island.

In my visits to the Hawaii County Emergency Operations Center in Hilo and the Disaster Recovery Center in Keaau, and to affected communities across Puna, I have seen the impact these workers are having firsthand.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency is coordinating the overall response and recovery with Federal, State, and county agencies. The U.S. Geological Survey scientific experts are monitoring seismic activities and providing realtime updates to affected residents. The affected residents are in the thousands. The Department of the Interior has provided technical assistance to protect Hawaii Island's natural and cultural resources. The Environmental Protection Agency has deployed experts to monitor air quality and provide timely alerts to county residents. The Department of Agriculture and the Small Business Administration are identifying resources and

assisting affected farmers and small business owners. The U.S. Coast Guard is monitoring and patrolling areas where lava is flowing into the ocean and enforcing safe perimeters for fishing and recreational activity.

These dedicated public servants have been working around the clock for months to support the Puna community. These workers deserve our respect, appreciation, and unwavering support for their service. They certainly don't deserve the contempt and animosity that Donald Trump and his administration have directed at them.

The collective weight of this administration's anti-worker agenda is taking a toll on our Federal workforce, needless to say, and the Executive orders President Trump issued in May are already making things worse by undermining workers' rights to fair representation in the workplace.

The President's first order directs agencies to reopen existing—these are existing already—bargaining agreements with the intent of rushing through one-size-fits-all replacement agreements without an opportunity for labor to provide input. The President's second order severely restricts the ability of unions to protect workers from managerial retaliation, workplace discrimination, and sexual harassment. The President's third order undermines traditional civil service protections intended to shield public servants from political retribution by making firing workers easier.

Collectively, these Executive orders sabotage the hard-fought gains Federal workers have achieved through decades of organizing and collective bargaining at agencies throughout the Federal Government. This sabotage has a purpose: to make life so miserable for our Federal workforce that they either quit their jobs or retire.

The long-term damage that gutting our Federal workforce would cause to our Nation, economy, and communities is serious. That is because, as Teddy Roosevelt recognized when he pushed for the first major civil service reform, a quality, professional civil service is a bulwark against corruption and cronyism.

Public servants uphold the law and promote the public interests. That includes holding big corporations accountable when they cheat consumers and pollute our environment.

Is this why Donald Trump and his moneyed, anti-union allies have such a fear of and disdain for our Federal workers—because they would rather be left unfettered by any government or regulatory oversight? Is that what is going on? How else can we explain the President's focus and vicious attacks on Federal employees, which ignore the work they do to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the people of our country every single day?

These are not normal times. It is not normal for the President and his allies to go after our Federal employees in this way. It is not normal, and it is up to each of us to resist this administration's coordinated attack on our Federal workforce and the institutions that represent and protect them.

I call on all of my colleagues to join me in this fight. I just do not understand what it is that motivates the President and his moneyed allies to try and tear apart the very workforce in our country that protects our health, safety, and welfare. I just don't get it.

I yield the floor.

AMENDMENTS NOS. 3553 AND 3543 TO AMENDMENT NO. 3399

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the following amendments be called up and reported by number: Senator MANCHIN's amendment No. 3553, Senator PAUL's amendment No. 3543. I further ask consent that at 5:45 p.m. today, the Senate vote in relation to the Manchin and Paul amendments in the order listed and that there be no second-degree amendments in order to the amendments prior to the votes. Finally, I ask that there be 10 minutes, equally divided in the usual form, between the two votes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the amendments by number en bloc.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Maine [Ms. COLLINS], for others, proposes amendments numbered 3553 and 3543 en bloc to amendment No. 3399.

The amendments are as follows:

AMENDMENT NO. 3553

(Purpose: To make an amount available for the Office of Terrorism and Financial Intelligence of the Department of the Treasury to investigate the illicit trade of synthetic opioids originating from the People's Republic of China)

On page 145, line 16, strike ''2020.'' and insert ''2020: *Provided further*, That of the amount appropriated under this heading, not less than $1,000,000 shall be used to support and augment new and ongoing investigations into the illicit trade of synthetic opioids, particularly fentanyl and its analogues, originating from the People's Republic of China: *Provided further*, That not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Treasury, in coordination with the Administrator of the Drug Enforcement Administration and the heads of other Federal agencies, as appropriate, shall submit a comprehensive report (which shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may include a classified annex) summarizing efforts by actors in the People's Republic of China to subvert United States laws and to supply illicit synthetic opioids to persons in the United States, including up-to-date estimates of the scale of illicit synthetic opioids flows from the People's Republic of China, to the Committee on Appropriations, the Committee on Homeland Security, and the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Appropriations, the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, and the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate.''.

AMENDMENT NO. 3543

(Purpose: To reduce the amounts appropriated to comply with the spending limits under the Budget Control Act of 2011)

On page 3, after line 2, add the following:

SEC. 4. REDUCTION TO COMPLY WITH BCA CAPS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the ''Restoring Fiscal Responsibility by Returning to the BCA Caps Act''.

(b) REDUCTION.—Each amount provided under division A, B, C, or D of this Act is reduced by 11.39 percent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

SUPPORTING FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I come to the floor today with my colleagues in defense of the millions of Federal workers around the country who have been targeted by President Trump and his administration, including tens of thousands of workers in my home State of Washington.

Federal workers go to work every day, performing jobs that often go unnoticed or unappreciated. They ensure that our grandparents receive Social Security and Medicare benefits. They investigate claims of unsafe working conditions or employers not paying workers what they are owed. Federal workers are the nurses and the doctors who take care of our veterans at VA hospitals and facilities. They are our first responders when natural disasters devastate communities, including thousands of men and women on the frontlines of the wildfires that today are ravaging the West. They help protect our drinking water and clean air as scientists at the Environmental Protection Agency. They educate us about our Nation's landmarks at our national parks, and so much more. They work tirelessly every day to make sure our lives are a little bit better.

While it is the responsibility of government to ensure that every worker is able to go to work without putting their health or safety at risk, earn a living wage to support their families, and retire with dignity, the Federal Government has even more direct responsibility for its own workers and should be a model for treating workers fairly and protecting their rights.

Unfortunately, since day one, President Trump has fought to roll back those worker protections and undermine their rights. Now he has taken a number of steps targeting Federal workers' right to join together and collectively bargain for better working conditions.

Through a series of Executive orders, President Trump has made it harder for workers to organize, for their unions to effectively represent them when they have a dispute with management, and for Federal agencies to bargain collectively with their employees in good faith. These Executive orders target protections that were painstakingly negotiated and agreed to by both parties to make sure workers who are paid with our taxpayer dollars are treated fairly and that workplace disputes in the Federal Government are resolved efficiently and equitably.

Again, the Federal Government should be a model for employers, demonstrating how to treat their workers fairly and with respect. By treating

these Federal workers poorly, President Trump is sending a clear signal that this administration doesn't care about workers and will do nothing to intervene when corporate management mistreats their workers.

These series of Executive orders are not the only way President Trump is making it harder for working families to succeed in this country. Since day one, President Trump has undermined worker protections, including the right to overtime pay and collective bargaining, and made it harder for working families to become economically secure.

Now he has nominated another anti-worker, anti-union judge to our Supreme Court. Last month's Supreme Court decision in Janus made it clear that working families have to have a fair voice in the highest Court in the land.

Judge Kavanaugh's record proves he wouldn't be a fair voice for working families. Throughout his long career, Judge Kavanaugh has sided with corporate special interests at the expense of their workers and rights. He has argued against health and safety standards for workers—a view not shared by other members of the circuit court. He has argued against workers' rights to be paid fairly for the work they do and repeatedly has been hostile toward workers' rights to organize and join a union and speak up together for better wages and working conditions.

Judge Kavanaugh has used his power as a Federal judge to try to create loopholes for corporations to avoid negotiating with unions and has even argued that some immigrant workers don't have a right to organize or collectively bargain.

Judge Kavanaugh's record is not one of someone who will be balanced and who will listen to each case without bias. It is the record of someone who has consistently sided with corporations and management, and I fear he will do the same on our Nation's highest Court. I fear that Judge Kavanaugh's pro-corporate, anti-worker record is exactly why President Trump and Republicans in Congress are pushing so hard to get him on the Supreme Court.

I am proud to join my colleagues on the floor today to stand for our Federal workers and for their families.

I urge every worker who believes that our economy should work for them, not just for corporations and special interests, to make their voice heard. Call, write, and text your Senators, and urge them to oppose this nomination. Our government, our economy, and our country are strongest when workers are able to make their voices heard and are part of this process.

I hope my colleagues across the aisle who care about the economic security of our working families and the middle class will join us in pushing back against President Trump's harmful Executive orders and opposing this anti-worker Supreme Court nominee.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President, I also rise to speak about our Federal workforce.

In Virginia, there are about 170,000 Virginians who are Federal employees. The density of Federal employees in our State is significant. I follow the comments of my colleague from Washington. They do all kinds of very important work. I think about the nurses at the Wounded Warrior hospital at Fort Belvoir, who are DOD civilian Federal employees. I think about folks who work in the Appalachian Regional Commission trying to help the Appalachian part of our State find economic strategies to move ahead. And there are so many others. I rise on their behalf to speak with significant concern about what the administration is doing.

The Executive orders the President issued are part of a concerted effort to go after Federal employees, the majority of whom are hard-working individuals driven by the pursuit of public service.

Under this administration, before these Executive orders, the workforce had already been subject to hiring freezes, proposed pay freezes, and cuts in their retirement. These additional Executive orders severely restrict or eliminate longstanding workplace rights and perpetuate less-than-optimal working conditions. They are being hastily implemented by managers across executive branch agencies, many of whom are political appointees who don't have history or expertise in working with particular agencies. Existing collective bargaining agreements are being torn up or ignored without good-faith negotiations.

Let me talk about the implications for hundreds of thousands of Federal employees.

First, under the Executive order of the administration—and this may be the one I am most concerned about—it will be easier to fire employees without due process, which leaves employees open to retaliation for personal or political reasons.

We have seen not just the administration but the President himself fire notable Federal employees—the FBI Director, for example, and others—and call others into question and challenge them publicly, in public settings, for just doing their jobs. What most incites the President to try to attack these Federal employees is if they take any position that he views as disloyal to him. If they are doing an investigation into ethical violations or other improprieties, then he goes after them and even fires them.

Leaving employees open to being fired because the political leader doesn't think they are loyal enough is not the system we should have or allow. Making it easier to fire employees without due process—we have seen how the President can use these authorities, and I don't think we want to expand them.

The orders also severely eliminate collective bargaining between agencies and employees. These agreements are relied on to ensure that employees have fair representation in the workplace, and now they are often being replaced with take-it-or-leave-it guidelines crafted by political appointees who may not understand an agency's mission.

I will conclude and tell you what I am hearing from Virginia. We have already heard firsthand accounts just since May 25 from Virginia and other agencies about the effect of these Executive orders.

We have a Social Security Administration office in Falls Church. The Social Security Administration is a pretty important agency because people who rely on Social Security deeply need it. The agency deals with all kinds of issues, from the processing of Social Security checks to determinations about Social Security disability benefits.

At the SSA office in Falls Church, VA, the agency notified union representatives that they are not allowed to use office space, computers, or email—not even on personal devices or personal time—to discuss personnel matters with employees. What kind of manager of employees would prohibit discussion of employment matters in the workplace or even on personal time or personal devices? What that means is that union officials, who are subject to valid and protected collective bargaining agreements, have to do all their representational work at home in order to honor their members' rights, which are guaranteed by law to be represented.

The HHS headquarters, where many Virginians are employed, is using Executive orders to say that they don't need to bargain with unions over grievance procedures, transit subsidies, and telework. At the HHS, the agency recently sat down at the table for a discussion but then only allowed the discussion to occur for a few hours before unilaterally getting up, walking out, and declaring that it was over.

We should have strategies and policies that encourage cooperation between management and employees, not pit them against one another, as this administration is currently doing.

With that, Mr. President, I speak on behalf of all of these good people in Virginia, particularly to raise the concern about weakening protections so employees can get fired without any kind of due process. I think that leaves them open to retaliation, firing for political reasons—other than the merits of the work—and I rise to speak against it.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Thank you, Mr. President.

I want to join my colleague from Virginia, Senator KAINE, and others who

have come to this floor to talk about the important work that is done every day on behalf of the country by our Federal civil servants. As my colleagues have said, these are people who do the work for the American people in Maryland, Virginia, and States in every part of this country. They are the nurses and doctors taking care of our veterans at veterans hospitals. They are the folks in our intelligence community who are the eyes and ears for our country, detecting foreign threats so that we can respond to them in time. They are the people at the Social Security offices, whether in Virginia or the Social Security Administration in Maryland or others around the country, who are making sure that people who put in a full day's work and had a long career can get the Social Security support they earned. They are the people at places like the National Institutes of Health who are working every day to discover cures and treatments for diseases that impact every American family.

Unfortunately, rather than treating these Federal civil servants with the dignity and respect they deserve, the administration is taking multiple steps to harm the ability of these men and women to do their job for the American people. It is especially ironic in an administration where we have seen people appointed to heads of Cabinet agencies who have been documented to have wasted lots of taxpayer dollars and abused the public trust—an administration that puts those people in the highest offices at the same time they are undermining the work of Federal employees who go to work every day.

I am pleased to join my colleagues today to stand up for these Federal employees. I wish we didn't have to be here, but we have to be here because the Trump administration issued a series of Executive orders just a few months ago that go after Federal civil servants, just as we have seen this administration attack workers' rights in the private sector across the country.

The first Executive order that was issued short-circuits the collective bargaining process. It imposes a new, rigid process under which Federal agencies are allowed to impose workplace policies without good-faith negotiations. Good-faith negotiations are required now, and this would undermine that requirement.

The second order imposes arbitrary limits on the time that Federal employees in a union can carry out their duties to represent their fellow workers. No single case is the same, and Federal employee unions are required not only to represent the people who sign up as members of the unions but all Federal workers. So to arbitrarily dictate the amount of time necessary to protect the rights of a Federal employee is simply wrong and will undermine the justice within the system.

The third Executive order, which is especially egregious, as my colleague from Virginia just said, is the one that eliminates the opportunity for due process before someone is fired. That opens the door to cronyism in our system—to favoritism and cronyism.

That is why 45 Senators sent a letter to the President a little while back calling upon him to rescind these orders and take other actions.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that that letter be printed in the RECORD.

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

U.S. SENATE,
Washington, DC, June 19, 2018.

President DONALD TRUMP,
The White House,
Washington, DC.

DEAR PRESIDENT TRUMP: We write to express our serious concerns about recent actions to undermine the foundations of our civil service system. We respectfully request that you reconsider and rescind Executive Orders 13836, 13837, and 13839, which undermine the lawful rights and protections afforded to federal employees. At a minimum, we hope you will ensure that managers at federal agencies do not use these executive orders inappropriately to circumvent existing collective bargaining agreements between agencies and federal workers.

The approximately two million men and women in the federal civil service are dedicated and hardworking professionals. They safeguard our national security and food safety, perform lifesaving medical procedures, deliver Social Security and veterans' benefits, and fulfill countless other responsibilities on behalf of our citizens.

The recent executive orders undermine the decades-old rights of federal employees to fair representation in the workplace. These orders significantly reduce the extent to which federal agencies will negotiate collective bargaining agreements with their workforce. Instead, federal agencies or outside panels will impose workplace policies without good faith negotiation.

Imposing arbitrary limits on the time that federal employees can carry out statutory duties to represent fellow employees—known as official time—makes it harder to resolve workplace disputes and root out waste, fraud, and abuse. The law already requires federal agencies and unions to negotiate agreements that require official time to be "reasonable, necessary, and in the public interest" (5 U.S.C. §7131) and official time has helped prevent cover-ups of disease outbreaks, address racial harassment, and expedite benefits for veterans.

We support improving the performance of the federal workforce, but these executive orders will do the opposite. These executive orders discourage federal agencies from using their discretion to create reasonable plans for federal employees to improve their performance if they are at risk of demotion or termination. Firing employees without due process undermines the merit-based civil service system, and opens the door for managers to satisfy their own personal vendettas or political agendas.

Some federal agencies already appear to be abrogating existing collective bargaining agreements by citing these executive orders. We ask that you direct agency and department heads to cease and desist from doing so.

It is time to stop the attacks on our federal workers. These are also attacks on our veterans, who make up roughly one-third of the federal civilian workforce. We need to keep politics out of the civil service, and we urge you to reconsider these executive orders.

Sincerely,

Chris Van Hollen, Tim Kaine, Sherrod Brown, Benjamin L. Cardin, Mazie K. Hirono, Brian Schatz, Mark R. Warner, Richard Blumenthal, Kirsten Gillibrand, Jeanne Shaheen, Thomas R. Carper, Patty Murray, Edward J. Markey, Tammy Duckworth, Maria Cantwell, Elizabeth Warren, Margaret Wood Hassan, Kamala D. Harris, Sheldon Whitehouse, Gary C. Peters, Angus S. King, Jr., Bernard Sanders, Tammy Baldwin, Charles E. Schumer, Richard J. Durbin, Jack Reed, Cory A. Booker, Tina Smith, Christopher A. Coons, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Michael F. Bennet, Robert Menendez, Tom Udall, Jeffrey A. Merkley, Joe Donnelly, Ron Wyden, Catherine Cortez Masto, Dianne Feinstein, Doug Jones, Bill Nelson, Debbie Stabenow, Martin Heinrich, Patrick J. Leahy, Amy Klobuchar, Christopher S. Murphy, U.S. Senators.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, Federal law requires that agencies bargain in good faith with their workers. That makes for a better workplace, and that makes for better results for the American people. The President cannot just repeal that law by Executive order. I hope the courts will strike down these Executive orders as being an abuse of process and violating the law.

With that, Mr. President, we got some good news on that front today. Even before the President's Executive orders were in place, Secretary DeVos over at the Department of Education had already launched her attack on workers' rights. That attack she launched was reviewed by the Federal Labor Relations Authority, and, as reported today in the New York Times—the headline states: "Education Dept. Illegally Curbed Workers' Union Protections, Mediators Suggest."

What we have seen is that this pattern the Trump administration has tried to unilaterally put in place is getting some pushback from the Labor Relations Authority.

As reported in the article—it says that "the decisions could have broad implications because the Education Department's actions mirror Trump administration efforts throughout the Federal Government." They mention the Social Security Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs, and others.

I hope the courts will follow the lead of the mediators that found President Trump's Executive orders to be illegal because, as has been reported and as the Senator from Virginia just mentioned with respect to Social Security in his State, we are also seeing efforts at the Social Security Administration in Baltimore to undermine the rights of Federal employees.

The leadership at SSA in Baltimore has already slashed official time for union members to represent fellow employees. They plan to evict the unions from their office space at the Social Security Administration headquarters as early as next week. The result will

be that Social Security Administration workers will not have their voices heard on issues important to their workplace. The Social Security Administration had previously agreed to provide a certain amount of official time and office space to its workers. Now they are ripping apart those agreements.

Today, Senator CARDIN and I sent letters to President Trump's nominees for the Social Security Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner to ask for their assurances that Federal workers will be treated more fairly under their watch if the Senate confirms those nominations. We have called upon the Social Security Administration's current leadership to honor the existing collective bargaining agreements and negotiate in good faith with the unions if they need to revise those agreements.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the letters Senator CARDIN and I sent to the nominees.

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

U.S. SENATE,
Washington, DC, July 25, 2018.

NANCY A. BERRYHILL,
Acting Commissioner,
Social Security Administration, Baltimore, MD.
RALPH A. PATINELLA,
Associate Commissioner, Labor-Management and Employee Relations, Social Security Administration, Baltimore, MD.

DEAR MS. BERRYHILL AND MR. PATINELLA: We are deeply concerned about the recent actions you have taken with regard to the workforce of the Social Security Administration (SSA) in your respective roles as the Acting Commissioner and the official designated to implement Executive Order 13837 at SSA. Social Security is the bedrock of economic security for American families, providing retirement benefits, disability insurance, and life insurance for surviving spouses and dependents. The federal employees at SSA are responsible for providing the fairness and efficiency that Americans expect and deserve from Social Security.

On June 19, 2018, we signed a letter joined by 45 Senators to urge President Trump to rescind three Executive Orders regarding the federal workforce, and we have attached that letter for your reference. We remain deeply concerned about how these orders undermine lawful civil service protections for federal employees throughout the government. Since signing that letter, it has come to our attention that SSA leadership has demonstrated particular hostility towards its workforce in the way it is implementing the Executive Orders.

President Trump's Executive Orders regarding the federal workforce currently face serious legal challenges, but SSA leadership has exceeded even the dubious authority provided by these orders. Executive Order 13837 makes clear that, ''Nothing in this order shall abrogate any collective bargaining agreement in effect on the date of this order.'' It is our understanding that some workers at SSA are covered by collective bargaining agreements that have not expired, and that even expired agreements provide for the continuation of key provisions until a new agreement is reached.

SSA leadership has abrogated its collective bargaining agreements by slashing the official time available to unions to fulfill their statutory duties for SSA workers. SSA leadership has further abrogated these agreements by refusing to provide agreed-upon reimbursement for union members to travel for arbitrations and negotiations—even cancelling existing reservations—and SSA leadership has moved to evict unions from office space that SSA agreed to provide in collective bargaining.

We understand that SSA cannot disregard these executive orders, but we do not understand why SSA is implementing these orders with more hostility towards its workforce than the executive orders require (and possibly even more hostility than they permit). Please explain to us what legal or regulatory barriers prevent SSA from honoring its existing collective bargaining agreements while negotiating new agreements in good faith with the unions.

We are also concerned about protecting the independence of Administrative Law Judges (ALJs), in light of President Trump's more recent Executive Order removing these positions from the competitive civil service. The integrity of Social Security depends on a merit-based process for selecting and managing ALJs that is free of political influence. We urge you to continue to use a merit-based process for hiring and managing ALJs that is not influenced by politics or pressure from elsewhere in the Executive Branch.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,

CHRIS VAN HOLLEN,
United States Senator.
BENJAMIN L. CARDIN,
U.S. Senator.

U.S. SENATE,
Washington, DC, July 25, 2018.

ANDREW M. SAUL,
Social Security Administration,
Baltimore, MD.

DEAR MR. SAUL: The Senate is currently considering your nomination to be Commissioner of Social Security. Social Security is the bedrock of economic security for American families, providing retirement benefits, disability insurance, and life insurance for surviving spouses and dependents. The federal employees at the Social Security Administration (SSA) are responsible for providing the fairness and efficiency that Americans expect and deserve from Social Security, which is why we strongly oppose recent actions by SSA leadership to undermine SSA's workforce. We are writing to ask for your assurance that if the Senate confirms your nomination, that SSA will treat its workers and their unions more fairly under your leadership.

On June 19, 2018, we signed a letter joined by 45 Senators to urge President Trump to rescind three Executive Orders regarding the federal workforce, and we have attached that letter for your reference. We remain deeply concerned about how these orders undermine lawful civil service protections for federal employees throughout the government. Since signing that letter, it has come to our attention that SSA leadership has demonstrated particular hostility towards its workforce in the way it is implementing the Executive Orders.

We are also concerned about protecting the independence of Administrative Law Judges (ALJs), in light of President Trump's more recent Executive Order removing these positions from the competitive civil service. The integrity of Social Security depends on a merit-based process for selecting and managing ALJs that is free of political influence.

President Trump's Executive Orders regarding the federal workforce currently face serious legal challenges, but SSA leadership has exceeded even the dubious authority provided by these orders. The Executive Order on official time provided to unions makes clear that, ''Nothing in this order shall abrogate any collective bargaining agreement in effect on the date of this order.'' It is our understanding that some workers at SSA are covered by collective bargaining agreements that have not expired, and that even expired agreements provide for the continuation of key provisions until a new agreement is reached.

SSA leadership has abrogated its collective bargaining agreements by slashing the official time available to unions to fulfill their statutory duties for SSA workers. SSA leadership has further abrogated these agreements by refusing to provide agreed-upon reimbursement for union members to travel for arbitrations and negotiations—even cancelling existing reservations—and SSA leadership has moved to evict unions from office space that SSA agreed to provide in collective bargaining.

Federal law requires agencies to bargain in good faith with the unions representing their workforce—an obligation that President Trump cannot overturn by Executive Order (5 U.S.C. 7114). If confirmed, we expect you to follow the law. Therefore, as the Senate considers your nomination, we request the following assurances from you regarding how SSA will function under your leadership:

1. SSA will honor its collective bargaining agreements by rescinding the unilateral changes that SSA has already made, and will not make further unilateral changes.
2. SSA will honor the terms of expired collective bargaining agreements until reaching a new agreement, by rescinding unilateral changes and not making further unilateral changes.
3. If SSA and its workforce seek to negotiate a new collective bargaining agreement, that you will bargain in good faith with the unions representing SSA's workforce, and do everything in your power to reach an agreement without resorting to the Federal Service Impasses Panel to impose terms.
4. SSA will continue to use a merit-based process for hiring and managing ALJs that is not influenced by politics or pressure from elsewhere in the Executive Branch.

Additionally, please describe the formal or informal role you have played, if any, regarding the implementation of these executive orders at SSA.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,

CHRIS VAN HOLLEN,
U.S. Senator.
BENJAMIN L. CARDIN,
U.S. Senator.

U.S. SENATE,
Washington, DC, July 25, 2018.

DAVID FABIAN BLACK,
Social Security Administration,
Baltimore, MD.

DEAR MR. BLACK: The Senate is currently considering your nomination to be Deputy Commissioner of Social Security. Social Security is the bedrock of economic security for American families, providing retirement benefits, disability insurance, and life insurance for surviving spouses and dependents. The federal employees at the Social Security Administration (SSA) are responsible for providing the fairness and efficiency that Americans expect and deserve from Social Security, which is why we strongly oppose recent actions by SSA leadership to undermine SSA's workforce. We are writing to ask for your assurance that if the Senate confirms your nomination, that SSA will treat its workers and their unions more fairly under your leadership.

On June 19, 2018, we signed a letter joined by 45 Senators to urge President Trump to

rescind three Executive Orders regarding the federal workforce, and we have attached that letter for your reference. We remain deeply concerned about how these orders undermine lawful civil service protections for federal employees throughout the government. Since signing that letter, it has come to our attention that SSA leadership has demonstrated particular hostility towards its workforce in the way it is implementing the Executive Orders.

We are also concerned about protecting the independence of Administrative Law Judges (ALJs), in light of President Trump's more recent Executive Order removing these positions from the competitive civil service. The integrity of Social Security depends on a merit-based process for selecting and managing ALJs that is free of political influence.

President Trump's Executive Orders regarding the federal workforce currently face serious legal challenges, but SSA leadership has exceeded even the dubious authority provided by these orders. The Executive Order on official time provided to unions makes clear that, ''Nothing in this order shall abrogate any collective bargaining agreement in effect on the date of this order.'' It is our understanding that some workers at SSA are covered by collective bargaining agreements that have not expired, and that even expired agreements provide for the continuation of key provisions until a new agreement is reached.

SSA leadership has abrogated its collective bargaining agreements by slashing the official time available to unions to fulfill their statutory duties for SSA workers. SSA leadership has further abrogated these agreements by refusing to provide agreed-upon reimbursement for union members to travel for arbitrations and negotiations—even cancelling existing reservations—and SSA leadership has moved to evict unions from office space that SSA agreed to provide in collective bargaining.

Federal law requires agencies to bargain in good faith with the unions representing their workforce—an obligation that President Trump cannot overturn by Executive Order (5 U.S.C. 7114). If confirmed, we expect you to follow the law. Therefore, as the Senate considers your nomination, we request the following assurances from you regarding how SSA will function under your leadership:

1. SSA will honor its collective bargaining agreements by rescinding the unilateral changes that SSA has already made, and will not make further unilateral changes.

2. SSA will honor the terms of expired collective bargaining agreements until reaching a new agreement, by rescinding unilateral changes and not making further unilateral changes.

3. If SSA and its workforce seek to negotiate a new collective bargaining agreement, that you will bargain in good faith with the unions representing SSA's workforce, and do everything in your power to reach an agreement without resorting to the Federal Service Impasses Panel to impose terms.

4. SSA will continue to use a merit-based process for hiring and managing ALJs that is not influenced by politics or pressure from elsewhere in the Executive Branch.

Additionally, please describe the formal or informal role you have played, if any, regarding the implementation of these executive orders at SSA.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,

CHRIS VAN HOLLEN,
U.S. Senator.
BENJAMIN L. CARDIN,
U.S. Senator.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. In closing, as our colleagues have said, it is very important that we work together to protect the integrity of the Federal civil service. We have had a system over time where folks have been judged on their merits, not judged on their political favoritism or whether they were really good at saying exactly what their boss might want them to say. We want a civil service that values independent thinking and also values merit. By taking these actions, unfortunately, the Trump administration is undermining those efforts.

I hope the courts and I hope this body will join us in pushing back on these efforts by the Trump administration to undermine the integrity of our workforce and stand up for the hard-working Federal employees who are doing the work of this country every day.

I thank the Presiding Officer.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 2 minutes.

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

AMENDMENT NO. 3553

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, I rise today to offer an amendment that would appropriate funding for the Office of Terrorism and Financial Intelligence at the Department of Treasury to investigate the illicit trade of synthetic opiates originating from the People's Republic of China.

In 2016, synthetic opiates killed 19,413 Americans. That is more than heroin, which killed 15,469, and prescription pain pills, which killed 14,487.

Between 2013 and 2016, deaths involving synthetic opioids increased 625 percent. Most illicit synthetic opioids found in street drugs originate in China, with some shipped through Mexico, according to the Drug Enforcement Administration and United Nations narcotics monitors.

China produces over 90 percent of the world's fentanyl and exports a range of fentanyl products to the United States, including raw fentanyl, fentanyl precursors, fentanyl analogues, and fentanyl-laced counterfeit prescription drugs, like oxycodone and pill pressers.

Unlike previous epidemics where there are a few underground sources, many manufacturers of fentanyl and fentanyl precursors in China are legitimate companies legally producing and exporting legitimate drugs and chemicals to the United States. According to the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission, ''the primary obstacles to controlling fentanyl and NPS flows lie in China''—China itself.

Unfortunately, China has yet to meaningfully crack down on the illicit production and export of these drugs and their derivatives, despite the urgings of the President of the United States and all of our officials. Just 2 milligrams of fentanyl will kill most people.

This amendment is simple. It dedicates $1 million for the Office of Terrorism Financial Intelligence within the Department of Treasury to study the illicit trade of synthetic opioids coming into our country from China. This is consistent with the office's dual mission safeguarding the financial system against illicit use and combating rogue nations, terrorist facilitators, weapons of mass destruction, money launderers, drug kingpins, and other national security threats.

I urge the adoption of this much needed amendment.

Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question now occurs on agreeing to Manchin amendment No. 3553.

Mr. MANCHIN. 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 bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN).

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

The result was announced—yeas 99, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 170 Leg.]

YEAS—99

Alexander	Gardner	Murray
Baldwin	Gillibrand	Nelson
Barrasso	Graham	Paul
Bennet	Grassley	Perdue
Blumenthal	Harris	Peters
Blunt	Hassan	Portman
Booker	Hatch	Reed
Boozman	Heinrich	Risch
Brown	Heitkamp	Roberts
Burr	Heller	Rounds
Cantwell	Hirono	Rubio
Capito	Hoeven	Sanders
Cardin	Hyde-Smith	Sasse
Carper	Inhofe	Schatz
Casey	Isakson	Schumer
Cassidy	Johnson	Scott
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	Toomey
Donnelly	Markey	Udall
Duckworth	McCaskill	Van Hollen
Durbin	McConnell	Warner
Enzi	Menendez	Warren
Ernst	Merkley	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Moran	Wicker
Fischer	Murkowski	Wyden
Flake	Murphy	Young

NOT VOTING—1

McCain

The amendment (No. 3553) was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 3543

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is now 10 minutes of debate, equally divided, before the next vote.

The Senator from Kentucky.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, our national debt now exceeds $22 trillion. We are borrowing about $1 million a minute—actually, more than $1 million. Many authorities, including Admiral Mullen, have said the greatest threat to our national security is actually our debt.

The best way to do something about debt is to quit spending yourself further into a hole. We had spending caps. We adhered to them for a couple of years, and we actually were reducing the size of the deficit.

This year, though, the deficit will actually approach $1 trillion, and next year it may exceed $1 trillion. This amendment would put the spending caps back just on the spending we have before us in this bill.

I would advocate that if you are concerned about the debt, concerned about the deficit, and concerned about the strength of our country, that you vote to reinstitute the spending caps.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, I rise to urge my colleagues to oppose the Paul amendment.

While we all understand the desire to cut spending, the allocations in this package before us are based on caps that were set in a bipartisan budget agreement signed into law earlier this year. I think we cannot go back on our word and our agreement and expect bipartisan support.

We are working longer in the Appropriations Committee. I think we are doing well at this point. We have a long way to go, but if we start loading it up, the process will fall apart.

I urge you to vote no on the Paul amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I rise to urge my colleagues to oppose the amendment offered by the Senator from Kentucky.

Make no mistake about what this amendment would do. It is an 11.4-percent, across-the-board, indiscriminate, meat-ax cut in important programs, and as the chairman of the Appropriations Committee has pointed out, it would violate the bipartisan agreement we just reached earlier this year.

In addition, let me give you just one example of what the impact of Senator PAUL's amendment would be. If you look at the section 8 housing program, which helps some of our most vulnerable citizens, this amendment's passage would mean that 275,000 low-income seniors, disabled individuals, homeless veterans, and families with small children would lose their housing assistance and become at risk of homelessness. I don't think that is what we want.

Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I totally agree with both the Senator from Alabama and the Senator from Maine.

First, as they said, this violates the bipartisan agreement this body made and agreed with the President about the things we would do. Seventy-three thousand jobs would be cut from the Federal Highway Administration projects when we need them, including 800,000 low-income women, infants, and children no longer receiving WIC.

Mr. President, the Paul amendment proposes an 11.39-percent cut in each of the four bills under consideration. If adopted, it would undo the bipartisan budget deal the Senate passed and the President signed into law just a few months ago, and it would undo all of the work that has gone into crafting the bipartisan bills we are considering today.

More importantly, an 11.39-percent across-the-board cut would have devastating impacts on programs that are important to millions of Americans and to our economy.

I would mean a loss of over 73,000 jobs that would otherwise be created through Federal Highway Administration projects. An 11.3-percent cut to our National Parks would cause steep reductions in visitor services, law enforcement, and natural resource protection, all at a time when our National Parks are seeing a dramatic increase in visitors.

An 11.39-percent cut means 108,000 low-income families, the elderly, and disabled will lose their HUD rental assistance and be at risk of becoming homeless. It means 830,000 low-income women, infants, and children would no longer receive WIC assistance.

These are just a few examples. I urge a no vote on the Paul amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate on the amendment?

If not, the question is on agreeing to Paul amendment No. 3543.

Mr. PAUL. 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 senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN).

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

The result was announced—yeas 25, nays 74, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 171 Leg.]

YEAS—25

Barrasso	Enzi	Paul
Burr	Ernst	Perdue
Cassidy	Flake	Risch
Corker	Grassley	Sasse
Cornyn	Inhofe	Scott
Cotton	Johnson	Thune
Crapo	Kennedy	Toomey
Cruz	Lankford	
Daines	Lee	

NAYS—74

Alexander	Coons	Heitkamp
Baldwin	Cortez Masto	Heller
Bennet	Donnelly	Hirono
Blumenthal	Duckworth	Hoeven
Blunt	Durbin	Hyde-Smith
Booker	Feinstein	Isakson
Boozman	Fischer	Jones
Brown	Gardner	Kaine
Cantwell	Gillibrand	King
Capito	Graham	Klobuchar
Cardin	Harris	Leahy
Carper	Hassan	Manchin
Casey	Hatch	Markey
Collins	Heinrich	McCaskill
McConnell	Roberts	Tester
Menendez	Rounds	Tillis
Merkley	Rubio	Udall
Moran	Sanders	Van Hollen
Murkowski	Schatz	Warner
Murphy	Schumer	Warren
Murray	Shaheen	Whitehouse
Nelson	Shelby	Wicker
Peters	Smith	Wyden
Portman	Stabenow	Young
Reed	Sullivan	

NOT VOTING—1

McCain

The amendment (No. 3543) was rejected.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

REMEMBERING OFFICER JACOB CHESTNUT AND DETECTIVE JOHN GIBSON

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, there are a few things I wish to talk about today, but I would like to start by recognizing the service and bravery of our Capitol Police officers.

This week is the 20th anniversary of a shooting which occurred in the U.S. Capitol that claimed the lives of U.S. Capitol Police Officer Jacob Chestnut and Detective John Gibson when a gunman forced his way into this Capitol Building. They laid down their lives in defense of others and made the ultimate sacrifice defending the U.S. Capitol, this pillar of American democracy.

At the time, then-President Clinton said: ''The shooting at the United States Capitol yesterday was a moment of savagery at the front door of American civilization.'' He was right.

I was working in the Capitol that day, 20 years ago. I remember where I was, as I am sure everybody does who was here. I remember hearing the gunshots. I was on the telephone from my office in the House of Representatives with a member of the leadership staff, and I heard the chaos through the phone lines for the first time.

We are forever grateful for the sacrifice of those two police officers and their families and for the continued service and commitment of the U.S. Capitol Police every single day in the Capitol. They are the ones who protect us every single day. This week, we are reminded to thank everyone who puts on a uniform and steps into harm's way to protect fellow Americans.

STRENGTHENING CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION FOR THE 21ST CENTURY ACT

Mr. President, I also wish to discuss important legislation the Senate passed earlier this week and the House passed today to improve skills training in our country at a time when it is so badly needed.

I am the cofounder and cochair of the Senate Career and Technical Education Caucus. I have to tell you, I am excited about this bipartisan legislation. It reauthorizes what is called the Perkins Career and Technical Education, or CTE, Act. It is a Federal law designed to help Americans get the education, training, and skills they need to fill in-demand jobs. The President supports the legislation. I know he is excited about signing it into law and helping

those who need the skills to fill those jobs that are out there.

CTE—at one time called vocational education—is just a great opportunity for the students but also for our economy and for employers. The bill that passed includes what is called the Educating Tomorrow's Workforce Act, legislation my colleague Senator TIM KAINE and I authored a few years ago to allow States and localities to use Perkins grant funding for a number of purposes.

No. 1, we allow them to use it for CTE-focused academies. We also encourage schools to incorporate key elements of high-quality CTE programs from around the country and promote partnerships between local businesses, regional industries, and other community stakeholders to create work-based learning opportunities for students, like apprenticeships and internships. We know they work. Getting that work experience really helps to be able to land a job, so we are excited about this legislation.

It also includes important accountability information for our most vulnerable students to track how well CTE programs are performing so we can ensure high-quality skills training.

When I travel around Ohio talking to employers of all sizes, they all stress one thing to me, which is, yes, the economy is doing better, tax reform has worked well for me, the regulatory relief is happening—that is great—but we are having trouble finding workers.

In Ohio today, on our website OhioMeansJobs, you will probably see 145,000 jobs being advertised, and yet we have 200,000 people out of work. A lot of that is the skills gap. I often hear the biggest challenge employers have is they can't find enough skilled workers for the positions they already have. We want to give these students the chance to acquire that training needed for today's jobs. Again, this legislation helps to ensure it regardless of someone's economic standing.

It provides a route to good-paying jobs and a successful career for students who might not have been interested in a typical formal STEM education or maybe they can't easily spend the time and money involved in going through a traditional college education.

It is not just about the students. It also helps those who are further on in life who are trying to rebuild or start a new career. This bill will also help those incumbent workers. Recently, I visited Flying HIGH, a welding school in Youngstown, OH. It is a very impressive program. It focuses on teaching people in recovery and people who have recently been released from prison to learn a skill—in this case, welding—which lets them transition back into the workplace. I am really impressed by it. Their placement rate is about 100 percent. They have taken people and helped provide them with the skills they need, and then, in turn, their lives have been turned around. This legislation will help enable places like this school to be more successful.

There are so many opportunities out there. Whether it is welding, whether it is coding, whether it is machining, whether it is healthcare skills, or whether it is in commercial driving, where we need drivers right away who have the CDL commercial license, we should encourage more of that.

I wish to thank my colleague and cochair of the Senate CTE Caucus, TIM KAINE, as well as Senator LAMAR ALEXANDER, who chairs the Senate HELP Committee that passed the bill this last month, MIKE ENZI, and all my colleagues on the CTE Caucus, for their work on this issue over the years.

Once signed into law, this legislation will help students get the career and technical education they need, regardless of economic standing, and help them have the opportunity they need to be able to pursue whatever their American dream is.

DATA ACT IMPLEMENTATION

Mr. President, the last thing I want to talk about today is some bad news we received this week. This is about our Federal Government and the lack of information from Federal agencies as to how they are spending our hard-earned tax dollars.

As many people know, our Federal Government has grown a lot in the last half century or so. In 1961, President Kennedy entered office with 7 Cabinet positions and 451 career management positions. When President Trump took office, we had gone about seven times higher in terms of the number of people. The number of Cabinet posts have been doubled from 7 to 15.

The increased size of our Federal Government is intended, of course, to provide a better structure to carry out important duties the government has and help more Americans, but one result we have to be cautious of is the increase in Federal spending that comes with it. As the size of our government grows, transparency in how taxpayer money is spent becomes increasingly important.

Most of the increase in funding we have seen over the last 20 years, of course, is in programs that Congress does not appropriate every year. This includes important entitlement programs like Medicaid, Medicare, and Social Security. We need to address this unsustainable growth in the so-called nondiscretionary spending. We need to save these entitlement programs for the current and future generations of Americans who rely on them, but we also need to ensure we rein in the waste, fraud, and abuse in our departments and agencies, the so-called discretionary spending that Congress spends every year on departments and programs. That is why this legislation is so important—to be able to require transparency and accountability with how Federal agencies spend their taxpayer dollars.

While the White House and Congress tracks spending through the budget and appropriations process, each Federal agency tracks its own spending internally. They have their own metrics and measurement systems. As you can imagine, it has made it hard to truly know where all of the funds are going to various departments and agencies because each has their own measurement. We recognized a need to address this.

In 2006, when I was Director of the Office of Management and Budget, the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act became law. I personally endorsed that legislation by then-Senator Tom Coburn—who some will remember was a key sponsor of that—when I was at OMB because I knew we needed it badly. We went about putting all grants and contracts online. That was a good thing. The goal of that law was to standardize the way Federal departments and agencies report their spending to have a more comprehensive and transparent account of where taxpayer dollars are going.

It also created a public website to be managed by OMB called USAspending.gov, where taxpayers and policymakers could go to get accurate, accessible information about what these funds are used for. Taxpayers should be able to see where their money goes, and Congress—which is given the power of the purse in our Federal Government—needs to know what the funds it allocates are being used for to make informed decisions about spending.

In 2010, the GAO, Government Accountability Office, looked into how this program was working. What they found was the usefulness of the USAspending.gov website was impaired by the lack of guidance to agencies on how to report their spending. So, in 2014, my colleague Senator MARK WARNER of Virginia and I authored what is called the Digital Accountability and Transparency Act, the DATA Act. We followed what the GAO had said, and we wrote this legislation to fix the law.

The goal of the DATA Act was to create a more consistent spending system across government to improve the efficiency of USAspending.gov and make tracking Federal spending more transparent and accessible. That would ultimately provide the American public and policymakers, we thought, with accurate, consistent, and reliable data on governmentwide spending to eliminate unnecessary spending.

Being able to follow Federal dollars from appropriation to the resulting grant or contract that actually occurs is incredibly helpful in that effort. The DATA Act required Federal agencies to report spending in real time down to the location by congressional district by 2017.

Now it is time to take stock of how that program is working and to assess the transparency in our Federal spending. The Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, which I chair, has taken this task on. Along

with the ranking member, Senator TOM CARPER, we have looked into the implementation of the DATA Act and how accurately departments and agencies report spending data. What our bipartisan report found was troubling.

We reviewed inspectors general, or IG, reports of 25 Federal agencies, making up more than 80 percent of all Federal spending from the second quarter of 2017.

At least 55 percent of the spending data—equal to roughly $240 billion those agencies submitted to USAspending.gov—was found to be incomplete, inaccurate, or both. Notably, the IG's report on the Department of Defense and the Department of Energy determined that 100 percent of those Departments' spending data was not accurate.

According to the inspectors general, some agencies, such as the Department of Education and the Agency for National Development, did well. They reported accurate data.

Unbelievably, about 96 percent of the spending data the Treasury Department submitted for its own Department was not accurate. So the Treasury Department, which the DATA Act says is supposed to monitor other Departments' spending data for accuracy, overwhelmingly submitted inaccurate data itself—and we found that just last month, OMB and the Department of Treasury have updated agency guidance that appears to weaken some of these data standards, which could lead to less accurate and not standardized DATA Act submissions in the future.

So we should be doing more to ensure this law is properly implemented, to ensure accountability and accuracy in our finances.

We also found deficiencies with the USAspending.gov website itself. The DATA Act requires the website to be user-friendly and accurate. Our investigators found it to sometimes be neither.

It is important to remember that the DATA Act is still in its early stages. It was fully implemented just a little over 1 year ago. So it is not yet what we had hoped it would be when it became law in 2014, but it is not too late to improve it. We know it has to be done. Our PSI—Permanent Subcommittee Investigation—report includes recommendations to do just that.

First, OMB and the Treasury Department should continue to update the standards and guidelines for agencies to follow when making DATA Act submissions to improve accuracy and accountability of spending. It is really up to them to do it.

Second, OMB and the Treasury Department should establish clear definitions for agencies and IGs to follow when conducting reviews of DATA Act compliance to avoid any existing confusion and disparity, which we found is out there today.

Finally, the Treasury Department should improve the overall quality of USAspending.gov.

These are all reasonable steps, and they are going to help increase accountability within the Federal Government and provide greater transparency for taxpayers. As I mentioned, taxpayers deserve to be able to access accurate information on where their money is going, and lawmakers need to know how departments and agencies are actually spending their resources to be able to conduct proper oversight, plan future budgets, and eliminate waste, fraud, and abuse in our Federal spending.

On the floor today, we were discussing appropriations bills. We will pass another floor appropriations bill this week, I hope. That is good, but part of this process is that we have to be sure we are doing the oversight so that if we are passing spending bills—all 12 should be passed by this Congress—we know where the money is going so we can identify ways to improve the spending.

I recognize that a lot of hard work has gone into USAspending.gov to date, and I am grateful for all the support and investments that many outside groups—like the Data Coalition and the Project on Government Oversight—have put into making this project successful. I also appreciate those in the Federal Government who have taken this seriously and have worked hard on this.

Although the executive branch has only implemented the law selectively so far, it has already made our government more transparent. If we continue to do the necessary followup to this important law that passed 4 years ago, I am optimistic that it will spur action to make our government spending more accountable, more accurate, and more accessible. That is the goal.

Mr. President, I yield back my time.

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

NATIONAL FLOOD INSURANCE PROGRAM

Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, we were sitting in the cloakroom between the last two votes that just happened in the Senate, and everybody's phone started buzzing at the same time. That is because everyone receives these alerts from the National Weather Service. The alert said: Flash flood warning until 9:15 p.m. this evening.

I thought it was ironic because I was headed to the floor to speak about flooding—and in particular flood insurance—which is a threat to so many different States across the country. It was an ironic moment that reminds us what that means to us here but also what it means to people in the real world who are impacted by this.

Earlier today, the House passed an extension of the National Flood Insurance Program, and it extends it for 4 months and will expire November 30 of this year. I am here today to tell you how critical it is that the Senate act on this as soon as possible because this program will expire next Tuesday, July 31—6 days from today—if we do not take action.

Let me preface everything I am about to say by telling you that this program is badly broken. It is not financially stable. It is not financially sustainable. It is a program that needs to be reformed. I don't like the way it is designed one bit. I have been working for years to try to reform it and to try to open up space for the private sector to come in and compete with the program and provide more options for people who need it.

I want everybody to understand that in many parts of Florida—I am sure it is true in other parts of the country—you can't buy a house in some places if you don't have flood insurance. They will not write it because of the threat of damage to the property and the loss of value. That is widespread throughout the State of Florida. There are many places where that is a fact.

While I don't like the way the program is designed, and I desperately want us to reform it to be consistent with market principles and sustainable in the long term, the answer is not to let it expire. The answer is not to let it expire because if we do, we are going to have an economic catastrophe. If we allow flood insurance to expire, there are real estate closings that will stop.

I will add one more point to it; that is, we would be allowing this to expire in the middle of the hurricane season. We went through a hurricane season last year that impacted Florida, Texas, and Puerto Rico. The damage that it did, economic and otherwise, was extensive. We don't know what this season holds, but we are right smack in the middle of it. I can't think of anything worse than allowing it not just to expire but to expire in the middle of the hurricane season. I would have hoped the extension would have been for 6 months, the way we got done in the Senate farm bill. I believe a 4-month extension is better than none at all.

My biggest fear is that it is going to get lost here in all the other issues we are dealing with. My hope—and I ask you here today—is that the leadership of this Chamber bring this extension for a vote, perhaps as early as Monday evening when we return, because to allow this to drag into Tuesday, Tuesday midnight—I am telling you, it is going to have a dramatic and negative impact on people in Florida and across the country.

Let me go back to one of the reforms that need to happen. One of the organizations that I agree with a lot was out there—what they do—key scoring this vote in the House against it. They make great points about how broken this program is. They are absolutely right about that. I personally support reforms that will increase private market involvement in this program. I want to go back to the practicality of it.

While I want there to be reforms, I cannot hold hostage and we should not hold hostage real people and families whose homes and lives will be at risk

while Congress tries to figure this out. It has to be done. I don't want to be in a cycle of perpetual extension. I am as frustrated about it as anybody else. I wish we could find some permanence to this in a way that didn't wipe everybody out by raising the rates but was also sustainable in the long term. We have to continue to work through that.

As a Senator from Florida recognizing that over one-third of the total policies nationwide are in the State that I represent, I have to come here today with a strong sense of urgency and argue on behalf of my neighbors and my constituents and my own family who depend on flood insurance in order not to just protect their homes in the middle of a hurricane cycle but to be able to transact real estate deals—selling a home, buying one, even commercial buildings—all these things that depend on this market being healthy.

In terms of the long-term reforms, affordability has to be a key part of any one of those reforms. The last time we extended this for 5 years, in 2012, the premiums in the State of Florida skyrocketed. What it did was it caused a massive exodus from this program, particularly out of Florida. A bunch of people left the program.

That is a problem because the key to having a sustainable program is having enough people in it. That is the whole purpose of insurance. You need to have enough people so you can spread the risk. But if people begin to migrate out of the program—and it usually is going to be the safest properties that are going to leave because they are the ones less willing to pay the higher premiums—you are going to be left with adverse selection. We have heard that term used in health insurance debates. If you don't have enough properties and enough safe properties to spread the risk, it drives up the premiums even more, and it makes the program even less healthy. That is why the key to any reforms has to be a program that is affordable enough to have that sort of participation, but we can't expect people to participate in a program they can't afford.

I think the one component of flood insurance reform that everyone should agree with is the importance of strong mitigation funding. FEMA and numerous other groups have repeatedly cited statistics confirming that every dollar we spend on mitigation—mitigation against flooding, mitigation against sea level rise, mitigation against all these things—results in $4 or more saved in future disaster recovery. Every single year now, it seems like we are spending millions upon tens of millions of dollars on storm recovery packages. Imagine if we could prevent some of that at the front end by funding mitigation efforts in concert with State and local governments.

Flood insurance reform is going to require a proactive approach to a problem that has only been approached in a reactionary way up this point. Simply raising rates without fundamentally changing what plagues the program will only lead to more people, more individuals leaving the program and an even larger disaster supplemental package when future storms occur.

Floridians deserve a program that is transparent and that is affordable. Right now, this program is neither. I believe the House and Senate can come to an agreement on a law that will achieve these goals. I think we need to do so in a way that is long term and sustainable. That is why once we pass this 4-month extension—and I say ''once we do'' because I cannot imagine not doing it. I cannot imagine leaving next week at some point for a 1-week recess in early August and leaving this thing lapsed. It can't happen. It is not an option. It has to be dealt with.

Once we do that, then we truly need to work on enacting this before November 30, when this extension will expire, and work on the fundamental flaws of the program and allow the Flood Insurance Program to move forward on a path that is responsible, affordable, and sustainable, not one that continues to require the government to bail it out. That is what I hope will happen.

In the strongest possible terms—I cannot emphasize this enough—I truly hope we will bring this reauthorization for a vote as soon as possible and that my colleagues will cooperate because Tuesday at midnight next week, if we have not acted, there will be hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of people across this country—many of them in my home State—who are going to find that their property, in the middle of a hurricane season, is not covered against water damage because they cannot get flood insurance. That would be catastrophic for our economy, and it would be catastrophic for Florida and the impacted States.

I am here to repeat and urge as strongly as I can that the leadership bring this up for a vote as soon as we are done dealing with the four appropriations bills that are before us. There is no other option. We cannot allow this to expire.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

TRADE AND TARIFFS

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I want to speak this evening for a few moments about trade and tariffs. They certainly have been in the news for a long time. They are in the news today. I want to highlight the importance of trade and exports to Kansas, my constituents, and express my concerns about tariffs and an escalating trade war.

A global trade war will raise the price of goods for American consumers; result in retaliation against farmers, ranchers, and manufacturers who depend upon exports; and weaken our ability to work with our allies to challenge China's unfair trade practices.

Kansans are already feeling the effects of tariffs. Approximately $361 million worth of Kansas exports are being targeted by the emerging trade war, including soybeans and sorghum exports to China, aerospace exports to Canada, and beef and corn exports to Mexico. Moving forward with another $200 billion to $500 billion in tariffs against China or new section 232 tariffs on automobiles for supposed national security concerns will only increase the negative impact upon my folks at home.

With 95 percent of consumers living outside our country's border, the ability for Kansas farmers and rancher to earn a living is directly tied to our ability to sell food, fuel, and fiber. The food, fuel, and fiber we grow in Kansas must be exported to people around the world.

Since March, uncertainty in trade has contributed to the price of soybeans falling by $2 a bushel. A $2 drop in soybean prices equates to Kansas farmers and grain handlers losing out about $378 million of possible revenue solely on soybeans—one crop.

The significant harm the trade war is causing to farmers and ranchers is no doubt the reason the administration is proposing $12 billion in disaster relief for agriculture. Unfortunately, it is only a short-term fix to a long-term problem and will not make up for the lost markets for farmers.

China and Mexico, two of our largest markets in Kansas for agriculture producers—Mexico is No. 1, and China is No. 2—have already started to increase purchases of ag commodities from Brazil and Argentina instead of from U.S. producers, including those in Kansas. I am concerned that once we lose those markets, it will take years, if ever, for us to regain those markets.

This hit could not come at a worse time for ag producers. Farm revenue has already fallen by over 50 percent since 2013. Low commodity prices have pushed many producers to limits of financial viability.

I wrote an op-ed this spring arguing that Kansas farmers and ranchers can't afford a trade war. With fall harvest around the corner, many farmers will be faced with the reality of selling grain at or below the cost of production just to be able to pay off this year's operating loans.

The impact of the downturn in the ag economy cannot be solely quantified on a balance sheet. I am concerned that reduced economic opportunity in agriculture will result in fewer young people returning to rural America. One of my goals is to see that the sons and daughters of farmers and ranchers in Kansas have the opportunity to continue another generation of agriculture production in our State. When they cannot reach a price that is profitable, when they cannot obtain a price that is profitable, the likelihood of those young men and women remaining or returning to Kansas farms and ranches disappears because when agricultural struggles, so do our rural communities.

As the average age of a farmer nears 60 years old, it is critical that our policies increase the likelihood that a

young person is able to return to take over the family farm or ranch. I fear the trade war and tariffs will unfortunately have the opposite effect. Fewer markets to sell meat and grain will make it more difficult for the next generation to earn a living in rural America.

If farmers in Kansas are not producing a crop and selling it, then it means their communities also suffer. The ability to keep a grocery store in town or a grain elevator or a hardware store is diminished when farm income is as it is today.

It is not just an agricultural issue. In fact, Kansas manufacturers are also dealing with the negative impact of recently imposed tariffs.

Users of steel and aluminum are frequent in Kansas. Ours is an automobile and aviation manufacturing State, and they are facing increased costs of materials, regardless of whether they utilize domestic or imported steel and aluminum.

Chanute Manufacturing in Chanute, KS, is an example of the steel and aluminum tariffs harming a small company and its workers. The company, which employs about 130 Kansans, is a domestic manufacturer of steel-based components for the power generation market. Due to tariffs, Chanute's cost for raw materials has increased by about 8 percent.

However, when the same powerplant equipment is manufactured overseas, it can be imported here tariff-free. The actual unintended consequence of the steel tariff has been to incentivize foreign manufacturing of power equipment currently made in my home State.

Chanute Manufacturing has also missed opportunities to compete on projects in other countries due to the tariffs. Last year, the company built and shipped equipment they manufactured in Kansas to Morocco. However, when a duplicate project came available in Morocco again this year, Chanute wasn't even considered because the steel tariffs have raised their production costs, making them less competitive than cheaper foreign manufacturers.

China is important. The President is right to try to change the behavior of China. Tariffs are not the only tool to make certain that other countries follow international trade rules and treat American exporters and workers fairly.

I support efforts to hold China accountable for unfair trade practices and the theft of trade secrets and intellectual property rights from American companies. I applauded the United States for filing a challenge to China's domestic agricultural support levels at the World Trade Organization. When China unfairly subsidizes its producers or limits market access to U.S. wheat, corn, and rice, the United States is right to contest them and to contest them strongly and firmly. While I remain unconvinced that tariffs are the best tool to change China's behavior, it does not mean we should not pursue strong enforcement of global trade rules.

I am also concerned that picking a fight on trade with the rest of the world reduces our ability to win the fight with China, the country that is most deserving of strong trade actions by the United States. By attempting to take the whole world on at once, the United States risks spreading our resources thin and reducing our focus on changing China's practices.

The United States is not the only country with complaints about China's trade practices. Yet, instead of working with our allies to influence China and change their behavior, we have forced confrontations with other countries that ought to be by our side in dealing with China.

I believe that by strengthening our trade and economic relations with our allies, the United States will be better able to continue directing sound trade policies on the global stage. This includes successfully concluding a NAFTA renegotiation with Canada and Mexico and reengaging in the Trans-Pacific Partnership—TPP—negotiations or pursuing bilateral agreements with countries in the TPP, such as Japan.

This week, in fact tomorrow, Ambassador Lighthizer, the U.S. Trade Representative, will be testifying before the Appropriations subcommittee that I chair, the Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, and Science. That subcommittee oversees the funding for the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative. The hearing will be an opportunity for the subcommittee members to hear firsthand from Ambassador Lighthizer on USTR's trade efforts and to express concerns about the impact the tariffs have had and will continue to have on our constituents. I hope to learn more about the USTR strategy and the end goal in threatening more tariffs, progress to conclusion of NAFTA negotiations, and efforts to fill the President's call for a new bilateral trade agreement.

Again, recently imposed tariffs are having immediate impacts upon farmers and ranchers and manufacturers, but the long-term implications of disrupting supply chains and losing market share that took decades to build up is perhaps even more concerning. It is time to inject more certainty into our trade policies. We ought to start by reaching an agreement on a modernized NAFTA and ending the threat of an escalating trade war.

I look forward to conversations with Ambassador Lighthizer this week and making certain that the administration understands the importance of getting trade policy right for Kansas and for America.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MORAN. 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.

60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MAINE STATE MUSIC THEATER

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, in 1959, a new summer playhouse opened in Brunswick, ME, with a performance of the popular operetta ''Song of Norway.'' In 2018, the Maine State Music Theater presents its 60th season with professional productions that range from ''Singin' in the Rain'' to ''Saturday Night Fever.''

It is a pleasure to congratulate Maine State Music Theater on this landmark anniversary and to thank the casts, crews, supporters, and volunteers who, for six decades, have delighted audiences and enriched the cultural life of our State.

The oldest professional musical theater in Maine, Maine State Music Theater was founded by Victoria Crandall, a truly remarkable entrepreneur and artist. Born in Cleveland, she studied piano at the prestigious Eastman School of Music, toured with the USO during World War II, and was an accompanist for such show business legends as Ethel Merman and Jimmy Durante.

After working in theatrical productions on Broadway, Ms. Crandall struck out on her own in 1959 to pursue her dream of establishing her own theater company and chose the Bowdoin College campus in Brunswick as the place to make her dream come true. Rejecting the prepackaged shows often used in summer theaters, she presented originally designed productions—as many as nine per season—that earned rave reviews from audiences and critics alike.

Ms. Crandall passed away in 1990 at the age of 81 while in New York City casting roles for that year's season. At the time of her death, she had staged 186 productions in Brunswick that were seen by more than 1.5 million people.

Ms. Crandall's legacy is carried on by accomplished performers and technical personnel, many of whom have gone on to achieve success on Broadway and in Hollywood. With dedicated management and strong community support, Maine State Music Theater has expanded its offerings to children's programs, outdoor concerts, film and lecture series, and an educational fellowship program for those developing careers in the theater. The 2017 season set a new record for attendance, with more than 95 percent of the house sold for the four main productions.

Maine State Music Theater is a true gem of the Maine arts scene and a highlight of the State's glorious summers. I offer the company all the best on this 60th anniversary and wish them great success for many years to come.

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF DINÉ COLLEGE

Mr. UDALL. Mr. President, I wish to honor the first Tribal college established in the United States, Diné College, on its 50th anniversary.

The college was founded in 1968 by the Navajo Nation as Navajo Community College. That year marked the centennial anniversary of the Treaty of 1868 in which the Navajo people negotiated return of their homeland after their forced relocation by the U.S. government on the brutal ''Long Walk'' to Fort Sumner, NM. In Fort Sumner, they had endured inhumane conditions for 5 years, and many had perished. The treaty was an important historical milestone, but it also contained certain harsh terms, requiring the Navajo people to send their children to government and missionary schools where they were forced to abandon their cultural practices and identity. This tragic and brutal practice by the U.S. Government threatened the survival of Navajo and other Native American languages and cultures.

Our Nation finally moved away from forced assimilation by the middle of the last century, and the Navajo Nation took a historic step toward educational self-determination when it established Navajo Community College. As the first tribally chartered and operated postsecondary institution, Navajo Community College's educational philosophy was grounded in Navajo cultural traditions. Its mission was to support the social and economic development of the Tribe.

In 1976, the college was the first Tribal 2-year institution to receive accreditation. In 1998, it awarded its first baccalaureate degrees under the Diné Teacher Education Program. In 1994, Navajo Community College joined 29 other Tribal colleges to become a Land Grant Institution under the Equity in Educational Land-Grant Status Act. In 1997, the board of regents changed its name to Diné College.

The college's educational principles are based on Sa'ah Naagháí Bik'eh Hózhóón—the Diné traditional living system—which places human life in harmony with the natural world and universe. Four principles undergird the education: Nitsáhákees or thinking, Nahat'á or planning, Iiná or living, and Sihasin or assuring.

Culturally relevant education makes a tremendous difference for Native students. The kids are engaged. They stay in school. They gain access to opportunities that otherwise might be out of reach. Diné College's curriculum is replete with Navajo language and culture classes. It awards certificates, associate degrees, and bachelor degrees in a wide range of fields, from fine arts to environment science to business administration to elementary and secondary education, and many more.

With approximately 1,300 students, Diné College is one of the largest Tribal colleges in the United States. The school's six campuses serve the 27,000-square-mile Navajo Reservation. Importantly, Diné College has played a critical role revitalizing Navajo culture and language, preparing thousands of young adults to contribute to their communities, States, Tribe, and the U.S. as a whole.

Diné College's legacy, however, reaches far beyond its own students. What was once an unassuming community college—with an entering population of 309 students—ignited a nationwide movement of Tribes founding their own colleges and universities. The network of Tribal colleges and universities built up over the last half century has made significant progress helping Native students break down barriers. Today, 36 Tribal colleges and universities all across the Nation educate tens of thousands of Native students. These institutions have been instrumental in attracting and keeping Native students in college and helping students maintain and grow ties with their cultures, languages, and traditional values.

I extend my whole-hearted congratulations to Diné College on its 50th anniversary. I thank the college and Navajo Nation for all the good they have accomplished over the years, and I wish them the absolute best in their next five decades.

TRIBUTE TO JIM GRANT

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, today I wish to honor Jim Grant. Describing him as a longtime, dedicated member of my staff does not adequately reflect his committed service. As of last week, Jim has worked 35 years in the U.S. Senate, in the offices of three Idaho Senators, through numerous Congresses and countless technological, State, and national changes.

The people of Idaho and our Nation have been far beyond well served by this dedicated and thoughtful public servant. Jim came to my office after working for two of my predecessors, Senator Steve Symms and Senator Dirk Kempthorne. Both have, not surprisingly, praised Jim's great work and dedication. I continue to feel blessed to benefit from Jim's extensive experience and work ethic over the past more than 19 years.

As a Caldwell, ID, native, Jim has a deep understanding of the State, and he has a profound sense of the pressing issues on the minds of many constituents. Jim reads and processes constituent mail. He is responsible for the timely response to the insight Idahoans have taken the time to share with me, and he carries out this responsibility with great care. This is an essential role in any congressional office, and Jim's work reflects a clear understanding of the importance of his work. He reliably ensures that their communications are wisely routed and that Idahoans are responded to effectively and promptly. As means of communication constantly change and speed up, this is no small undertaking, but Jim has taken on these developments and increased volumes with great proficiency.

Thank you, Jim. You have served our State and Nation admirably for a remarkable 35 years. During this time, you have helped ensure that Idaho voices are heard in this important legislative body and that what we do here in these halls is effectively communicated into countless households. This is such an important duty, and we have greatly benefited from your careful, hard work all these years.

Congratulations on this extraordinary milestone in your Senate service. I honor you, and thank you for your exceptional work.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO JENNA BISHOP

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

Jenna is a native of Cheyenne. She is a student at the University of Wyoming, where she is studying business economics and management, and psychology. 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 Jenna 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.•

TRIBUTE TO BETHANY GOOD

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

Bethany is a native of Cheyenne. She is a student at the University of Wyoming, where she is studying elementary education. 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 Bethany 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.•

TRIBUTE TO GAVIN HEADY

• Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I would like to take the opportunity to

express my appreciation to Gavin for his hard work as an intern in my Casper office. I recognize his efforts and contributions to my office, as well as to the State of Wyoming.

Gavin is a native of Casper. He is a sophomore at Casper College, where he is studying anthropology. He has demonstrated a strong work ethic, which has made him an invaluable asset to our office. The quality of his work is reflected in his great efforts over the last several months.

I want to thank Gavin for the dedication he has shown while working for me and my staff. It is a pleasure to have him as part of our team. I know he will have continued success with all of his future endeavors. I wish him all my best on his journey.●

TRIBUTE TO DAKOTAH PRICE

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

Dakotah is a native of Casper. She is a junior at the University of Wyoming, where she is studying economics and journalism. 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 Dakotah 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.●

TRIBUTE TO JOHN DAVID RICHARDSON

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

JD is a native of Green River. He is a junior at the University of Wyoming, where he is studying political science and public law. He has demonstrated a strong work ethic, which has made him an invaluable asset to our office. The quality of his work is reflected in his great efforts over the last several months.

I want to thank JD for the dedication he has shown while working for me and my staff. It is a pleasure to have him as part of our team. I know he will have continued success with all of his future endeavors. I wish him all my best on his journey.●

TRIBUTE TO ALBERT SIXFEATHERS

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

Albert is a native of Casper. He is a student at Casper College, where he is studying paralegal studies. He has demonstrated a strong work ethic, which has made him an invaluable asset to our office. The quality of his work is reflected in his great efforts over the last several months.

I want to thank Albert for the dedication he has shown while working for me and my staff. It is a pleasure to have him as part of our team. I know he will have continued success with all of his future endeavors. I wish him all my best on his journey.●

TRIBUTE TO ASHLEY SONDAG

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

Ashley is a native of Casper. She is a graduate student at Idaho State University, where she is studying public administration and environmental policy. 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 Ashley 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.●

REMEMBERING CARMELLA MARY RIZZO

● Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I rise to pay tribute to Carmella Mary Rizzo, who passed away at the age of 101 on July 15, 2018. Carmella was the wife of former Philadelphia mayor Frank L. Rizzo and will be remembered for her community advocacy and political prowess. I admired her very much, and I am grateful to have known her.

Born on July 25, 1916, Carmella was raised in a large family in the Chestnut Hill neighborhood of Philadelphia. The daughter of first-generation Italian Americans, her family encouraged her to form her own identity and establish close ties within the Philadelphia community. In 1942, she married Frank L. Rizzo, a Philadelphia police officer. Frank and Carmella had two children, Francis and Joanna.

During her husband's time as police commissioner and as a two-term mayor of Philadelphia, Carmella avoided the spotlight. She did, however, play a private yet pivotal role in Mayor Rizzo's career. Notably compassionate, Carmella regularly discussed community affairs with her husband during his administration in the 1970s. Carmella's insight and charisma proved invaluable to the city of Philadelphia.

Carmella passed away just a day shy of the 27th anniversary of Mayor Rizzo's passing. In the years after his death, she remained very close to her children and grandchildren.

It is my honor to commemorate the life of Carmella Rizzo, a woman whose decades of advocacy for Philadelphians has set an example for many to follow.●

TRIBUTE TO GEORGE OSTROM

● Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, this week I have the honor of recognizing George Ostrom of Flathead County, on his 90th birthday, for his 60-plus years of contributions to news broadcasting and journalism in Montana.

A native Montanan, George spent the beginning of his formative years on a ranch in Sanders County and then in a mining camp near Kila. At age 17, George left Flathead High School to enlist in the Army and served his country for the next 3 years while stationed in Frankfurt, Germany. Following his return to the States, George spent a few years as a Forest Service smokejumper before an injury led him to seek employment at a newly founded radio station in Kalispell.

Ever since landing the gig as an announcer for KOFI radio in 1956, George has been a staple in Montana broadcasting. After rising up the ranks to eventually become co-owner of the station, George purchased the Kalispell Weekly News in 1974, which he grew into the most circulated weekly in Montana. He was also the host of a KCFW-TV program. George is the author of three books and writes a weekly column for the Hungry Horse News. He continues on-air in the Flathead with his own ''George Ostrum News & Comment,'' a key component of the KGEZ 600 AM Good Morning show.

He has served on countless boards including the Red Cross, ALERT, the Kalispell Chamber of Commerce, Rotary, and, for more than 20 years, the University of Montana president's advisory council. Now known as the dean of Montana radio broadcasters, he has been inducted into the Montana Broadcasters Hall of Fame.

Presently, George resides in Kalispell with his wife, Iris, and has 4 children, 3 grandchildren, and 1 great-grandchild. He still finds time to go on weekly excursions with the ''Over-the-Hill Gang'' in Glacier National Park. I congratulate and thank George for his continued dedication to sharing his voice with his fellow Montanans.●

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:03 a.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. 184. An act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the excise tax on medical devices.

H.R. 519. An act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to facilitate water leasing and water transfers to promote conservation and efficiency.

H.R. 1201. An act 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.

H.R. 1476. An act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permit individuals eligible for Indian Health Service assistance to qualify for health savings accounts.

H.R. 3500. An act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to prohibit the Commissioner of the Internal Revenue Service from rehiring any employee of the Internal Revenue Service who was involuntarily separated from service for misconduct.

H.R. 4952. An act to direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to conduct a study and submit a report on the effects of the inclusion of quality increases in the determination of blended benchmark amounts under part C of the Medicare program.

H.R. 6084. An act to amend title VII of the Social Security Act to provide for a single point of contact at the Social Security Administration for individuals who are victims of identity theft.

H.R. 6124. An act to amend title II of the Social Security Act to authorize voluntary agreements for coverage of Indian tribal council members, and for other purposes.

H.R. 6138. An act to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for ambulatory surgical center representation during the review of hospital outpatient payment rates under part B of the Medicare program, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the House agrees to the resolution (H. Res. 1019) recommitting to the committee of conference the conference report to accompany the bill (H.R. 5515) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2019 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes, and, in the opinion of this House, contravenes the first clause of the seventh section of the first article of the Constitution of the United States and is an infringement of the privileges of this House and be respectfully recommitted to the committee of conference.

At 10:40 a.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. 2409. An act to allow servicemembers to terminate their cable, satellite television, and Internet access service contracts while deployed.

H.R. 2787. An act to establish in the Department of Veterans Affairs a pilot program instituting a clinical observation program for pre-med students preparing to attend medical school.

H.R. 5538. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the inclusion of certain additional periods of active duty service for purposes of suspending charges to veterans' entitlement to educational assistance under the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs during periods of suspended participation in vocational rehabilitation programs.

H.R. 5649. An act to amend titles 10 and 38, United States Code, to amend the Social Security Act, and to direct the Secretaries of Veterans Affairs, Defense, Labor, and Homeland Security, and the Administrator of the Small Business Administration, to take certain actions to improve transition assistance to members of the Armed Forces who separate, retire, or are discharged from the Armed Forces, and for other purposes.

H.R. 5882. An act to amend the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act to provide for the termination by a spouse of a lessee of certain leases when the lessee dies while in military service.

H.R. 5938. An act to amend the VA Choice and Quality Employment Act to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish a vacancy and recruitment database to facilitate the recruitment of certain members of the Armed Forces to satisfy the occupational needs of the Department of Veterans Affairs, to establish and implement a training and certification program for intermediate care technicians in that Department, and for other purposes.

H.R. 5974. An act to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to use on-site regulated medical waste treatment systems at certain Department of Veterans Affairs facilities, and for other purposes.

At 1:44 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House agrees to the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 2353) to reauthorize the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006.

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

At 3:10 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON) has signed the following enrolled bills:

S. 2245. An act 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 nonimmigrants if United States nationals are treated similarly by the Government of New Zealand.

S. 2850. An act to amend the White Mountain Apache Tribe Water Rights Quantification Act of 2010 to clarify the use of amounts in the WMAT Settlement Fund.

At 4:21 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that House has passed the following bill, with amendments, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

S. 1182. An act to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint commemorative coins in recognition of the 100th anniversary of The American Legion.

MEASURES REFERRED

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

H.R. 519. An act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to facilitate water leasing and water transfers to promote conservation and efficiency; to the Committee on Finance.

H.R. 1476. An act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permit individuals eligible for Indian Health Service assistance to qualify for health savings accounts; to the Committee on Finance.

H.R. 2409. An act to allow servicemembers to terminate their cable, satellite television, and Internet access service contracts while deployed; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

H.R. 2787. An act to establish in the Department of Veterans Affairs a pilot program instituting a clinical observation program for pre-med students preparing to attend medical school; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

H.R. 3500. An act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to prohibit the Commissioner of the Internal Revenue Service from rehiring any employee of the Internal Revenue Service who was involuntarily separated from service for misconduct; to the Committee on Finance.

H.R. 4952. An act to direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to conduct a study and submit a report on the effects of the inclusion of quality increases in the determination of blended benchmark amounts under part C of the Medicare program; to the Committee on Finance.

H.R. 5538. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the inclusion of certain additional periods of active duty service for purposes of suspending charges to veterans' entitlement to educational assistance under the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs during periods of suspended participation in vocational rehabilitation programs; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

H.R. 5649. An act to amend titles 10 and 38, United States Code, to amend the Social Security Act, and to direct the Secretaries of Veterans Affairs, Defense, Labor, and Homeland Security, and the Administrator of the Small Business Administration, to take certain actions to improve transition assistance to members of the Armed Forces who separate, retire, or are discharged from the Armed Forces, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

H.R. 5882. An act to amend the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act to provide for the termination by a spouse of a lessee of certain leases when the lessee dies while in military service; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

H.R. 5938. An act to amend the VA Choice and Quality Employment Act to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish a vacancy and recruitment database to facilitate the recruitment of certain members of the Armed Forces to satisfy the occupational needs of the Department of Veterans Affairs, to establish and implement a training and certification program for intermediate care technicians in that Department, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

H.R. 5974. An act to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to use on-site regulated medical waste treatment systems at certain Department of Veterans Affairs facilities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

H.R. 6084. An act to amend title VII of the Social Security Act to provide for a single point of contact at the Social Security Administration for individuals who are victims of identity theft; to the Committee on Finance.

H.R. 6138. An act to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for ambulatory surgical center representation during the review of hospital outpatient payment rates under part B of the Medicare program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bills were read the first time:

H.R. 184. An act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the excise tax on medical devices.

H.R. 1201. An act 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.

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–6033. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Florasulam; Pesticide Tolerances'' (FRL No. 9979–81) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 24, 2018; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–6034. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''1,1-Difluoroethane; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance'' (FRL No. 9980–20) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 24, 2018; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–6035. A communication from the Secretary of Defense, transmitting a report on the approved retirement of General Ellen M. Pawlikowski, United States Air Force, and her advancement to the grade of general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–6036. A communication from the Secretary of Defense, transmitting a report on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General Lawrence D. Nicholson, United States Marine Corps, and his advancement to the grade of lieutenant general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–6037. A communication from the Secretary, Securities and Exchange Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Regulation of NMS Stock Alternative Trading Systems'' (RIN3235–AL66) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 24, 2018; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–6038. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Significant New Use Rules on Certain Chemical Substances'' ((RIN2070–AB27) (FRL No. 9970–23)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 24, 2018; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–6039. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan; National Priorities List: Partial Deletion of the Peters Cartridge Factory Superfund Site'' (FRL No. 9981–26–Region 5) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 24, 2018; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–6040. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan; National Priorities List: Deletion of the Davenport and Flagstaff Smelters Superfund Site'' (FRL No. 9981–21–Region 8) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 24, 2018; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–6041. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan; National Priorities List: Deletion of the Old Esco Manufacturing Superfund Site'' (FRL No. 9981–36–Region 6) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 24, 2018; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works .

EC–6042. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Air Plan Approval; Ohio; Hospital/Medical/Infectious Waste Incinerator Withdrawal for Designated Facilities and Pollutants'' (FRL No. 9980–95–Region 5) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 24, 2018; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–6043. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Air Plan Approval and Air Quality Designation; MO; Redesignation of the Missouri Portion of the St. Louis Missouri-Illinois Area to the Attainment of the 1997 Annual Standards for Fine Particulate Matter and Approval of Associated Maintenance Plan'' (FRL No. 9981–29–Region 7) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 24, 2018; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–6044. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Additional Air Quality Designations for the 2015 Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards - San Antonio, Texas Area'' ((RIN2060–AU13) (FRL No. 9981–17–OAR)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 24, 2018; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–6045. A communication from the Acting Commissioner, Social Security Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to Supplemental Security Income (SSI) non-medical redeterminations for fiscal year 2012; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–6046. A communication from the Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''2017 Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) Report to the Nation: Reaching Victims Everywhere''; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

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 Ms. WARREN (for herself, Mr. SANDERS, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. MARKEY, and Ms. HARRIS):

S. 3262. A bill to provide the option of discharging certain unsecured financial obligations of self-governing territories of the United States; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. DURBIN:

S. 3263. A bill to limit the separation of families at or near ports of entry, to provide access to counsel for unaccompanied alien children, and to improve immigration detention, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. WICKER:

S. 3264. A bill to protect the right of law-abiding citizens to transport knives interstate, notwithstanding a patchwork of local and State prohibitions, and to repeal Federal provisions related to switchblade knives which burden citizens; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Ms. BALDWIN:

S. 3265. A bill to require the Secretary of Commerce to undertake certain activities to support waterfront community revitalization and resiliency, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. JONES (for himself, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. GRAHAM, and Mr. CORKER):

S. 3266. A bill to require a study of the well-being of the United States automotive industry and to stay the investigation into the national security effects of automotive imports until the study is completed, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself and Mr. SCHUMER):

S. 3267. A bill to establish a National Commission on Fibrotic Diseases; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mrs. MURRAY:

S. 3268. A bill to amend the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to establish a permanent, nationwide summer electronic benefits transfer for children program; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. TESTER (for himself, Mr. UDALL, and Mr. SULLIVAN):

S. 3269. A bill to establish the Department of Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee on Tribal and Indian Affairs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. INHOFE (for himself, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. WICKER, Mr. BOOZMAN, and Mr. HATCH):

S. 3270. A bill to address the need for pilot development and encourage more individuals to enter the field of aviation, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. SANDERS:

S. 3271. A bill to prohibit the use of payment of money as a condition of pretrial release in Federal criminal cases, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself and Mr. NELSON):

S. 3272. A bill to authorize the President to provide assistance to the Governments of Haiti and Armenia to reverse the effects of deforestation, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. WICKER:

S. 3273. A bill to improve the safety, efficiency, and reliability of the movement of goods through ports and intermodal connections to ports, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. BENNET:

S. 3274. A bill to amend the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 to require an individual to register as a lobbyist under such Act if the individual is employed or retained by a client for making more than one lobbying contact over a 2-year period and to treat legislative, political, and strategic counseling

in support of lobbying contacts as lobbying activity under such Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself and Mr. MCCAIN):

S. 3275. A bill to amend the Russia Sanctions Review Act of 2017 to ensure appropriate congressional review and the continued applicability of sanctions under the Sergei Magnitsky Rule of Law Accountability Act of 2012; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mrs. SHAHEEN:

S. 3276. A bill to protect and enhance core diplomatic capabilities at the Department of State; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. CRUZ (for himself, Mr. NELSON, and Mr. MARKEY):

S. 3277. A bill to reduce regulatory burdens and streamline processes related to commercial space activities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. WYDEN (for himself and Mrs. FISCHER):

S. Res. 592. A resolution designating October 9, 2018, as ''National Ada Lovelace Day'' and honoring the life and legacy of Ada Lovelace, the first computer programmer; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. WYDEN (for himself and Mrs. FISCHER):

S. Res. 593. A resolution honoring the life and legacy of Grace Hopper, professor, inventor, entrepreneur, business leader, and Rear Admiral of the Navy; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 58

At the request of Mr. HELLER, the names of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) and the Senator from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN) were added as cosponsors of S. 58, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the excise tax on high cost employer-sponsored health coverage.

S. 65

At the request of Ms. WARREN, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 65, a bill to address financial conflicts of interest of the President and Vice President.

S. 109

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Alabama (Mr. JONES) 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. 514

At the request of Mr. PERDUE, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 514, a bill to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a pilot program to provide access to magnetic EEG/EKG-guided resonance therapy to veterans.

S. 569

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) was added as a cosponsor of S. 569, a bill to amend title 54, United States Code, to provide consistent and reliable authority for, and for the funding of, the Land and Water Conservation Fund to maximize the effectiveness of the Fund for future generations, and for other purposes.

S. 781

At the request of Mr. CASSIDY, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER) 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. 821

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 821, a bill to promote access for United States officials, journalists, and other citizens to Tibetan areas of the People's Republic of China, and for other purposes.

S. 830

At the request of Mr. CASSIDY, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. YOUNG) was added as a cosponsor of S. 830, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for the coordination of programs to prevent and treat obesity, and for other purposes.

S. 835

At the request of Mr. MURPHY, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 835, a bill to require the Supreme Court of the United States to promulgate a code of ethics.

S. 896

At the request of Mr. BENNET, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. HASSAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 896, a bill to permanently reauthorize the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

S. 1050

At the request of Ms. DUCKWORTH, the names of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) and the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) were added as cosponsors of S. 1050, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the Chinese-American Veterans of World War II, in recognition of their dedicated service during World War II.

S. 1348

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Ms. HEITKAMP) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1348, a bill to amend title XI of the Social Security Act to require drug manufacturers to publicly justify unnecessary price increases.

S. 1353

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1353, a bill to require States to automatically register eligible voters to vote in elections for Federal offices, and for other purposes.

S. 1510

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1510, a bill to amend the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 to provide for online voter registration and other changes and to amend the Help America Vote Act of 2002 to improve voting, to require the Election Assistance Commission to study and report on best practices for election cybersecurity and election audits, and to make grants to States to implement those best practices recommended by the Commission.

S. 1580

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1580, a bill to enhance the transparency, improve the coordination, and intensify the impact of assistance to support access to primary and secondary education for displaced children and persons, including women and girls, and for other purposes.

S. 1989

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1989, a bill to enhance transparency and accountability for online political advertisements by requiring those who purchase and publish such ads to disclose information about the advertisements to the public, and for other purposes.

S. 2046

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2046, a bill to amend titles 5 and 44, United States Code, to require Federal evaluation activities, improve Federal data management, and for other purposes.

S. 2127

At the request of Ms. MURKOWSKI, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2127, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the United States merchant mariners of World War II, in recognition of their dedicated and vital service during World War II.

S. 2208

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

S. 2313

At the request of Mr. VAN HOLLEN, the names of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON) were added as cosponsors of S. 2313, a bill to deter foreign interference in United States elections, and for other purposes.

S. 2314

At the request of Mrs. MCCASKILL, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2314, a bill to increase the number of U.S. Customs and Border Protection Office of Field Operations officers and support staff and to require reports that identify staffing, infrastructure, and equipment needed to enhance security at ports of entry.

S. 2430

At the request of Mr. COONS, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2430, a bill to provide a permanent appropriation of funds for the payment of death gratuities and related benefits for survivors of deceased members of the uniformed services in event of any period of lapsed appropriations.

S. 2478

At the request of Mrs. MCCASKILL, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2478, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to deny the deduction for advertising and promotional expenses for prescription drugs.

S. 2506

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, the names of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) and the Senator from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2506, a bill to establish an aviation maintenance workforce development pilot program.

S. 2554

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the names of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. KENNEDY) and the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. HASSAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2554, a bill to ensure that health insurance issuers and group health plans do not prohibit pharmacy providers from providing certain information to enrollees.

S. 2565

At the request of Ms. DUCKWORTH, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) 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. 2575

At the request of Ms. WARREN, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2575, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for treatment of audiologists as physicians for purposes of furnishing audiology services under the Medicare program, to improve access to the audiology services available for coverage under the Medicare program and to enable beneficiaries to have their choice of a qualified audiologist to provide such services, and for other purposes.

S. 2580

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2580, a bill to amend title 13, United States Code, to make clear that each decennial census, as required for the apportionment of Representatives in Congress among the several States, shall tabulate the total number of persons in each State, and to provide that no information regarding United States citizenship or immigration status may be elicited in any such census.

S. 2629

At the request of Mr. CARPER, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2629, a bill to improve postal operations, service, and transparency.

S. 2633

At the request of Ms. HARRIS, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2633, a bill to amend title 18, United States Code, with respect to civil forfeitures relating to certain seized animals, and for other purposes.

S. 2759

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Alabama (Mr. JONES) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2759, a bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to reauthorize and expand the National Threat Assessment Center of the Department of Homeland Security.

S. 2881

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2881, a bill to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to seek to enter into an agreement with the city of Vallejo, California, for the transfer of Mare Island Naval Cemetery in Vallejo, California, and for other purposes.

S. 2938

At the request of Mr. SASSE, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. LANKFORD) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2938, a bill to require the Secretary of Transportation to modify provisions relating to hours of service requirements with respect to transportation of livestock and insects, and for other purposes.

S. 2946

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2946, a bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to clarify the meaning of the terms ''act of war'' and ''blocked asset'', and for other purposes.

S. 3013

At the request of Mr. CORKER, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3013, a bill to amend the Trade Expansion Act of 1962 to require Congressional approval before the President adjusts imports that are determined to threaten to impair national security.

S. 3088

At the request of Ms. DUCKWORTH, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3088, a bill to amend the Energy Policy Act of 2005 to require the Secretary of Energy to establish a program to prepare veterans for careers in the energy industry, including the solar, wind, cybersecurity, and other low-carbon emissions sectors or zero-emissions sectors of the energy industry, and for other purposes.

S. 3160

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3160, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to improve access to, and utilization of, bone mass measurement benefits under part B of the Medicare program by establishing a minimum payment amount under such part for bone mass measurement.

S. 3172

At the request of Mr. WARNER, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3172, a bill to amend title 54, United States Code, to establish, fund, and provide for the use of amounts in a National Park Service Legacy Restoration Fund to address the maintenance backlog of the National Park Service, and for other purposes.

S. 3223

At the request of Mr. RISCH, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3223, a bill to amend the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act to make supplemental funds available for the management of fish and wildlife species of greatest conservation need, as determined by State fish and wildlife agencies, and for other purposes.

S. 3231

At the request of Mr. YOUNG, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. KENNEDY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3231, a bill to establish the Task Force on the Impact of the Affordable Housing Crisis, and for other purposes.

S. 3241

At the request of Ms. WARREN, the names of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY) and the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) were added as cosponsors of S. 3241, a bill to amend the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act to provide for the termination by a spouse of a lessee of certain leases when the lessee dies while in military service.

S. 3247

At the request of Mr. BOOZMAN, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3247, a bill to improve programs and activities relating to women's entrepreneurship and economic empowerment that are carried out by the United States Agency for International Development, and for other purposes.

S. 3260

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH) was added as a cosponsor

of S. 3260, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to include individuals receiving Social Security Disability Insurance benefits under the work opportunity credit, increase the work opportunity credit for vocational rehabilitation referrals, qualified SSI recipients, and qualified SSDI recipients, expand the disabled access credit, and enhance the deduction for expenditures to remove architectural and transportation barriers to the handicapped and elderly.

S. 3261

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3261, a bill to establish the Office of Disability Policy in the legislative branch.

S. RES. 571

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 571, a resolution condemning the ongoing illegal occupation of Crimea by the Russian Federation.

S. RES. 582

At the request of Mr. SANDERS, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 582, a resolution protecting American democracy.

AMENDMENT NO. 3402

At the request of Mr. CRUZ, the names of the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES) and the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3402 intended to be proposed to H.R. 6147, a bill making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3414

At the request of Mr. UDALL, the names of the Senator from North Dakota (Ms. HEITKAMP) and the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3414 proposed to H.R. 6147, a bill making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3424

At the request of Mr. GARDNER, the names of the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON), the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. HASSAN), the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES), the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. SMITH), the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH), the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) and the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3424 intended to be proposed to H.R. 6147, a bill making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3441

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3441 intended to be proposed to H.R. 6147, a bill making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3445

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3445 intended to be proposed to H.R. 6147, a bill making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3447

At the request of Mr. JONES, the names of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) and the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3447 intended to be proposed to H.R. 6147, a bill making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3459

At the request of Ms. HEITKAMP, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3459 intended to be proposed to H.R. 6147, a bill making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3463

At the request of Mr. CARPER, the names of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) and the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3463 intended to be proposed to H.R. 6147, a bill making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3496

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the names of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN), the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT), the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY), the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON) and the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3496 intended to be proposed to H.R. 6147, a bill making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3501

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the names of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) and the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3501 intended to be proposed to H.R. 6147, a bill making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3504

At the request of Mr. PETERS, the names of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN), the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) and the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. HASSAN) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3504 intended to be proposed to H.R. 6147, a bill making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3533

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the names of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY), the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE), the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. HASSAN), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY), the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL), the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON), the Senator from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN), the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) and the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3533 intended to be proposed to H.R. 6147, a bill making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3536

At the request of Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3536 intended to be proposed to H.R. 6147, a bill making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. DURBIN:

S. 3263. A bill to limit the separation of families at or near ports of entry, to provide access to counsel for unaccompanied alien children, and to improve immigration detention, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the joint resolution be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the joint resolution was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 3263

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Humane Treatment of Migrant Children Act''.

TITLE I—KEEPING FAMILIES TOGETHER

SEC. 101. DEFINITIONS.

In this title:

(1) AGENT; OFFICER.—The terms ''agent'' and ''officer'' include contractors of the Federal Government.

(2) CHILD.—The term ''child'' means an individual who—

(A) has not reached the age of 18; and

(B) has no permanent immigration status.

(3) COMMITTEES OF JURISDICTION.—The term ''committees of jurisdiction'' means—

(A) the Committee on the Judiciary and the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives.

(4) DANGER OF ABUSE OR NEGLECT AT THE HANDS OF THE PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN.—The term ''danger of abuse or neglect at the hands of the parent or legal guardian'' shall not mean migrating to or crossing the United States border.

(5) DESIGNATED AGENCY.—The term ''designated agency'' means—

(A) the Department of Homeland Security;

(B) the Department of Justice; and

(C) the Department of Health and Human Services.

(6) FINDING.—The term ''finding'' means an individualized written assessment or screening by the trained agent or officer that includes a consultation with a child welfare specialist, formalized as required under section 102(c) and consistent with sections 103, 104, and 108.

(7) SECRETARY.—Unless otherwise specified, the term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of Homeland Security.

SEC. 102. LIMITATION ON THE SEPARATION OF FAMILIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—An agent or officer of a designated agency shall be prohibited from removing a child from his or her parent or legal guardian, at or near the port of entry or within 100 miles of the border of the United States, unless one of the following has occurred:

(1) A State court, authorized under State law, terminates the rights of a parent or legal guardian, determines that it is in the best interests of the child to be removed from his or her parent or legal guardian, in accordance with the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 (Public Law 105–89), or makes any similar determination that is legally authorized under State law.

(2) An official from the State or county child welfare agency with expertise in child trauma and development makes a best interests determination that it is in the best interests of the child to be removed from his or her parent or legal guardian because the child is in danger of abuse or neglect at the hands of the parent or legal guardian, or is a danger to herself or others.

(3) The Chief Patrol Agent or the Area Port Director in their official and undelegated capacity, authorizes separation upon the recommendation by an agent or officer, based on a finding that—

(A) the child is a victim of trafficking or is at significant risk of becoming a victim of trafficking;

(B) there is a strong likelihood that the adult is not the parent or legal guardian of the child; or

(C) the child is in danger of abuse or neglect at the hands of the parent or legal guardian, or is a danger to themselves or others.

(b) PROHIBITION ON SEPARATION.—An agency may not remove a child from a parent or legal guardian solely for the policy goal of deterring individuals from migrating to the United States or for the policy goal of promoting compliance with civil immigration laws.

(c) DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED.—The Secretary shall ensure that a separation under subsection (a)(3) is documented in writing and includes, at a minimum, the reason for such separation, together with the stated evidence for such separation.

SEC. 103. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SEPARATION BY AGENTS OR OFFICERS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of Health and Human Services, shall develop training and guidance, with an emphasis on the best interests of the child, childhood trauma, attachment, and child development, for use by the agents and officers, in order to standardize the implementation of section 102(a)(3).

(b) ANNUAL REVIEW.—Not less frequently than annually, the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall review the guidance developed under subsection (a) and make recommendations to the Secretary to ensure such guidance is in accordance with current evidence and best practices in child welfare, child development, and childhood trauma.

(c) REQUIREMENT.—The guidance under subsection (a) shall incorporate the presumptions described in section 104.

(d) ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS.—

(1) EVIDENCE-BASED.—The guidance and training developed under this section shall incorporate evidence-based practices.

(2) TRAINING REQUIRED.—

(A) All agents and officers of designated agencies, upon hire, and annually thereafter, shall complete training on adherence to the guidance under this section.

(B) All Chief Patrol Agents and Area Port Directors, upon hire, and annually thereafter, shall complete—

(i) training on adherence to the guidance under this section; and

(ii) 90 minutes of child welfare practice training that is evidence-based and trauma-informed.

SEC. 104. PRESUMPTIONS.

The presumptions described in this section are the following:

(1) FAMILY UNITY.—There shall be a strong presumption in favor of family unity.

(2) SIBLINGS.—To the maximum extent practicable, the Secretary shall ensure that sibling groups remain intact.

(3) DETENTION.—In general, there is a presumption that detention is not in the best interests of families and children.

SEC. 105. REQUIRED POLICY FOR LOCATING SEPARATED CHILDREN.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall publish final public guidance that describes, with specificity, the manner in which a parent or legal guardian may locate a child who was separated from the parent or legal guardian under section 102(a). In developing the public guidance, the Secretary shall consult with the Secretary of Health and Human Services, immigrant advocacy organizations, child welfare organizations, and State child welfare agencies.

(b) WRITTEN NOTIFICATION.—The Secretary shall provide each parent or legal guardian who was separated, with written notice of the public guidance to locate a separated child.

(c) LANGUAGE ACCESS.—All guidance shall be available in English and Spanish, and at the request of the parent or legal guardian, in the language or manner that is understandable by the parent or legal guardian.

SEC. 106. REQUIRED INFORMATION FOR SEPARATED FAMILIES.

Not less frequently than once every month, the Secretary shall provide the parent or legal guardian of a child who was separated, the following information, at a minimum:

(1) A status report on the monthly activities of the child.

(2) Information about the education and health of the child, including any medical treatment provided to the child or medical treatment recommended for the child.

(3) Information about changes to the child's immigration status.

(4) Other information about the child, designed to promote and maintain family reunification, as the Secretary determines in his or her discretion.

SEC. 107. ANNUAL REPORT ON FAMILY SEPARATION.

Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to the committees of jurisdiction a report that describes each instance in which a child was separated from a parent or legal guardian and includes, for each such instance, the following:

(1) The relationship of the adult and the child.

(2) The age and gender of the adult and child.

(3) The length of separation.

(4) Whether the adult was charged with a crime, and if the adult was charged with a crime, the type of crime.

(5) Whether the adult made a claim for asylum, expressed a fear to return, or applied for other immigration relief.

(6) Whether the adult was prosecuted if charged with a crime and the associated outcome of such charges.

(7) The stated reason for, and evidence in support of, the separation.

(8) If the child was part of a sibling group at the time of separation, whether the sibling group has had physical contact and visitation.

(9) Whether the child was rendered an unaccompanied alien child.

(10) Other information in the Secretary's discretion.

SEC. 108. CLARIFICATION OF PARENTAL RIGHTS.

If a child is separated from a parent or legal guardian, and a State court has not made a determination that the parental rights have been terminated, there is a presumption that—

(1) the parental rights remain intact; and

(2) the separation does not constitute an affirmative determination of abuse or neglect under Federal or State law.

SEC. 109. CLARIFICATION OF EXISTING LAW.

(a) FEDERAL LAW.—Nothing in this title shall be interpreted to supersede or modify Federal child welfare law, where applicable, including the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 (Public Law 105–89).

(b) STATE LAW.—Nothing in this title shall be interpreted to supersede or modify State child welfare laws where applicable.

SEC. 110. GAO REPORT ON PROSECUTION OF ASYLUM SEEKERS.

(a) STUDY.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study of the prosecution of asylum seekers during the period beginning on January 1, 2008 and ending on December 31, 2018, including—

(1) the total number of persons who claimed a fear of persecution, received a favorable credible fear determination, and were referred for prosecution;

(2) an overview and analysis of the metrics used by the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Justice to track the number of asylum seekers referred for prosecution;

(3) the total number of asylum seekers referred for prosecution, a breakdown and description of the criminal charges filed against asylum seekers during such period, and a breakdown and description of the convictions secured;

(4) the total number of asylum seekers who were separated from their children as a result of being referred for prosecution;

(5) a breakdown of the resources spent on prosecuting asylum seekers during such period, as well as any diversion of resources required to prosecute asylum seekers, and any costs imposed on States and localities;

(6) the total number of asylum seekers who were referred for prosecution and also went through immigration proceedings; and

(7) the total number of asylum seekers referred for prosecution who were deported before going through immigration proceedings.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit to Congress a report that describes the results of the study conducted pursuant to subsection (a).

TITLE II—FAIR DAY IN COURT FOR KIDS

SEC. 201. IMPROVING IMMIGRATION COURT EFFICIENCY AND REDUCING COSTS BY INCREASING ACCESS TO LEGAL INFORMATION.

(a) APPOINTMENT OF COUNSEL IN REMOVAL PROCEEDINGS; RIGHT TO REVIEW CERTAIN DOCUMENTS IN REMOVAL PROCEEDINGS.—Section 240(b) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1229a(b)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (4)—

(A) in subparagraph (A)—

(i) by striking '', at no expense to the Government,''; and

(ii) by striking the comma at the end and inserting a semicolon;

(B) by redesignating subparagraphs (B) and (C) as subparagraphs (D) and (E), respectively;

(C) by inserting after subparagraph (A) the following:

''(B) the Attorney General may appoint or provide counsel, at Government expense, to aliens in immigration proceedings;

''(C) the alien, or the alien's counsel, not later than 7 days after receiving a notice to appear under section 239(a), shall receive a complete copy of the alien's immigration file (commonly known as an 'A-file') in the possession of the Department of Homeland Security (other than documents protected from disclosure under section 552(b) of title 5, United States Code);''; and

(D) in subparagraph (D), as redesignated, by striking '', and'' and inserting ''; and''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(8) FAILURE TO PROVIDE ALIEN REQUIRED DOCUMENTS.—A removal proceeding may not proceed until the alien, or the alien's counsel, if the alien is represented—

''(A) has received the documents required under paragraph (4)(C); and

''(B) has been provided at least 10 days to review and assess such documents.''.

(b) CLARIFICATION REGARDING THE AUTHORITY OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL TO APPOINT COUNSEL TO ALIENS IN IMMIGRATION PROCEEDINGS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 292 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1362) is amended to read as follows:

''SEC. 292. RIGHT TO COUNSEL.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subsections (b) and (c), in any removal proceeding and in any appeal proceeding before the Attorney General from any such removal proceeding, the subject of the proceeding shall have the privilege of being represented by such counsel as may be authorized to practice in such proceeding as he or she may choose. This subsection shall not apply to screening proceedings described in section 235(b)(1)(A).

''(b) ACCESS TO COUNSEL FOR UNACCOMPANIED ALIEN CHILDREN.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—In any removal proceeding and in any appeal proceeding before the Attorney General from any such removal proceeding, an unaccompanied alien child (as defined in section 462(g) of the Homeland Security Act on 2002 (6 U.S.C. 279(g))) shall be represented by Government-appointed counsel, at Government expense.

''(2) LENGTH OF REPRESENTATION.—Once a child is designated as an unaccompanied alien child under paragraph (1), the child shall be represented by counsel at every stage of the proceedings from the child's initial appearance through the termination of immigration proceedings, and any ancillary matters appropriate to such proceedings even if the child attains 18 years of age or is reunified with a parent or legal guardian while the proceedings are pending.

''(3) NOTICE.—Not later than 72 hours after an unaccompanied alien child is taken into Federal custody, the alien shall be notified that he or she will be provided with legal counsel in accordance with this subsection.

''(4) WITHIN DETENTION FACILITIES.—The Secretary of Homeland Security shall ensure that unaccompanied alien children have access to counsel inside all detention, holding, and border facilities.

''(c) PRO BONO REPRESENTATION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—To the maximum extent practicable, the Attorney General should make every effort to utilize the services of competent counsel who agree to provide representation to such children under subsection (b) without charge.

''(2) DEVELOPMENT OF NECESSARY INFRASTRUCTURES AND SYSTEMS.—The Attorney General shall develop the necessary mechanisms to identify counsel available to provide pro bono legal assistance and representation to children under subsection (b) and to recruit such counsel.

''(d) CONTRACTS; GRANTS.—The Attorney General may enter into contracts with, or award grants to, nonprofit agencies with relevant expertise in the delivery of immigration-related legal services to children to carry out the responsibilities under this section, including providing legal orientation, screening cases for referral, recruiting, training, and overseeing pro bono attorneys. Nonprofit agencies may enter into subcontracts with, or award grants to, private voluntary agencies with relevant expertise in the delivery of immigration related legal services to children in order to carry out this section.

''(e) MODEL GUIDELINES ON LEGAL REPRESENTATION OF CHILDREN.—

''(1) DEVELOPMENT OF GUIDELINES.—The Executive Office for Immigration Review, in consultation with voluntary agencies and national experts, shall develop model guidelines for the legal representation of alien children in immigration proceedings, which shall be based on the children's asylum guidelines, the American Bar Association Model Rules of Professional Conduct, and other relevant domestic or international sources.

''(2) PURPOSE OF GUIDELINES.—The guidelines developed under paragraph (1) shall be designed to help protect each child from any individual suspected of involvement in any criminal, harmful, or exploitative activity associated with the smuggling or trafficking of children, while ensuring the fairness of the removal proceeding in which the child is involved.

''(f) DUTIES OF COUNSEL.—Counsel provided under this section shall—

''(1) represent the unaccompanied alien child in all proceedings and matters relating to the immigration status of the child or other actions involving the Department of Homeland Security;

''(2) appear in person for all individual merits hearings before the Executive Office for Immigration Review and interviews involving the Department of Homeland Security;

''(3) owe the same duties of undivided loyalty, confidentiality, and competent representation to the child as is due to an adult client; and

''(4) carry out other such duties, as determined by the Attorney General or the Executive Office for Immigration Review.

''(g) SAVINGS PROVISION.—Nothing in this section may be construed to supersede—

''(1) any duties, responsibilities, or disciplinary or ethical responsibilities an attorney may have to his or her client under State law;

''(2) the admission requirements under State law; or

''(3) any other State law pertaining to the admission to the practice of law in a particular jurisdiction.''.

(2) RULEMAKING.—The Attorney General shall promulgate regulations to implement section 292 of the Immigration and Nationality Act, as added by paragraph (1), in accordance with the requirements set forth in section 3006A of title 18, United States Code.

SEC. 202. ACCESS BY COUNSEL AND LEGAL ORIENTATION AT DETENTION FACILITIES.

The Secretary of Homeland Security shall provide access to counsel for all aliens detained in a facility under the supervision of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, or the Department of Health and Human Services, or in any private facility that contracts with the Federal Government to house, detain, or hold aliens.

SEC. 203. REPORT ON ACCESS TO COUNSEL.

(a) REPORT.—Not later than December 31 of each year, the Secretary of Homeland Security, in consultation with the Attorney General, shall prepare and submit to the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate and the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives a report regarding the extent to which aliens described in section 292(b) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, as added by section 201(b)(1), have been provided access to counsel.

(b) CONTENTS.—Each report submitted under paragraph (a) shall include, for the immediately preceding 1-year period—

(1) the number and percentage of aliens described in section 292(b) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, as added by section 201(b)(1), who were represented by counsel, including information specifying—

(A) the stage of the legal process at which each such alien was represented;

(B) whether the alien was in government custody; and

(C) the nationality and ages of such aliens; and

(2) the number and percentage of aliens who received legal orientation presentations, including the nationality and ages of such aliens.

SEC. 204. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Executive Office of Immigration Review of the Department of Justice such sums as may be necessary to carry out this title.

(b) BUDGETARY EFFECTS.—The budgetary effects of this title, for the purpose of complying with the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go-Act of 2010, shall be determined by reference to the latest statement titled ''Budgetary Effects of PAYGO Legislation'' for this title, submitted for printing in the Congressional Record by the Chairman of the Senate Budget Committee, provided that such statement has been submitted prior to the vote on passage.

TITLE III—IMPROVING IMMIGRATION DETENTION

SEC. 301. IMMIGRATION DETENTION PRIORITIES.

(a) PRIORITIZATION.—The Director of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement shall use the limited resources of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement to detain aliens who pose a threat to national security or public safety.

(b) PRESUMPTION.—Absent extraordinary circumstances, aliens shall not be detained if—

(1) they are known to be suffering from serious physical or mental illness;

(2) they have a disability;

(3) they are elderly, pregnant, or nursing;

(4) they are minors;

(5) they demonstrate that they are primary caretakers of a minor or an infirm person; or

(6) their detention is otherwise not in the public interest.

SEC. 302. U.S. IMMIGRATION AND CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT DETENTION FACILITY STANDARDS.

Beginning not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, all U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement detention system facilities, including contract facilities and local and county jails operating under intergovernmental service agreements, shall meet the Performance-Based National Detention Standards developed by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement in 2011, including the revisions issued in December 2016.

SEC. 303. INCREASED FUNDING FOR ALTERNATIVES TO DETENTION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Homeland Security shall provide sufficient funding to the Alternatives to Detention Division to cover alternatives to detention program costs for all aliens awaiting immigration proceedings who are not subject to detention.

(b) CONTRACTS AUTHORIZED.—The Director of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement shall contract with nonprofit service providers with the ability to provide the services required in operating an alternatives to detention program whenever feasible.

(c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to carry out this section.

SEC. 304. INCREASING THE NUMBER OF IMMIGRATION JUDGES AND STRENGTHENING MERIT-BASED HIRING AND DUE PROCESS.

(a) IMMIGRATION JUDGES.—The Attorney General shall increase the total number of immigration judges by 225, compared to the number of immigration judges authorized on the date of the enactment of this Act.

(b) SUPPORT STAFF; OTHER RESOURCES.—The Attorney General shall ensure that the Executive Office for Immigration Review has sufficient support staff, adequate technological and security resources, and appropriate facilities to conduct the immigration proceedings required under Federal law.

(c) LIMITATION.—Amounts appropriated for the Executive Office for Immigration Review or for any other Department of Justice agency or function may not be used to implement numeric judicial performance standards or other standards that could negatively impact the fair administration of justice by the immigration courts.

(d) QUALIFICATION; SELECTION.—The Attorney General shall—

(1) ensure that all newly hired immigration judges and Board of Immigration Appeals members are highly qualified and trained to conduct fair, impartial adjudications in accordance with applicable due process requirements; and

(2) in selecting immigration judges, may not give any preference to candidates with prior government experience compared to equivalent subject-matter expertise resulting from nonprofit, private bar, or academic experience.

(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to carry out this section.

SEC. 305. U.S. CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION SERVICES REFUGEE CORPS OFFICERS.

The Secretary of Homeland Security shall increase the total number of Department of Homeland Security personnel who are responsible for processing refugee applications by not fewer than the maximum number of such personnel reassigned to the Asylum Division during fiscal year 2018.

By Mr. JONES (for himself, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. GRAHAM, and Mr. CORKER):

S. 3266. A bill to require a study of the well-being of the United States automotive industry and to stay the investigation into the national security effects of automotive imports until the study is completed, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. JONES. Mr. President, I rise today on behalf of the line workers at our Alabama auto plants. I rise on behalf of our soybean and cotton farmers. I rise on behalf of countless other Alabama businesses that have contacted me because they feel threatened by proposed tariffs but are afraid to speak out publicly for fear of reprisal. In some cases they simply don't want to be seen as inflicting political damage on the President.

I came to this body to work on solutions, not to raise partisan threat levels. I am not one to unfairly level criticism at the President of the United States, but I have called it as I see it when his actions hurt our economy and my State, in particular, and I will continue to do so.

Today, I want to talk about his proposed tariffs on our allies and our trading partners. These actions have prompted retaliatory tariffs on countless Alabama goods, including cotton and soybeans. American industries overwhelmingly oppose these tariffs or, really, they are taxes on their products.

I share President Trump's desire to see continued growth in our manufacturing sector and to secure trade deals that benefit our country. His tariffs are not leading to more manufacturing jobs in Alabama. Instead, they have manufactured a crisis that threatens to permanently harm our businesses and our farms. This is a self-inflicted wound.

I am well aware that China has been a rogue actor when it comes to trade, and I support a strong response. Alabama's steel industry, for example, was hurt by the illegal dumping of Chinese steel into the global market. I witnessed it firsthand in my hometown of Fairfield, AL, once home to one of the country's largest U.S. steel facilities, which now sits virtually idle. Globe Metallurgical in Selma has been hit by the dumping of silicon metal from China. China has time and again shown a blatant disregard for American intellectual property rights. I have spoken out against these abuses and will continue to do so when they occur in the future.

We should not sweep our friends with the same brush with which we sweep China. Antagonizing allies like Canada, South Korea, and Germany for no reason at all only weakens us. According to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, more than half a million Alabama jobs are supported by global trade, meaning more than one in every four Alabama jobs are tied to trade. Those jobs are needlessly at risk to date.

I have spoken with representatives from industries across my State. Some are already hurting from the tariffs; others are OK for the moment but are fearful of consequences down the road, such as losing suppliers or taking a direct hit from retaliatory tariffs.

Many of these workers or business owners tell me they support President Trump. They want him to do well. They voted for him, and they are hesitant to speak out because they don't want to appear to be disloyal or harm him politically. They are confused as to why the President is taking steps that hurt their businesses and put their jobs at risk. They want help.

They say what we in this body already know: Tariffs are nothing more than tax increases. They are taxes that hurt American businesses, American workers, American consumers, and the American economy. In a cruel twist, they seem to be doing the most damage in the places and sectors that make up the President's base of support: farmers, autoworkers, truck drivers. These are the exact folks he promised to take care of. Nowhere is that more prevalent and evident than in our automotive industry. It is not just really an ''industry'' as we think of it in abstract terms. It means people, jobs, families, and the ability to support a family.

One of those people is a man named John Hall. John has been a maintenance worker at the Hyundai Motor manufacturing plant in Montgomery, AL, for nearly 14 years. He recently came to Washington to tell folks about what the industry has meant to his community.

At a rally last Thursday, he said that the transformation of Montgomery and the Alabama River Region has been breathtaking—breathtaking—since the Hyundai plant arrived in our State. He went on that day to testify at the Commerce Department at a hearing about whether or not imported automobiles, trucks, and parts posed a national security threat.

That bears repeating. These tariffs on automobiles—foreign automobiles and parts—are being proposed because somehow, some way foreign vehicles and parts are a threat to national security.

I don't know how else to say it, but that is a ridiculous premise, and everyone knows it. Even the President implicitly acknowledged that in one of his Twitter rants the other day when he threatened to raise auto tariffs in response to the antitrust fine levied against Google by the European Union. Not only is it not a national security threat, this industry has brought untold opportunity to Alabama and other States, particularly in the Southeast.

Before the automakers came to Alabama, our manufacturing industry was still reeling from NAFTA. Many Alabama facilities, like textile manufacturers, were closing down and moving to other countries. These automakers came to Alabama—Mercedes, Honda, Hyundai, Toyota's engine factory, which is now a Toyota and Mazda automobile factory, breaking ground soon, and they have breathed new life into our economy. They have all announced planned expansions in the last year or so.

Alabama's automotive sector employs some 50,000 people, and motor vehicle exports from Alabama reached $11 billion in 2017. Simply put, Alabama is a trade State, an exporting State. It is not just cars, either. We export about $170 million annually in soybeans to China, and that industry contributes 11,000 jobs to our State.

The day China released its list of U.S. goods that could be tariffed, soybean prices fell 40 cents that morning. Stan Usery, the president of the Alabama Soybean & Corn Association and soybean farmer, said:

> If you weighed that out in dollar figures, it was in the billions of what the value of the U.S. soybean crop lost in just that one day. Just based on the fear of an imposed tariff.

I have heard from other farmers too. Peanut contract prices have fallen flat. Pork prices have fallen $18 a head since March. Cotton prices dropped 10 cents in the wake of the initial round of tariffs. Our cattle farmers share these concerns and are anticipating potential production cost increases as a result of more expensive fuel and grain.

Just yesterday, we learned that the administration is going to spend $12 billion in taxpayer money to help offset the damage its trade war has done to American farmers. These farmers need the money. It is a self-inflicted wound, but they need it. This money might help some of the farmers somewhat in the short term, but it is a slippery slope for the President of the United States to start down.

What about the meatpackers who see less work because of reduced sales or truckdrivers who transport these goods across the country? These folks want trade, not aid. If tariffs are not reversed soon, the damage to supply chains and markets cannot be undone.

A company like Harley-Davidson can move a plant from Wisconsin overseas to avoid tariffs. My farmers in Alabama can't do that. You can't move a soybean farm. You can't move a cotton field. You can only move plants, hardware, and people.

China is one of the top markets for Alabama's cotton, poultry, pork, and soybeans. When China chooses to source these goods from Brazil, Australia, or Vietnam to avoid the President's tariffs, they will not go back to purchasing from Alabama once common sense prevails and the tariffs are rescinded. By then, it will be too late. A market will be lost, and family farms cannot recover from the loss of a business.

I know some folks back home in Alabama don't like it when the President gets criticized. They certainly don't like it when I do, and I understand that. They don't like it even when the policies of the administration may hurt Alabama.

One of my own delegation colleagues in the House went so far as to suggest that we shouldn't be worried about these automobile tariffs; we are all getting worked up over nothing. I like to think he is right, but I don't think he is, and neither do the thousands of folks who work in Alabama's automobile industry or their family members who have written or called my offices, nor do the industry representatives they have sent to Washington to plead with their elected officials for help, nor does my good friend, the senior Senator from Tennessee, with whom I am proud to be standing here today.

I believe these tariffs are bad for Alabama and bad for America.

Senator ALEXANDER, who is a strong supporter of the President on many issues, agrees that these tariffs represent a very real threat to the hundreds of thousands of jobs in the automotive industry. No region in the country would be hit harder than the Southeast, where textiles used to be king but where automobiles now reign supreme.

That is why I am here today, to stand up for my constituents and to do what I think is right. It is why, last month, Senator ALEXANDER and I wrote to Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross, urging him to reconsider the auto tariff tax proposal before it damages the automotive sector, which contributes more than 200,000 jobs to our two States. It is why I have reached out to the Commerce Department and the U.S. Trade Representatives on behalf of a number of Alabama businesses, from textiles to heating and air conditioning companies, to businesses in the energy sector, each facing their own unique crisis because of the proposed tariffs.

In fact, since I was sworn in, I have invited representatives from a number of impacted industries to come to my office to share their stores, to offer suggestions on what we can do, and to be honest about outcomes if we fail to act.

I did not come to this body to simply sit by and watch and do nothing, especially when I see a need and I need to step up. I said I would follow my conscience and do the right thing to make Alabama and America a better place. In that spirit, a short time earlier today, Senator ALEXANDER and I followed up on our letter to Secretary Ross—to which, quite frankly, we have not yet received a response—by introducing the Automotive Jobs Act of 2018. It is a bipartisan effort to halt President Trump's proposed tax on imported cars, trucks, and auto parts, which would raise the price of every automobile produced in the United States.

Our legislation would require the International Trade Commission to conduct a comprehensive study of the well-being, health, and vitality of the U.S. automotive industry. The ITC will be required to deliver the report to Congress before these tariffs could be applied.

Tariffs should be used to protect American jobs, not hurt them. In the coming weeks, I will be looking at other legislative solutions to help other sectors impacted by the President's tariffs, but the President can save our auto industry today by simply calling off the 232 investigation.

If we are not vigilant, hard-working Alabamians are going to be the losers in this game of chicken with China, the European Union, and others. The small family farmers, the line workers at our auto plants, the truckdrivers who transport Alabama-made products to market, and our port, all stand to lose the gains that we have made in the last couple of decades.

It is my hope that through this legislation we can demonstrate beyond any doubt the positive benefits the auto industry brings to Alabama, Tennessee, and many other States across the country.

Instead of pursuing these tariffs, we should be partnering with our allies who have also been treated unfairly by countries like China and present a united front against bad actors and their harmful trade practices.

I believe in the great potential of our Nation's automobile industry, and I want to empower both the American and foreign automakers who have already invested significantly in this country. This is a thriving industry and one supported by the greatest workforce in the world. Let's help it to continue to grow and support good-paying jobs in our communities. We need to stand united against these proposed tariffs.

President Trump, Alabamians are counting on you to do the right thing by those who stood with you. I hope you will do so.

I yield for my friend, the senior Senator from Tennessee, Mr. ALEXANDER.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Alabama for his leadership and his remarks.

The President of the United States has got the world's attention with his tariffs. He met today with the President of the European Commission, but what should get more attention than

the tariffs is President Trump's solution for the tariffs: zero tariffs, zero barriers—which, as the President said at the G7 summit in June, is the way it should be. He said that again last night and again today. After his meeting with the President of the European Commission in the Oval Office, President Trump said: ''If we could have no tariffs and no barriers and no subsidies, the United States would be extremely pleased.''

Well, so would I, Mr. President, but that is not what is happening. Piling tariffs on top of tariffs with no end in sight is a trade war and will hurt American workers.

But the basis of the President's long-term solution is ''reciprocity,'' a word he has also used many times, which means, when it comes to trade, other countries should do for the United States what the United States does for them. Taking steps in the direction of reciprocity, rather than a trade war, would be much better for the American worker.

Today I have come to the floor with Senator JONES to introduce legislation that would delay the administration's proposed 25 percent tariff on automobiles and auto parts imported from other countries into the United States until the President has the benefit of a second opinion from the International Trade Commission about the effects those tariffs would have on the more than 7 million Americans who work in the auto industry.

After the President and the Congress have received the International Trade Commission's study and the President has this second opinion, he may still continue with the section 232 investigation if he chooses to do so.

I have no doubt that there is a trade problem, and some countries are taking advantage of us. I also have no doubt that shooting yourself in both feet at once is not the right solution to our problem, which is what would happen if we continue these tariffs for a long time. That is not the best way to solve the problem.

These tariffs are dangerous. These tariffs are going to cost us jobs. These tariffs are going to lower our family incomes. These tariffs are going to undo much of the good the President and the Congress have done during the last year and a half to create this booming economy, which is booming like none of us have seen for a long, long time. We don't want to interrupt that.

A better strategy is the one that the President himself has suggested and that I believe would be much more effective: Insist on reciprocity. Say to other countries: Do for our country what we do for you—just as the President said at the G7 summit: ''no tariffs, no barriers is the way it should be.'' And just as he said today to the President of the European Commission.

May I suggest a first step in that direction? It might be to agree on the same tariffs on light trucks and cars that are traded between the United States and the European Union. Currently, the European Union levies a 10-percent tariff on light trucks that come from the United States, and the United States levies a 25-percent tariff on trucks imported from the European Union. Similarly, the European Union levies a 10-percent tariff on cars imported from this country. The United States levies a 2.5 percent tariff on cars that come to us from Europe. A first step for the solution would be to make these tariffs the same.

Now, my late friend Alex Haley once told me that if I begin a speech by saying ''instead of making a speech, let me tell you a story,'' someone might actually listen to what I have to say. So let me tell you a story about how tariffs affect Tennessee.

This is a story about a Canadian company, Onward Manufacturing Company, which 8 years ago had a choice between locating its new plant either in the United States or in China. The company chose Dickson, TN, where today about 300 Tennesseans have good-paying jobs making Broil King gas grills, which the company then exports to Canada and Europe.

The company decided on Tennessee instead of China because NAFTA—the North American Free Trade Agreement—made it possible to buy materials and parts to manufacture their grills in the United States and Canada without paying tariffs. That is the advantage of zero tariffs.

Broil King buys the steel and aluminum the company uses to make grills from U.S. producers. But in 2016, our country imposed tariffs on steel from China that is used to manufacture grills. That increased the cost of imported steel, and that had the effect of increasing the price of steel made in the United States.

Then, on March 23 of this year, our country imposed another 25 percent tariff on steel and 10 percent on aluminum, after the Commerce Department's section 232 investigation concluded that those imports were a threat to national security. This also had the effect of raising the price of steel and aluminum that Broil King used to make gas grills in Dickson, TN. Prices for U.S.-produced steel that Broil King buys are up by 40 percent since January, according to the trade publication Steel Benchmark.

This is called shooting yourself in one foot. Now, here goes the other foot.

Europe and Canada then responded to the U.S. tariffs on steel and aluminum by imposing tariffs on U.S. products sold in Europe and Canada, including gas grills.

Broil King exports about 60 percent of the grills the company makes in Tennessee to Canada and Europe. Remember, they located their plant here so they could do that.

The company told me last week that they are losing money on every grill they sell in Europe because of the combination of steel and aluminum tariffs and the response by Europe and Canada.

Broil King is also hurt by the March 2018 announcement that tariffs would be imposed on $50 billion by the United States on Chinese goods because the company buys some parts from China that it uses to make gas grills in Tennessee.

Now, here is what is causing the owners of Broil King to wonder why they ever decided to locate a plant in Dickson, TN, instead of China. The new U.S. tariffs do not apply to barbecue gas grills made in China that are already assembled, which means that every one of Broil King's competitors in China can import their grills into the United States without any tariff on it.

So here is the bottom line. These new tariffs make it difficult to make a profit on gas grills made in Dickson, TN, and leave the U.S. market wide open for gas grills made in China.

That is what happened to one small company that employs 300 Tennesseans and buys its steel and aluminum from U.S. suppliers when we begin piling tariffs on top of tariffs with no end in sight. That is what happens with a trade war.

That is why I like what the President said this morning to the President of the European Commission. ''If we could have no tariffs and no barriers and no subsidies,'' the President said, ''the United States would be extremely pleased.'' So would workers in Tennessee. That would be better for the 300 workers in Dickson, TN.

Here is another story. It is about Electrolux. I visited Springfield, TN, outside Nashville, a few weeks ago. The mayor and the chamber of commerce officials rushed up to me. The new tariffs on steel had been announced, and the largest employer in Springfield—Electrolux, which makes home supplies—had cancelled a $250 million expansion. Electrolux buys all of its steel from U.S. suppliers, but, of course, when you raise the price on imported steel, the price of U.S. steel also goes up, and Electrolux concluded that it could not be competitive in the U.S. market and with exports at the higher price.

Of course, it sounds good to say that putting a 10-percent tariff on Chinese-made goods is good for us, but Electrolux also buys some components made in China. Last week, the company said the latest U.S. tariffs on Chinese-made goods would cost the company $10 million during the second half of this year if the proposed 10 percent tariffs go into effect after a comment period ending in late August. That is Electrolux in Springfield, TN.

Now, if we were moving toward a policy of reciprocity—do for us what we do for you—there would be zero tariffs, and the people of Springfield would have a $250 million expansion and the jobs that come with it instead of a 25-percent tax on the U.S. steel that Electrolux buys.

Then there are the stories about the effects of steel and aluminum tariffs on

tire companies. We have three big tire companies in Tennessee. Bridgestone is one of them, with 1,700 employees. I will talk about it for just a moment.

Bridgestone tires all have steel cords to make them stronger. None of that steel is produced in the United States. All of it is imported. Now all of it has a 25-percent tax. Who pays that? The American consumer. The same must be true for every tire-making company.

Here is one more story. You have probably heard of Bush Brothers' beans. They can one-third of all the beans in the United States. Their plant is in Chestnut Hill, in the mountains of East Tennessee, near where I live.

The cans are made of tin-plated steel that is mostly imported. There is not enough produced in the United States. Bush Brothers & Company estimates that the new tariff on steel will reduce its revenues and raise prices by as much as 8 percent.

Even the workers in Chestnut Hill who can one-third of all of the beans in the United States would benefit from a zero tariff policy such as the one the President talked about today, instead of a trade war that piles tariffs on top of tariffs.

We have many more stories. We have over 900 auto parts suppliers in Tennessee. They are in 88 of our 95 counties. Almost all of them use steel and aluminum. When the prices go up, revenues and profits go down. That has an effect on 136,000 Tennesseans. Those are the people who work in our automotive industry. That is one-third of our entire manufacturing workforce.

Tariffs are taxes, pure and simple—taxes we pay. Existing tariffs on steel and aluminum are bad enough, but nothing could do more damage to Tennessee's auto industry than the proposed tariffs on imported automobiles and automotive parts. Those, combined with already imposed tariffs on steel and aluminum, will cost us jobs and lower our family incomes.

I respectfully said to President Trump both publicly and privately that he and the Republican Congress have accomplished an enormous amount in 18 months. I am very proud of that. This booming economy is something that benefits so many Americans. But I am afraid that if we do not move quickly toward the President's announced long-term goal of no tariffs and that if we continue to pile tariffs on top of tariffs, we will take this economy in exactly the opposite direction and undo much of the good the Republican President and the Republican Congress have already done.

What would take us in the right direction is the goal of reciprocity that the President talked about today. That is why, in the meantime, until we shift gears into this long-term goal of no tariffs, no subsidies, no barriers, and take steps toward it, Senator JONES and I have developed this bill to make sure the President has all the facts before he makes a decision on the proposed 25-percent tariff on imported cars and parts. It simply requires the Commerce Department's investigation to be delayed while we get more facts about the impact of these tariffs on the automotive industry.

The President is right to focus on China. China steals our intellectual property, and it imposes other trade barriers. But tariffs on steel and aluminum and uncertainty surrounding the negotiation of NAFTA threaten to destroy many more U.S. jobs than they might save.

We should remember the lessons of history. Presidents have tried this before.

When I first came to the Senate, President George W. Bush imposed steel tariffs. Within a year, he dropped the idea because the tariffs destroyed more jobs in the automotive industry than existed in the steel industry at that time, according to the Consuming Industries Trade Action Coalition.

Let's look at today. Last year, the U.S. steel industry employed about 139,000 Americans, according to the Congressional Research Service. About 162,000 worked in the aluminum industry. That is around 300,000 Americans who work in the steel and aluminum industry. To put this in perspective, the automotive industry employs 20 times that many Americans—more than 7 million, according to the Auto Alliance, and 136,000 of those, as I have said, are Tennesseans.

There are only eight aluminum smelting plants operating in the United States that employ Americans. They employ about 4,000. Seven of those are actually producing. One is curtailed. Alcoa, which produces about half the aluminum produced in the United States, doesn't even want the tariffs. It makes me wonder, who does want the tariffs on aluminum?

The main reason those smelting plants—one of which is in my hometown and my father worked at for 40 years—have closed has nothing to do with trade. It is because aluminum plants need a lot of cheap electricity to run through the bauxite ore to make aluminum ingots, and they can't buy electricity that cheap in the United States. The 10-percent tariff already imposed on aluminum is not nearly enough to offset the cost of electricity.

The reason I have been so outspoken about this is that no state is more likely to be more damaged by tariffs on aluminum and steel and on automobiles and auto parts than Tennessee. In many ways, over the last 40 years, we have become the Nation's No. 1 auto State, with our more than 136,000 Tennesseans working in the automotive industry. There are three big assembly plants—General Motors, Volkswagen, and Nissan—and over 900 auto suppliers in 88 of our 95 counties. As Senator JONES said, 35 years ago, we were the third poorest state and textile plants were moving overseas. Things looked bleak for us. In came the auto industry with better paying jobs, and our family incomes have been going up ever since in almost every county. I don't want to see that hurt. Tennesseans who work in the auto industry would benefit, as they have under NAFTA, from zero tariffs instead of a trade war that piles tariffs on top of tariffs.

In conclusion, the President has gotten the world's attention with his tariffs. As a tactic, perhaps he is wise to do that. He had the President of the European Commission in his office today, but what should get more attention and what I hope gets more attention also from the President is the solution he talked about again today. ''If we could have no tariffs and no barriers and no subsidies,'' the President said, ''the United States would be extremely pleased.'' That is the way it should be. Let's move toward that goal as rapidly as we can. Piling tariffs on top of tariffs with no end in sight is a trade war. It hurts American workers.

The basis of the President's solution is reciprocity—a word he has used many times—which means when it comes to trade, other countries should do for the United States what we do for them. Taking steps in that direction would be the right way to go.

In the meantime, the bill Senator JONES and I have introduced will make certain that President Trump has before him all the facts—in effect, a second opinion—before he makes a decision regarding the proposed 25-percent tariffs on imported automobiles and automotive parts.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself and Mr. NELSON):

S. 3272. A bill to authorize the President to provide assistance to the Governments of Haiti and Armenia to reverse the effects of deforestation, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 3272

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Haiti and Armenia Reforestation Act of 2018''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS; PURPOSE.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that—

(1) the established policy of the Federal Government is to support and seek the protection of forests around the world, which provide a wide range of benefits by—

(A) harboring a major portion of the biological and terrestrial resources of Earth;

(B) providing habitats for almost ⅔ of all species on Earth, including species essential to medical research and agricultural productivity;

(C) contributing to the livelihood of more than 1,600,000,000 people through access to food, fresh water, clothing, traditional medicines, and shelter;

(D) ensuring environmental services, such as biodiversity, water conservation, soil enrichment, water supply management, and climate regulation; and

(E) absorbing and storing carbon dioxide, as deforestation accounts for approximately 12 percent of the global anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to global warming;

(2) while forests cover a little less than ⅓ of the land area on Earth, approximately 85 percent of Earth's original primary forests have been destroyed, degraded, or fragmented;

(3) in Haiti—

(A) the destruction of forests began centuries ago, when 17th century colonists cut down trees for lumber, fuel, and furniture;

(B) the 18th century plantation economy resulted in hillsides near towns being stripped of trees;

(C) after gaining independence, deforestation continued as Haiti rebuilt its local economy by growing coffee and exporting timber;

(D) in 1923, more than 60 percent of the land was forested, but by the 1940s and 1950s deforestation was accelerating as an increasing population put more pressure on forests;

(E) in recent years, urbanization has expanded exponentially and growing cities have depended on charcoal produced by cutting down trees in the countryside;

(F) poor forestry and land use policies by the Government of Haiti has exacerbated deforestation, and by 2014, forest cover had decreased to approximately 9 to 11 percent of the country; and

(G) between 2000 and 2016, 5,430 hectares of forest cover were lost, equal to 6.3 percent of Haiti's tree cover;

(4) in Armenia—

(A) while archeological data indicated that approximately 35 percent of the country was originally forested—

(i) less than 12 percent of the country was covered in forest in 1990; and

(ii) less than 6 percent of the country was covered in forest by 2016; and

(B) in August, 2017, a fire caused significant damage to the Khosrov Forest, which is among the world's oldest protected areas, engulfing more than 2,733 hectares in flames and causing substantial harm to hundreds of unique plant species;

(5) economic pressures, resulting from more than 60 percent of the population of Haiti living below the poverty line and 29.8 percent of the population of Armenia living below the poverty line—

(A) are factors contributing to the deforestation of Haiti and Armenia; and

(B) are manifested particularly through the cutting of areas of forest for conversion to agricultural and commercial uses, where wood and charcoal produced from cutting down trees accounts for a major supply toward Haiti's and Armenia's energy sectors;

(6) forests provide cover to soften the effect of heavy rains and reduce erosion by anchoring the soil with tree roots;

(7) a significant effect of the deforestation in Haiti and Armenia is soil erosion, which has—

(A) lowered the productivity on the land due to the leaching of nutrients in topsoils;

(B) worsened the severity of droughts and the effects of landslides and floods;

(C) led to further deforestation due to slash and burn practices when eroded areas are no longer productive;

(D) increased the pressure on the remaining land and trees in Haiti and Armenia; and

(E) significantly decreased water quality and the quantity of freshwater and clean drinking water available to populations;

(8) research strongly suggests that deforestation increases the risk of infectious diseases, including malaria, dengue fever, SARS, Ebola, Hantavirus, and Zika—

(A) by depriving insect and animal carriers of habitat; and

(B) by directly increasing their rate of exposure to human populations who are susceptible to zoonotic pathogens;

(9) both Haiti and Armenia have faced natural disasters in recent years, the effects of which have been exacerbated by deforestation, such as—

(A) flooding in Armenia that has swept away or damaged thousands of homes, schools, health clinics, and other institutions, partly because of damage to forests through illegal logging, landslides, and soil erosion;

(B) hurricanes in Haiti that have killed thousands and displaced hundreds of thousands more, partly because the clearing of large hillsides enabled rainwater to run off directly into settlements located at the bottom of slopes, causing severe flooding; and

(C) the January 2010 earthquake in Haiti, which destroyed much of the infrastructure of Port-au-Prince, reduced hillside stability and increased the likelihood of mudslides, soil erosion, and flooding factors, which negatively impacted the water supply and heightened concerns for the spread of waterborne diseases;

(10) economic benefits for local communities from sustainable uses of forests are critical for the long-term sustainable management of forests in Haiti and Armenia;

(11) Congress appropriated funding for fiscal years 2015, 2017, and 2018 to support market-based reforestation programs in Haiti, which have resulted in successful agroforestry activities that have increased crop production, profits, and tree cover; and

(12) reforestation efforts would provide new sources of jobs, income, and investments in Haiti and Armenia by—

(A) providing employment opportunities in tree seedling programs, contract tree planting and management, sustainable agricultural initiatives, sustainable and managed timber harvesting, and wood products milling and finishing services; and

(B) enhancing community enterprises that generate income through the trading of sustainable forest resources, many of which exist on small scales.

(b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this Act is to provide assistance to the Government of Haiti and the Government of Armenia to develop and implement, or improve, nationally appropriate policies and actions—

(1) to reduce deforestation and forest degradation, and improve forest management and natural regeneration;

(2) to increase annual rates of afforestation and reforestation in a sustainable, measurable, reportable, and verifiable manner;

(3) to restore social and economic conditions for the environmental recovery of the forest cover of Haiti and Armenia to at least 7 percent of total land mass in Haiti and 12 percent of total land mass in Armenia (as determined under section 302(a)) not later than 10 years after the date of the enactment of this Act; and

(4) to improve sustainable resource management at the watershed level.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) AFFORESTATION.—The term ''afforestation''—

(A) means the establishment of a new forest through the planting of trees on a parcel of land not previously forested; and

(B) includes—

(i) the introduction of a tree species to a parcel of nonforested land in which the species is not a native species; and

(ii) the increase of tree cover through plantations.

(2) AGROFORESTRY.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ''agroforestry'' means systems in which perennial trees or shrubs—

(i) are integrated with crops or livestock; and

(ii) constitute a minimum 10 percent of ground cover.

(B) INCLUSION.—Actual forest cover resulting from agroforestry programs may be counted toward the total forest cover goal set forth in section (2)(b)(3).

(3) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS.—The term ''appropriate committees of Congress'' means—

(A) the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate;

(B) the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate;

(C) the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives; and

(D) the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives.

(4) DEFORESTATION.—The term ''deforestation'' means—

(A) the conversion of forest to another land use; or

(B) the long-term reduction of the tree canopy.

(5) FOREST.—The term ''forest''—

(A) except as provided in subparagraph (B), means a terrestrial ecosystem containing native tree species generated and maintained primarily through natural ecological and evolutionary processes, which spans more than 0.5 hectares with trees higher than 5 meters and a canopy cover of more than 10 percent or trees able to reach these thresholds in situ; and

(B) does not include—

(i) plantations, such as crops of trees planted primarily by humans for the purposes of harvesting; or

(ii) land that is predominantly under agricultural or urban land use.

(6) REFORESTATION.—The term ''reforestation''—

(A) means the establishment of forest on lands that were previously considered as forest, but which have been deforested; and

(B) includes the increase of tree cover through plantations.

TITLE I—FORESTATION AND WATERSHED MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE TO THE GOVERNMENT OF HAITI AND THE GOVERNMENT OF ARMENIA

SEC. 101. FORESTATION ASSISTANCE.

(a) AUTHORITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In accordance with section 118 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2151p–1) and consistent with paragraph (2), the President is authorized to provide financial assistance, technology transfers, or capacity-building assistance to the Government of Haiti and to the Government of Armenia for activities to develop and implement 1 or more forestation proposals described in paragraph (2)—

(A) to reduce the deforestation of Haiti or Armenia; and

(B) to increase the rates of afforestation and reforestation in Haiti or Armenia.

(2) PROPOSALS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Assistance may be provided under this section to the Government of Haiti and to the Government of Armenia to implement 1 or more proposals submitted by either country that contain—

(i) a description of each policy and initiative to be carried out with such assistance;

(ii) adequate documentation to ensure, as determined by the President, that—

(I) each policy and initiative—

(aa) will be carried out and managed in accordance with widely-accepted, environmentally-sustainable forestry and agricultural practices; and

(bb) will be designed and implemented in a manner that improves the governance of forests by building local capacity to be transparent, inclusive, accountable, and coordinated in decision-making processes and the implementation of the policy or initiative; and

(II) the proposals will further establish and enforce legal regimes, standards, and safeguards designed to ensure that members of local communities in affected areas, as partners and primary stakeholders, will be engaged in the design, planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the policies and initiatives; and

(iii) a description of how the proposal supports and aids forest restoration efforts in accordance with the purpose set forth in section 2(b).

(B) DETERMINATION OF COMPATIBILITY WITH CERTAIN PROGRAMS.—In evaluating each proposal submitted under subparagraph (A), the President shall ensure that each policy and initiative described in such proposal is compatible with—

(i) broader development, poverty alleviation, sustainable energy usage, and natural resource conservation objectives and initiatives in Haiti or in Armenia;

(ii) the development, poverty alleviation, disaster risk management, and climate resilience programs of the United States Agency for International Development, including program involving technical support from the United States Forest Service; and

(iii) activities of international organizations and multilateral development banks.

(b) ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES.—Any assistance received by the Government of Haiti or by the Government of Armenia under subsection (a)(1) shall be conditional upon the development and implementation of a proposal submitted under subsection (a)(2), which may include—

(1) the provision of technologies and associated support for activities to reduce deforestation or increase afforestation and reforestation rates, including—

(A) fire reduction initiatives;

(B) sustainable land use management initiatives;

(C) initiatives to increase agricultural productivity;

(D) forest law enforcement initiatives;

(E) the development of timber tracking systems;

(F) the development of cooking fuel substitutes;

(G) tree-planting initiatives; and

(H) programs that are designed to focus on market-based solutions to reduce deforestation and increase reforestation and afforestation, including programs that leverage the international carbon-offset market;

(2) the enhancement and expansion of governmental and nongovernmental institutional capacity to effectively design and implement a proposal developed under subsection (a)(2) through initiatives, including—

(A) the establishment of transparent, accountable, and inclusive decision-making processes relating to all stakeholders (including affected local communities);

(B) the promotion of enhanced coordination among ministries and agencies responsible for agro-ecological zoning, mapping, land planning and permitting, sustainable agriculture, forestry, mining, and law enforcement; and

(C) the clarification of land tenure and resource rights of affected communities, including local communities;

(3) the development and support of institutional capacity to measure, verify, and report the activities carried out by the Government of Haiti and by the Government of Armenia to reduce deforestation and increase afforestation and reforestation rates through the use of appropriate methods, including—

(A) the use of best practices and technologies to monitor land use change in Haiti and in Armenia, and changes in the extent of natural forest cover, protected areas, mangroves, agroforestry, and agriculture;

(B) the monitoring of the impacts of policies and initiatives on—

(i) affected communities;

(ii) the biodiversity of the environment of Haiti and Armenia; and

(iii) the health of the forests of Haiti and Armenia; and

(C) independent and participatory forest monitoring; and

(4) the development of and coordination with watershed restoration programs in Haiti and Armenia, including—

(A) agreements between the Government of Haiti or the Government of Armenia and nongovernmental organizations or private sector partners to provide technical assistance, capacity building, or technology transfers which support the environmental recovery of Haiti's and Armenia's watersheds through forest restoration activities if such assistance will—

(i) strengthen economic drivers of sustainable resource inventory mapping and management;

(ii) reduce environmental vulnerability; or

(iii) improve governance, planning, and community action of watersheds in Haiti and Armenia;

(B) actions to support economic incentives for sustainable resource management, including enhanced incentives for the replacement of annual hillside cropping with perennial and non-erosive production systems;

(C) enhanced extension services supporting the sustainable intensification of agriculture to increase farmer incomes and reduce pressure on degraded land; and

(D) investments in watershed infrastructure to reduce environmental vulnerability, including the establishment of appropriate erosion control measures through reforestation activities in targeted watersheds or sub-watersheds.

(c) DEVELOPMENT OF PERFORMANCE METRICS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—If the President provides assistance to the Government of Haiti or the Government of Armenia under subsection (a)(1), the President, in cooperation with such government, shall develop appropriate performance metrics to measure, verify, and report—

(A) the implementation of each policy and initiative to be carried out by the Government of Haiti or the Government of Armenia, as the case may be;

(B) the progress of each policy and initiative with respect to the forests of Haiti and Armenia; and

(C) impacts of reforestation policies and initiatives on the local communities of Haiti and Armenia.

(2) REQUIREMENTS.—Performance metrics developed under paragraph (1) shall include, to the maximum extent practicable, short-term and long-term metrics to evaluate the implementation of each policy and initiative contained in each proposal developed under subsection (a)(2).

(d) REPORTS.—

(1) INITIAL REPORT.—Not later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall submit a report to the appropriate committees of Congress that describes the actions the President has taken, or plans to take—

(A) to engage with the Government of Haiti and the Government of Armenia, nongovernmental stakeholders, civil society, and public and private nonprofit organizations to implement this section; and

(B) to enter into agreements with the Government of Haiti and with the Government of Armenia under subsection (a)(1).

(2) BIENNIAL REPORTS.—Not later than 2 years after the date on which the President first provides assistance to the Government of Haiti or the Government of Armenia under subsection (a)(1), and biennially thereafter, the President shall submit a report to the appropriate committees of Congress that describes the progress made by the Government of Haiti and by the Government of Armenia in implementing each policy and initiative contained in the proposal submitted by each such government under subsection (a)(2).

(e) ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The President is authorized to provide financial and other assistance to the Government of Haiti, the Government of Armenia, local government bodies, or nongovernmental organizations—

(A) to provide information to local communities relating to each policy and initiative to be carried out by the Government of Haiti or by the Government of Armenia with assistance made available under subsection (a)(1);

(B) to promote effective participation by local communities in the design, implementation, and independent monitoring of each policy and initiative;

(C) to promote, in support of sustainable forestation activities, enhanced watershed governance, national planning, and community action programs that increase—

(i) the development of national watershed management policies for Haiti and for Armenia by the appropriate government ministries and agencies;

(ii) the establishment of an effective forum for donor coordination related to management and reforestation in Haiti and Armenia;

(iii) support for the Centre National de l'Information Géo-Spatiale (CNIGS), the Center for Ecological-Noosphere Studies (CENS), and the United States Forest Service to provide technology, data, and monitoring support for improved watershed and forest resource management at a national scale in Haiti and in Armenia; and

(iv) development of effective governance structures in Haiti and in Armenia for stakeholder engagement, coordination of approaches, land use planning, and disaster mitigation at the watershed scale; and

(D) to meet the goals of this Act.

(2) TERMINATION OF DIRECT FUNDING.—If the President determines that the goals of this Act are not being appropriately and efficiently met with the assistance provided under this section, the President may terminate such assistance to either the Government of Haiti or the Government of Armenia, as appropriate.

(f) MINIMUM COUNTRY REFORESTATION FUND PERCENTAGE.—Not less than 85 percent of amounts provided for programs under this section shall be spent on actual reforestation activities in Haiti and Armenia, which may include the protection of reforested areas.

(g) SUNSET.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The authority under this section shall terminate on the date that is 10 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, or the date that is 10 years after an extension under paragraph (2), unless the President certifies to the appropriate committees of Congress that—

(A) effective and sustainable programs are in place through the Government of Haiti, the Government of Armenia, or local governments in Haiti or in Armenia, in potential partnership with international donors, nongovernmental organizations, or civil society

groups, to protect and manage areas reforested with assistance provided under this Act; and

(B) additional time is necessary to accomplish the goals of this Act.

(2) EXTENSIONS.—If a certification is made under paragraph (1), the authority under this section shall be extended for an additional 10-year term. Not more than 2 extensions are permitted under this paragraph.

TITLE II—GRANTS FOR REFORESTATION

SEC. 201. REFORESTATION GRANT PROGRAM.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The President is authorized to establish a grant program to carry out the purpose described in section 2(b), including reversing deforestation and improving reforestation and afforestation in Haiti and in Armenia.

(b) GRANTS AUTHORIZED.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The President is authorized to award grants and contracts, for a period not to exceed 3 years, to carry out projects that, in the aggregate, reverse deforestation and improve reforestation and afforestation in Haiti or in Armenia.

(2) MAXIMUM AMOUNT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), the President may not award a grant under this section in an amount greater than $500,000 per year.

(B) EXCEPTION.—The President may award a grant under this section in an amount greater than $500,000 per year if the President determines that the recipient of the grant has demonstrated success with respect to a project that was funded under this section.

(c) USE OF FUNDS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Grants awarded pursuant to subsection (b) may be used—

(A) to provide a financial incentive to protect forests;

(B) to provide hands-on management and oversight of replanting efforts;

(C) to support sustainable, income-generating, forest-related economic growth;

(D) to provide—

(i) seed money to start cooperative reforestation and afforestation efforts; and

(ii) subsequent conditional funding for such efforts contingent upon required tree care and maintenance activities;

(E) to promote the widespread use of—

(i) improved cooking stove technologies that do not involve the harvesting of forest growth; and

(ii) other renewable fuel technologies that reduce deforestation and improve human health; and

(F) securing the involvement and commitment of local communities—

(i) to protect forests in existence as of the date of the enactment of this Act; and

(ii) to partner in and carry out afforestation and reforestation activities.

(2) LOCAL COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION.—Activities to secure the participation of local communities under paragraph (1)(F) should include 1 or more of the following activities:

(A) Creation of local jobs involving establishing, protecting, and managing reforested areas.

(B) Collaboration to analyze biodiversity and ecosystem services integral to sustainability and business decisions.

(C) Cooperative conservation programs, including—

(i) working with local water sources to ensure clean water through improved forestland and watershed; or

(ii) working with food suppliers to ensure sustainable agroforestry products.

(3) CONSISTENCY WITH PROPOSALS.—To the maximum extent practicable, projects using grant funds shall support, and be consistent with, the proposal developed under section 101(a)(2) that is the subject of the project.

(d) APPLICATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—An entity desiring a grant under this section shall submit an application at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the President may reasonably require.

(2) CONTENT.—Each application submitted under paragraph (1)—

(A) should be consistent with the findings, recommendations, and ongoing work relating to—

(i) the United States Agency for International Development Haiti Reforestation Project for Haiti; or

(ii) the 2009 United States Agency for International Development report entitled ''Biodiversity Analysis Update for Armenia Final Report: Prosperity, Livelihoods, and Conserving Ecosystems (PLACE) IQC Task Order #4''; and

(B) shall include—

(i) a description of the objectives to be attained;

(ii) a description of the manner in which grant funds will be used;

(iii) a plan for evaluating the success of the project based on verifiable evidence; and

(iv) to the extent that the applicant intends to use nonnative species in afforestation efforts—

(I) an explanation of the benefit of using nonnative species rather than native species; and

(II) verification that the species to be used are not invasive.

(3) PREFERENCE FOR CERTAIN PROJECTS.—In awarding grants under this section, preference shall be given to applicants that propose—

(A) to develop market-based solutions to the challenges of reforestation in Haiti and Armenia, including the use of conditional cash transfers and similar financial incentives to protect reforestation efforts;

(B) to partner with local communities and cooperatives; and

(C) to focus on efforts that build local capacity to sustain growth after the completion of the underlying grant project.

(e) DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION.—The President shall collect and widely disseminate information about the effectiveness of the demonstration projects assisted under this section.

SEC. 202. FOREST PROTECTION PROGRAMS.

Chapter 7 of part I of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2281 et seq.) is amended—

(1) by redesignating sections 461 through 466 as sections 471 through 476, respectively; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''SEC. 477. PILOT PROGRAM FOR HAITI.

''(a) SUBMISSION OF LIST OF AREAS OF SEVERELY DEGRADED NATURAL RESOURCES.—The President, in cooperation with nongovernmental conservation organizations, shall invite the Government of Haiti to submit a list of areas within Haiti in which forests are seriously degraded or threatened.

''(b) REVIEW OF LIST.—The President shall—

''(1) analyze the areas on the list submitted by the Government of Haiti under subsection (a); and

''(2) seek to reach an agreement with the Government of Haiti to assist with the restoration and future sustainable use of such areas.

''(c) GRANT PROGRAM.—

''(1) GRANTS AUTHORIZED.—The President is authorized to award grants to nongovernmental organizations, on such terms and conditions as may be necessary, for the purchase on the open market of discounted debt of the Government of Haiti, if a market is determined to be viable, in exchange for commitments by the Government of Haiti—

''(A) to restore forests identified pursuant to subsection (a); or

''(B) to develop plans for sustainable use of such forests.

''(2) MANAGEMENT OF PROTECTED AREAS.—Each recipient of a grant under this subsection shall participate in the ongoing management of the area or areas protected pursuant to such grant.

''(3) MATCHING OF GRANT FUNDS.—Any United States funding provided to a nongovernmental organization under this subsection should be matched by an equal or greater amount of funding from the nongovernmental organization. Such matching funds may include funding provided by other international donors, nongovernmental organizations, philanthropic bodies, corporations or other private entities, institutions of higher learning, the Government of Haiti, or other non-United States Government sources.

''(4) MINIMUM COUNTRY REFORESTATION FUND PERCENTAGE.—Not less than 85 percent of grant funds provided under this subsection shall be spent on actual reforestation activities in Haiti, which may include the protection of reforested areas.

''(5) RETENTION OF PROCEEDS.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a grantee (or any subgrantee) under this subsection may retain, without deposit in the Treasury of the United States and without further appropriation by Congress—

''(A) interest earned on the proceeds of any resulting debt-for-nature exchange pending the disbursements of such proceeds; and

''(B) interest for approved program purposes, which may include the establishment of an endowment, the income of which is used for such purposes.

''(6) SUNSET.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The authority to award grants under this subsection shall terminate on the date that is 5 years after the date of the enactment of this Act unless the President determines and certifies to Congress that—

''(i) the grant program under this subsection has been effective in meeting the goals of the Haiti and Armenia Reforestation Act of 2018; and

''(ii) the Government of Haiti has committed to returning land in Haiti to long-term sustainable forests.

''(B) RENEWAL.—If the President makes a certification under subparagraph (A), the authority to award grants under this subsection may be renewed for 1 additional 5-year period.

''SEC. 478. PILOT PROGRAM FOR ARMENIA.

''(a) SUBMISSION OF LIST OF AREAS OF SEVERELY DEGRADED NATURAL RESOURCES.—The President, in cooperation with nongovernmental conservation organizations, shall invite the Government of Armenia to submit a list of areas within the territory of Armenia in which forests are seriously degraded or threatened.

''(b) REVIEW OF LIST.—The President shall—

''(1) analyze the areas on the list submitted by the Government of Armenia under subsection (a); and

''(2) seek to reach an agreement with the Government of Armenia for the restoration and future sustainable use of such areas.

''(c) DEBT FORGIVENESS AGREEMENT.—

''(1) DEBT FORGIVENESS.—The President is authorized to forgive debt owed to the United States by the Government of Armenia in exchange for commitments by the Government of Armenia—

''(A) to restore forests identified by the Government under subsection (a); or

''(B) to develop plans for sustainable use of such forests.

''(2) MANAGEMENT OF PROTECTED AREAS.—The Government of Armenia shall participate in the ongoing management of the area or areas protected pursuant to such debt relief.

''(3) MINIMUM COUNTRY REFORESTATION FUND PERCENTAGE.—Not less than 85 percent of funds that qualify under a debt relief agreement under this section shall be spent on actual reforestation activities in Armenia, which may include the protection of reforested areas or of existing forests.

''(4) TERMINATION OF PROGRAM.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The authority to offer debt relief under this subsection shall terminate on the date that is 5 years after the date of the enactment of this Act unless the President determines and certifies to Congress that—

''(i) the debt forgiveness pilot program under this subsection has been effective in meeting the goals of the Haiti and Armenia Reforestation Act of 2018; and

''(ii) the Government of Armenia has committed to returning land in Armenia to long-term sustainable forests.

''(B) RENEWAL.—If the President makes a certification under subparagraph (A), the authority to forgive debt under this subsection may be renewed for 1 additional 5-year period.''.

TITLE III—ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISION

SEC. 301. DELEGATION.

The President, or the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development or the Secretary of State, acting as the President's delegate, may draw on the expertise of the United States Forest Service and the United States Agency for International Development in designing and implementing programs under this Act relating to reforestation, watershed restoration, and monitoring of land use change.

SEC. 302. DETERMINATION AND MONITORING OF FOREST LEVELS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 6 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Chief of the United States Forest Service, in consultation with the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development, using the latest available Landsat data, shall—

(1) determine the current level of forest cover in Haiti and the current level of forest cover in Armenia, expressed as a percentage of each country's total land mass; and

(2) submit this information to the appropriate committees of Congress.

(b) UPDATES.—The Chief of the United States Forest Service, in consultation with the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development, shall submit an annual report to the appropriate committees of Congress that contains an updated determination, using the latest available Landsat data, of the level of forest cover in Haiti and the level of forest cover in Armenia.

(c) USE OF DETERMINATIONS.—Each determination under subsection (a)(1) and each updated determination under subsection (b) shall be used for the purposes of setting and achieving the goals described in section 2(b)(3).

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 593—HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF GRACE HOPPER, PROFESSOR, INVENTOR, ENTREPRENEUR, BUSINESS LEADER, AND REAR ADMIRAL OF THE NAVY

Mr. WYDEN (for himself and Mrs. FISCHER) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 593

Whereas Grace Hopper was born on December 9, 1906, in New York City, New York;

Whereas, in 1928, Grace Hopper graduated with honors from Vassar College with degrees in physics and mathematics;

Whereas Grace Hopper would go on to earn both her masters degree and Ph.D. from Yale University, earning her Ph.D. in 1934;

Whereas, after the bombing of Pearl Harbor and the entry of the United States into World War II, Grace Hopper felt called to serve her nation and enlisted in the Navy;

Whereas Grace Hopper was assigned to the Bureau of Ships Computation Project at Harvard University, where she worked on the first electromechanical computer in the United States, which was known as the MARK I;

Whereas, while assigned to the Computation Project, Grace Hopper—

(1) served as second in command in charge of operations;

(2) wrote the 561-page user manual for the MARK I, considered the first book about modern computers; and

(3) used the MARK I to solve various wartime mathematical problems for the Navy that saved thousands of lives, including the implosion problem for the Manhattan Project;

Whereas, after World War II, Grace Hopper remained in the Navy as a reservist, continuing to work on the MARK II and MARK III computers;

Whereas, in the 1950s, Grace Hopper helped pioneer the computer industry at the Eckert-Mauchly Computer Corporation and Remington Rand, where she assisted in developing the Universal Automatic Computer I and II, the first commercial electronic computers;

Whereas, while working on the Universal Automatic Computer I and II, Grace Hopper invented the first compiler, which is the cornerstone of modern automatic programming;

Whereas, in 1953, Grace Hopper was the first person to theorize code as words instead of symbols, which was considered impossible by her peers, and after 3 years her team was using the first written-word programming language;

Whereas the development of a written-word programming language was an incredibly important step in the development of computer science, as it allowed people who lacked advanced engineering and mathematics backgrounds to program computers;

Whereas, in 1959, Grace Hopper organized leaders from government, the private sector, and academia to create a universal business computer programming language called ''common business-oriented language'', or ''COBOL'';

Whereas, in 2018, COBOL supports over 30,000,000,000 transactions per day and 90 percent of all global financial transactions;

Whereas throughout her work in the private sector, Grace Hopper remained a naval reservist until the age of 60, calling her required retirement from the Naval Reserve ''the saddest day of my life'';

Whereas, just a few months after her retirement from the Naval Reserve, ''Amazing Grace'' was called again to the Navy for active service, where she would serve for another 19 years until her final military retirement as Rear Admiral of the Navy at the age of 79;

Whereas Grace Hopper has received many honors for her groundbreaking ideas and contributions over the years, including becoming the first inductee to the Computer Hall of Fame, receiving the U.S. National Medal of Technology, the naming of the destroyer USS *Hopper* in her honor, and receiving the Presidential Medal of Freedom;

Whereas, of all of the contributions and service of Grace Hopper, she considered her work as a mentor and teacher the most valuable;

Whereas Grace Hopper once remarked that ''If you ask me what accomplishment I'm most proud of, the answer would be all the young people I've trained over the years'';

Whereas, today the ''Grace Hopper Celebration'' is the largest gathering of women in computing with 18,000 attendees in 2017;

Whereas Grace Hopper passed away January 1, 1992, at the age of 85, and was interred with full military honors in Arlington National Cemetery; and

Whereas Grace Hopper served as a trailblazer for other women and men who would follow her in the field of computer science, academia, and the Armed Forces: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate honors the pioneering ideas and service of Grace Hopper, professor, inventor, entrepreneur, business leader, and Rear Admiral of the Navy.

SENATE RESOLUTION 592—DESIGNATING OCTOBER 9, 2018, AS ''NATIONAL ADA LOVELACE DAY'' AND HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF ADA LOVELACE, THE FIRST COMPUTER PROGRAMMER

Mr. WYDEN (for himself and Mrs. FISCHER) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 592

Whereas Augusta Ada King-Noel, Countess of Lovelace, now known as Ada Lovelace, was born on December 10, 1815, in London, United Kingdom;

Whereas, from a young age, Lovelace displayed a gift for mathematics, languages, and the sciences;

Whereas, at the age of 17, Lovelace began to study mathematics under the guidance of scientist and translator Mary Somerville and, later, logician Augustus de Morgan;

Whereas, in 1833, Lovelace was introduced to inventor and mechanical engineer, Charles Babbage, and began to study his designs for the Analytical Engine, a mechanical computer;

Whereas Lovelace was the first person to recognize that the Analytical Engine could be used to manipulate symbols and letters and was the first person to theorize that the Analytical Engine could be used to create music and graphics;

Whereas, in 1843, Lovelace published step-by-step instructions for using the Analytical Engine to calculate Bernoulli numbers ''without having been worked out by human head and hands first'';

Whereas these insights gave Lovelace an unparalleled vision of the future of computer science, and she stated that ''[a] new, a vast and a powerful language is [being] developed for the future use of analysis, in which to wield its truths so that these may become of more speedy and accurate practical application for the purposes of mankind'';

Whereas the work of Lovelace went widely unrecognized until the 1950s, when her papers were republished, and their significance and her contributions to the fields of computer science and mathematics were finally acknowledged;

Whereas, in the 1980s, to honor the contributions of Lovelace, the Department of Defense named its newly created computer language ''Ada'' after Lovelace;

Whereas the second Tuesday in October is annually celebrated as Ada Lovelace Day

and is intended to honor women in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics and their accomplishments and contributions to academia and the world; and

Whereas Ada Lovelace died on November 27, 1852, leaving behind a legacy of poetic science and reasoning, in which the arts and sciences are woven together to find new insights: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates October 9, 2018, as ''National Ada Lovelace Day''; and

(2) honors the life and contributions of Ada Lovelace, a leading woman in science and mathematics and the first computer programmer.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 3538. Ms. KLOBUCHAR submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3539. Mr. COONS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3540. Mr. HELLER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3541. Ms. MURKOWSKI (for Mr. FLAKE) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 2779, to amend the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act of 2001.

SA 3542. Mr. TESTER (for himself, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. HASSAN, and Mr. MERKLEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3543. Ms. COLLINS (for Mr. PAUL) proposed an amendment to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra.

SA 3544. Mr. CARDIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3545. Mr. NELSON (for himself, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. WARREN, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Mr. MENENDEZ) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3546. Ms. SMITH (for herself and Mrs. SHAHEEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3547. Ms. HEITKAMP submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3548. Ms. HEITKAMP submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3549. Mr. YOUNG (for himself, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, and Mr. BLUNT) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3550. Mr. YOUNG (for himself, Mr. COONS, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. KAINE, and Mr. HELLER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3551. Mr. RUBIO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3552. Ms. STABENOW (for herself, Mr. PETERS, Mr. REED, Ms. DUCKWORTH, and Mr. CARDIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3553. Ms. COLLINS (for Mr. MANCHIN) proposed an amendment to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra.

SA 3554. Ms. STABENOW (for herself, Mr. PETERS, and Mr. BROWN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3555. Mr. DONNELLY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3556. Mr. DONNELLY (for himself and Mrs. ERNST) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3557. Ms. WARREN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3558. Mr. TOOMEY (for himself, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. MENENDEZ, and Mr. KENNEDY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3559. Mr. TOOMEY (for himself, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. MENENDEZ, and Mr. MANCHIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3560. Mr. RUBIO (for himself, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Mr. WYDEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3561. Mr. COTTON (for himself, Mr. HATCH, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. PERDUE, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. SASSE, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. RUBIO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3562. Mr. RUBIO (for himself and Mrs. ERNST) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3563. Mr. BARRASSO (for himself, Mr. GARDNER, and Mr. DAINES) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3564. Mr. DURBIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3565. Mr. JOHNSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3566. Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. ISAKSON, and Mr. SULLIVAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3567. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3568. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3569. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3570. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3571. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3572. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3573. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3574. Mr. BOOZMAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3575. Mr. NELSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3576. Mr. COONS (for himself and Mr. CARPER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3577. Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself, Mr. WYDEN, and Ms. CANTWELL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3578. Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. CANTWELL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3579. Mr. WYDEN (for himself, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. CARDIN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. HARRIS, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MERKLEY, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, and Mr. WHITEHOUSE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3580. Mr. DAINES submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3581. Mr. PETERS (for himself and Mr. YOUNG) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3582. Mr. BROWN (for himself and Mr. PORTMAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3583. Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mrs.

GILLIBRAND, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. BOOKER, Ms. HASSAN, and Mr. KING) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3584. Mr. WYDEN (for himself and Mr. BOOKER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3585. Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself and Ms. HEITKAMP) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3586. Mr. HATCH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3587. Mr. BARRASSO (for himself, Mr. BENNET, Mr. ENZI, and Mr. WHITEHOUSE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3588. Mr. BARRASSO (for himself and Ms. CORTEZ MASTO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3589. Mr. SANDERS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3590. Mr. SASSE (for himself, Mr. JONES, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. DAINES, Mrs. ERNST, Mr. RISCH, Mr. ENZI, and Mr. LANKFORD) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3591. Mr. LEE (for himself and Mr. BOOKER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3592. Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Ms. HARRIS, and Mr. BOOKER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3593. Mr. SCOTT (for himself and Mr. MANCHIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3594. Mr. SCOTT (for himself and Mr. JONES) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3595. Ms. COLLINS (for herself, Mr. KING, Mr. SANDERS, and Mrs. SHAHEEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3596. Mr. ENZI submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3597. Mr. TOOMEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3598. Mr. MORAN (for himself, Mr. UDALL, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. GARDNER, and Mr. BENNET) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3599. Mr. PERDUE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3600. Mr. BROWN (for himself and Mr. PORTMAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3601. Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Ms. WARREN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3602. Mr. BOOKER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3603. Mr. CARPER (for himself, Ms. DUCKWORTH, and Mr. BOOKER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3604. Mr. CARPER (for himself, Ms. DUCKWORTH, and Mr. BOOKER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3605. Mr. CARPER (for himself, Ms. DUCKWORTH, and Mr. BOOKER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3606. Mr. CARPER (for himself, Ms. DUCKWORTH, and Mr. BOOKER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3607. Ms. STABENOW (for herself, Mr. PETERS, Mr. REED, and Mr. CARDIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3608. Mr. REED submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3609. Mr. REED submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3610. Mr. REED submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3611. Mr. DURBIN (for himself and Mr. GRASSLEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3612. Mr. DURBIN (for himself and Mr. GRASSLEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 3538. Ms. KLOBUCHAR submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 437, line 22, strike ''133(b)(1)(A)'' and insert ''133(b)''.

On page 438, line 12, strike ''133(b)(1)(A)'' and insert ''133(b)''.

On page 438, line 18, strike ''133(b)(1)(A)'' and insert ''133(b)''.

On page 438, line 25, strike ''133(b)(1)(A)'' and insert ''133(b)''.

SA 3539. Mr. COONS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title I of division A, add the following:

DESIGNATION OF PETER B. WEBSTER III MEMORIAL AREA

SEC. 1____. (a)(1) The rest area bound by Alexandria Avenue, West Boulevard Drive, and the George Washington Memorial Parkway on the Mount Vernon Trail within the George Washington Memorial Parkway is designated as the ''Peter B. Webster III Memorial Area''.

(2) Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the rest area described in paragraph (1) shall be deemed to be a reference to the ''Peter B. Webster III Memorial Area''.

(b)(1) A plaque honoring Peter B. Webster III may be installed at the Peter B. Webster III Memorial Area on a signpost, bench, or other appropriate structure, on the condition that the Director of the National Park Service shall approve the design and placement of the plaque.

(2) No Federal funds may be used to design, procure, prepare, or install the plaque authorized under paragraph (1).

(3) The Secretary of the Interior may accept and expend private contributions for the design, procurement, preparation, and installation of the plaque authorized under paragraph (1).

SA 3540. Mr. HELLER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 85, line 17, strike ''$15,000,000'' and insert ''$20,000,000''.

SA 3541. Ms. MURKOWSKI (for Mr. FLAKE) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 2779, to amend the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act of 2001; as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Amendment Act of 2018''.

SEC. 2. RECONSTRUCTION AND REBUILDING OF ZIMBABWE.

Section 2 of the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act of 2001 (22 U.S.C. 2151 note; Public Law 107–99) is amended by striking ''and restore the rule of law'' and inserting ''restore the rule of law, reconstruct and rebuild Zimbabwe, and come to terms with the past through a process of genuine reconciliation that acknowledges past human rights abuses and orders inquiries

into disappearances, including the disappearance of human rights activists, such as Patrick Nabanyama, Itai Dzamara, and Paul Chizuze''.

SEC. 3. FINDINGS.

Section 4(a) of the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act of 2001 is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking ''costly deployment of troops to the Democratic Republic of the Congo'' and inserting ''private appropriation of public assets''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(6) In October 2016, the Government of Zimbabwe cleared a small hurdle in its longstanding public sector arrears with the IMF.''.

SEC. 4. PROVISIONS RELATED TO MULTILATERAL DEBT RELIEF AND OTHER FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.

Section 4(b)(2) of the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act of 2001 is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), by striking ''to propose that the bank should undertake a review of the feasibility of restructuring, rescheduling, or eliminating the sovereign debt of Zimbabwe held by that bank'' and inserting ''to support efforts to reevaluate plans to restructure, rebuild, reschedule, or eliminate Zimbabwe's sovereign debt held by that bank and provide an analysis based on reasonable financial options to achieve those goals''; and

(2) in subparagraph (B), by striking ''dollar'' and inserting ''currency''.

SEC. 5. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON THE UNITED STATES-ZIMBABWE BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP.

It is the sense of Congress that the United States should seek to forge a stronger bilateral relationship with Zimbabwe, including in the areas of trade and investment, if the following conditions are satisfied:

(1) The Government of Zimbabwe takes the concrete, tangible steps outlined in paragraphs (1) through (4) of section 4(d) of the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act of 2001, as amended by section 6 of this Act.

(2) The Government of Zimbabwe takes concrete, tangible steps towards—

(A) good governance, including respect for the opposition, rule of law, and human rights;

(B) economic reforms that promote growth, address unemployment and underdevelopment, restore livelihoods, ensure respect for contracts and private property rights, and promote significant progress toward monetary policy reforms, particularly with the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe, and currency exchange reforms; and

(C) identification and recovery of stolen private and public assets within Zimbabwe and in other countries.

(3) The Government of Zimbabwe holds an election that is widely accepted as free and fair, based on the following pre- and post-election criteria or conditions:

(A) Establishment and public release, without cost, of a provisional and a final voter registration roll.

(B) The Zimbabwe Electoral Commission is permitted to entirely carry out the functions assigned to it under section 239 of Zimbabwe's 2013 Constitution in an independent manner, and the chairperson meets and consults regularly with representatives of political parties represented in the parliament of Zimbabwe and the parties contesting the elections.

(C) Consistent with Zimbabwe's 2013 Constitution, the Defence Forces of Zimbabwe—

(i) are neither permitted to actively participate in campaigning for any candidate nor to intimidate voters;

(ii) are required to verifiably and credibly uphold their constitutionally-mandated duty to respect the fundamental rights and freedoms of all persons and to be nonpartisan in character; and

(iii) are not permitted to print, transfer, or control ballots or transmit the results of elections.

(D) International observers, including observers from the United States, the African Union, the Southern African Development Community, and the European Union—

(i) are permitted to observe the entire electoral process prior to, on, and following voting day, including by monitoring polling stations and tabulation centers; and

(ii) are able to independently access and analyze vote tallying tabulation and the transmission and content of voting results.

(E) Candidates are allowed access to public broadcasting media during the election period, consistent with Zimbabwe's Electoral Act and are able to campaign in an environment that is free from intimidation and violence.

(F) Civil society organizations are able to freely and independently carry out voter and civic education and monitor the entire electoral process, including by observing, recording, and transmitting publicly-posted or announced voting results at the ward, constituency, and all higher levels of the vote tallying process.

(4) Laws enacted prior to the passage of Zimbabwe's March 2013 Constitution that are inconsistent with the new Constitution are amended, repealed, or subjected to a formal process for review and correction so that such laws are consistent with the new Constitution.

(5) The Government of Zimbabwe—

(A) has made significant progress on the implementation of all elements of the new Constitution; and

(B) has demonstrated its commitment to sustain such efforts in achieving full implementation of the new Constitution.

(6) Traditional leaders of Zimbabwe observe section 281 of the 2013 Constitution and are not using humanitarian assistance provided by outside donor organizations or countries in a politicized manner to intimidate or pressure voters during the campaign period.

SEC. 6. CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS.

Section 4(d) of the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act of 2001 is amended—

(1) in paragraph (3), by striking ''consistent with'' and all that follows through ''September 1998'';

(2) by striking paragraph (4); and

(3) by redesignating paragraph (5) as paragraph (4).

SEC. 7. REMOVAL OF AUTHORITY TO PAY LAND ACQUISITION COSTS.

Section 5(a) of the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act of 2001 is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2), by striking '', including the payment of costs'' and all that follows through ''thereto; and'' and inserting a semicolon;

(2) in paragraph (3), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(4) identify and recover stolen public assets.''.

SEC. 8. INCLUSION OF AUSTRALIA, THE UNITED KINGDOM, THE AFRICAN UNION, AND THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY IN CONSULTATIONS ABOUT ZIMBABWE.

Section 6 of the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act of 2001 is amended by inserting ''Australia, the United Kingdom, the African Union, the Southern African Development Community,'' after ''Canada,''.

SEC. 9. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON ENFORCEMENT OF SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY TRIBUNAL RULINGS.

It is the sense of Congress that the Government of Zimbabwe and the Southern African Development Community (referred to in this section as ''SADC'') should enforce the SADC tribunal rulings issued between 2007 to 2010, including 18 disputes involving employment, commercial, and human rights cases surrounding dispossessed Zimbabwean commercial farmers and agricultural companies.

SA 3542. Mr. TESTER (for himself, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. HASSAN, and Mr. MERKLEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. STOP TAXING OUR POTENTIAL ACT.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the ''Stop Taxing Our Potential Act of 2018''.

(b) MINIMUM JURISDICTIONAL STANDARDS FOR STATE AND LOCAL SALES AND USE TAX COLLECTION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—A State may not—

(A) impose an obligation on a person for—

(i) the collection of a sales tax, use tax, or any similar tax; or

(ii) the reporting of any information with respect to a tax described in clause (i);

(B) assess any tax described in subparagraph (A)(i) on a person; or

(C) treat a person as doing business in a State for purposes of any tax described in subparagraph (A)(i),

unless such person had a physical presence in the State during the calendar quarter with respect to which such obligation or assessment is imposed.

(2) REQUIREMENTS FOR PHYSICAL PRESENCE.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of paragraph (1), a person has a physical presence in a State only if such person's business activities in the State include any of the following during the calendar quarter:

(i) Maintains its commercial or legal domicile in the State.

(ii) Owns, holds a leasehold interest in, or maintains real property such as a retail store, warehouse, distribution center, manufacturing operation, or assembly facility in the State.

(iii) Leases or owns tangible personal property (other than computer software) of more than de minimis value in the State.

(iv) Has one or more employees, agents, or independent contractors present in the State who provide on-site design, installation, or repair services on behalf of the remote seller.

(v) Has one or more employees, exclusive agents or exclusive independent contractors present in the State who engage in activities that substantially assist the person to establish or maintain a market in the State.

(vi) Maintains an office in the State at which it regularly employs three or more employees for any purpose.

(B) DE MINIMIS PHYSICAL PRESENCE.—For purposes of this subsection, the term ''physical presence'' shall not include—

(i) entering into an agreement under which a person, for a commission or other consideration, directly or indirectly refers potential

purchasers to a person outside the State, whether by an Internet-based link or platform, Internet Web site or otherwise;

(ii) any presence in a State, as described in subparagraph (A), for less than 15 days in a taxable year (or a greater number of days if provided by State law);

(iii) product placement, setup, or other services offered in connection with delivery of products by an interstate or in-State carrier or other service provider;

(iv) Internet advertising services provided by in-State residents which are not exclusively directed towards, or do not solicit exclusively, in-State customers;

(v) ownership by a person outside the State of an interest in a limited liability company or similar entity organized or with a physical presence in the State;

(vi) the furnishing of information to customers or affiliates in such State, or the coverage of events or other gathering of information in such State by such person, or his representative, which information is used or disseminated from a point outside the State; or

(vii) business activities directly relating to such person's potential or actual purchase of goods or services within the State if the final decision to purchase is made outside the State.

(3) PROTECTION OF NON-SELLERS.—A State may not impose or assess a sales, use, or similar tax on a person or impose an obligation to collect or report any information with respect thereto, unless such person is either a purchaser or a seller having a physical presence in the State.

(c) DISPUTE RESOLUTION.—The district courts of the United States shall have original jurisdiction over civil actions to enforce the provisions of this section, including authority to issue declaratory judgments pursuant to section 2201 of title 28, United States Code, and, notwithstanding the provisions of section 1341 of such title, injunctive relief, as necessary to carry out any provision of this section.

(d) DEFINITIONS AND EFFECTIVE DATE.—

(1) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this section:

(A) MARKETPLACE PROVIDER.—The term ''marketplace provider'' includes any person, other than a seller, who facilitates a sale. For purposes of this subsection, a person facilitates a sale when the person both—

(i) lists or advertises products for sale in any forum, including a catalog or Internet Web site; and

(ii) either directly or indirectly through agreements or arrangements with third parties, collects gross receipts from the customer and transmits those receipts to the marketplace seller, whether or not such person deducts any fees or other amounts from those receipts prior to transferring them to the marketplace seller.

(B) MARKETPLACE SELLER.—The term ''marketplace seller'' means a person that has any sales facilitated by a marketplace provider.

(C) PERSON.—The term ''person'' has the meaning given such term by section 1 of title 1, United States Code. Each corporation that is a member of a group of affiliated corporations, whether unitary or not, is itself a separate person.

(D) PRODUCT.—The term ''product'' includes any good or service, tangible or intangible.

(E) REFERRER.—The term ''referrer'' shall mean every person who—

(i) contracts or otherwise agrees with a seller to list multiple products for sale and the sales prices thereof in any forum, including a catalog or Internet Web site;

(ii) receives a fee, commission, or other consideration from a seller for the listing;

(iii) transfers, via telephone, Internet link, or otherwise, a customer to the seller or the seller's Web site to complete a purchase; and

(iv) does not collect receipts from the customer for the transaction.

(F) SELLER.—The term ''seller'' does not include—

(i) any marketplace provider (except with respect to the sale through the marketplace of products owned by the marketplace provider);

(ii) any referrer;

(iii) any carrier, in which the seller does not have an ownership interest, providing transportation or delivery services with respect to tangible personal property; and

(iv) any credit card issuer, transaction or billing processor, or other financial intermediary.

(G) SIMILAR TAX.—The term ''similar tax'' means a tax that is imposed with respect to the sale or use of a product, regardless of whether the tax is imposed on the person making the sale or the purchaser, with the right or obligation of the person making the sale to obtain reimbursement for the amount of the tax from the purchaser at the time of the transaction.

(H) STATE.—The term ''State'' means the several States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, the United States Virgin Islands, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and any other territory or possession of the United States and includes any political subdivision thereof.

(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall apply with respect to calendar quarters beginning on or after January 1, 2019.

SA 3543. Ms. COLLINS (for Mr. PAUL) proposed an amendment to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; as follows:

On page 3, after line 2, add the following:

SEC. 4. REDUCTION TO COMPLY WITH BCA CAPS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the ''Restoring Fiscal Responsibility by Returning to the BCA Caps Act''.

(b) REDUCTION.—Each amount provided under division A, B, C, or D of this Act is reduced by 11.39 percent.

SA 3544. Mr. CARDIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 142, between lines 16 and 17, insert the following:

PROHIBITION OF USE OF FUNDS TO RELOCATE ANY FUNCTION OF THE CAPTAIN JOHN SMITH CHESAPEAKE NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAIL PROGRAM

SEC. 433. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used by the Secretary of the Interior to relocate any function of the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail program.

SA 3545. Mr. NELSON (for himself, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. WARREN, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Mr. MENENDEZ) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in division D, insert the following:

SEC. ____. Not later than 15 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development shall enter into an interagency agreement or agreements with the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency as may be necessary to ensure the implementation of a Disaster Housing Assistance Program to provide temporary rental assistance to individuals and households displaced from their residences by a major disaster declared by the President under section 401 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170) related to Hurricane Maria or Hurricane Irma.

SA 3546. Ms. SMITH (for herself and Mrs. SHAHEEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in division C, insert the following:

SEC. ____. Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Rural Housing Service of the Department of Agriculture shall submit to Congress a report including—

(1) a description of—

(A) the number of properties assisted under title V of the Housing Act of 1949 (42 U.S.C. 1471 et seq.) that are reaching the end of their loan term;

(B) the location of each property described in subparagraph (A);

(C) the number of units in each property described in subparagraph (A); and

(D) the date on which each the loan for each property described in subparagraph (A) is expected to reach maturity;

(2) the strategy of the Rural Housing Service to preserve the long-term affordability of the properties described in paragraph (1)(A) when the loan matures; and

(3) a description of the resources and tools that the Rural Housing Service needs from Congress in order to preserve the long-term affordability of the properties described in paragraph (1) (A).

SA 3547. Ms. HEITKAMP submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in division C, insert the following:

SEC. ____. (a) Of the amount made available by this Act for the Foreign Agricultural Service, $10,000,000 shall be available for fiscal year 2019 for the trade adjustment assistance for farmers program under chapter 6 of title II of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2401 et seq.), as amended by subsection (b).

(b) Section 292(c) of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2401a(c)) is amended—

(1) by striking paragraphs (2) and (3); and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (1) the following:

''(2) either—

''(A) the volume of imports of articles like, or directly competitive with, the agricultural commodity produced by the group in the marketing year with respect to which the group files the petition increased compared to the average volume of such imports during the 3 marketing years preceding such marketing year; or

''(B)(i) the volume of exports of the agricultural commodity produced by the group in the marketing year with respect to which the group files the petition decreased compared to the average volume of such exports during the 3 marketing years preceding such marketing year; and

''(ii) the decrease in exports described in clause (i) resulted in whole or in part from duties imposed on such exports by a foreign country in response to duties imposed by the United States on imports from such country pursuant to action taken under the authority of—

''(I) section 232 of the Trade Expansion Act of 1962 (19 U.S.C. 1862);

''(II) section 301 of this Act (19 U.S.C. 2411); or

''(III) the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.); and

''(3) the increase in imports described in paragraph (2)(A) or the decrease in exports described in paragraph (2)(B) contributed importantly to the decrease in the national average price, quantity of production, or value of production of, or cash receipts for, the agricultural commodity, as described in paragraph (1).''.

SA 3548. Ms. HEITKAMP submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in division C, insert the following:

SEC. ____. (a) Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act, the amount made available under the heading ''SALARIES AND EXPENSES (INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)'' under the heading ''FOREIGN AGRICULTURAL SERVICE'' under the heading ''FOREIGN ASSISTANCE AND RELATED PROGRAMS'' in title V shall be $302,230,000.

(b) Of the amount made available by this Act for the Foreign Agricultural Service, $90,000,000 shall be available for fiscal year 2019 for the trade adjustment assistance for farmers program under chapter 6 of title II of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2401 et seq.), as amended by subsection (c).

(c) Section 292(c) of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2401a(c)) is amended—

(1) by striking paragraphs (2) and (3); and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (1) the following:

''(2) either—

''(A) the volume of imports of articles like, or directly competitive with, the agricultural commodity produced by the group in the marketing year with respect to which the group files the petition increased compared to the average volume of such imports during the 3 marketing years preceding such marketing year; or

''(B)(i) the volume of exports of the agricultural commodity produced by the group in the marketing year with respect to which the group files the petition decreased compared to the average volume of such exports during the 3 marketing years preceding such marketing year; and

''(ii) the decrease in exports described in clause (i) resulted in whole or in part from duties imposed on such exports by a foreign country in response to duties imposed by the United States on imports from such country pursuant to action taken under the authority of—

''(I) section 232 of the Trade Expansion Act of 1962 (19 U.S.C. 1862);

''(II) section 301 of this Act (19 U.S.C. 2411); or

''(III) the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.); and

''(3) the increase in imports described in paragraph (2)(A) or the decrease in exports described in paragraph (2)(B) contributed importantly to the decrease in the national average price, quantity of production, or value of production of, or cash receipts for, the agricultural commodity, as described in paragraph (1).''.

SA 3549. Mr. YOUNG (for himself, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, and Mr. BLUNT) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in division D, insert the following:

SEC. ____. (a) In this section—

(1) the terms ''families'' and ''public housing agency'' have the meanings given those terms in section 3(b) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437a(b));

(2) the term ''housing choice voucher assistance'' means voucher assistance provided under section 8(o) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f(o));

(3) the term ''Plan'' means a Regional Housing Mobility Plan submitted under subsection (d); and

(4) the term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development.

(b) The Secretary may carry out a mobility demonstration program to enable public housing agencies to administer housing choice voucher assistance in a manner designed to encourage families receiving that assistance to move to lower-poverty areas and expand access to opportunity areas.

(c)(1) The Secretary shall establish requirements for public housing agencies to participate in the demonstration program under this section, which shall provide that the following public housing agencies may participate:

(A) Public housing agencies that together—

(i) serve areas with high concentrations of families receiving housing choice voucher assistance in poor, low-opportunity neighborhoods; and

(ii) have an adequate number of moderately priced rental units in higher-opportunity areas.

(B) Planned consortia or partial consortia of public housing agencies that—

(i) include not less than 1 public housing agency with a high-performing Family Self-Sufficiency program carried out under section 23 of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437u); and

(ii) will enable participating families to continue in the Family Self-Sufficiency program if the family relocates to the jurisdiction served by any other public housing agency of the consortium.

(C) Planned consortia or partial consortia of public housing agencies that—

(i) serve jurisdictions within a single region;

(ii) include not less than 1 small public housing agency; and

(iii) will consolidate mobility-focused operations.

(D) Such other public housing agencies as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(2) The Secretary shall establish competitive selection criteria for public housing agencies eligible under paragraph (1) to participate in the demonstration program under this section.

(3) The Secretary may require public housing agencies participating in the demonstration program under this section to use a randomized selection process to select among the families eligible to receive assistance under the demonstration program.

(d) The Secretary shall require each public housing agency applying to participate in the demonstration program under this section to submit a Regional Housing Mobility Plan, which shall—

(1) identify the public housing agencies that will participate under the Plan and the number of vouchers each participating public housing agency will make available out of their existing programs in connection with the demonstration;

(2) identify any community-based organizations, nonprofit organizations, businesses, and other entities that will participate under the Plan and describe the commitments for the participation made by each such entity;

(3) identify any waivers or alternative requirements requested for the execution of the Plan;

(4) identify any specific actions that the public housing agencies and other entities will undertake to accomplish the goals of the demonstration program, which shall include a comprehensive approach to enable a successful transition to opportunity areas and may include counseling and continued support for families;

(5) specify the criteria that the public housing agencies would use to identify opportunity areas under the Plan;

(6) provide for the establishment of priority and preferences for families receiving assistance under the demonstration program, including a preference for families with young children, as such term is defined by the Secretary, based on regional housing needs and priorities; and

(7) comply with any other requirements established by the Secretary.

(e)(1) Each public housing agency participating in the demonstration program under this section may use administrative fees under section 8(q) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f(q)), any administrative fee reserves of the public housing agency, and funding from private entities to provide mobility-related services in connection with the demonstration program, including services such as counseling, portability coordination, landlord outreach, security deposits, and administrative activities associated with establishing and operating regional mobility programs.

(2) Each public housing agency participating in the demonstration program under this section may use housing assistance payment contract funds under section 8(o) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f(o)) for security deposits if necessary to enable families to lease units with housing choice voucher assistance in designated opportunity areas.

(f)(1) To allow for public housing agencies to implement and administer the Plan of the

public housing agency under the demonstration program under this section, the Secretary may waive or specify alternative requirements for the following provisions of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437 et seq.):

(A) Paragraphs (7)(A) and (13)(E)(i) of section 8(o) (42 U.S.C. 1437f(o)) (relating to the term of a lease and mobility requirements).

(B) Section 8(o)(13)(C)(i) (42 U.S.C. 1437f(o)(13)(C)(i)) (relating to the public housing agency plan).

(C) Section 8(r)(2) (42 U.S.C. 1437f(r)(2)) (relating to the responsibility of a public housing agency to administer portable assistance).

(2) The Secretary shall provide additional authority for public housing agencies in a selected region to form a consortium that has a single housing assistance payment contract, or to enter into a partial consortium to operate all or portions of the Plan, including public housing agencies participating in the Moving To Work demonstration program established under section 204 of the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and Independent Agencies Appropriations Act, 1996 (Public Law 104–134; 110 Stat. 1321–281).

(3) Any waiver or alternative requirements pursuant to this subsection shall not take effect before the date that is 10 days after the date on which the date on which the Secretary publishes a notice of the waiver or alternative requirement in the Federal Register.

(g) The Secretary may implement the demonstration program under this section, including the terms, procedures, requirements, and conditions of the demonstration, by notice.

(h)(1) Not later than 5 years after the implementation of the regional housing mobility programs by public housing agencies participating in the demonstration program under this section, the Secretary shall submit to Congress and publish in the Federal Register a report evaluating the effectiveness of the strategies pursued under the demonstration program, subject to the availability of funding to conduct the evaluation.

(2) The Secretary shall—

(A) through internet websites and other means, disseminate interim findings relating to the demonstration program under this section as they become available; and

(B) if promising strategies are identified through the findings described in subparagraph (A), notify Congress of the amount of funds that would be required to expand the testing of these strategies in additional types of public housing agencies and housing markets.

SA 3550. Mr. YOUNG (for himself, Mr. COONS, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. KAINE, and Mr. HELLER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in division D, insert the following:

SEC. ____. (a) In this section—

(1)(A) the term ''affordable housing'' means—

(i) housing for which the household is required to pay not more than 30 percent of the household income for gross housing costs, including utilities, where such income is less than or equal to the area median income for the municipality in which the housing is located, as determined by the Secretary; and

(ii) housing—

(I) for which the household pays more than 30 percent of the household income for gross housing costs, including utilities, where such income is less than or equal to the area median income for the municipality in which the housing is located, as determined by the Secretary; and

(II) that is assisted or considered affordable by the Department of Housing and Urban Development, including—

(aa) public housing;

(bb) housing assisted under section 8(o) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 1437f(o));

(cc) housing receiving the low-income housing credit under section 42 of the Internal Revenue Code; and

(dd) housing assisted under other Federal or local housing programs serving households with incomes at or below 80 percent of the area median income or providing services or amenities that will primarily be used by low-income housing; and

(B) the definition in subparagraph (A) shall apply to Federal, State, and local affordable housing programs;

(2) the terms ''low-income housing'' and ''public housing'' have the meanings given those terms in section 3(b) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437a(b));

(3) the term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development; and

(4) the term ''Task Force'' means the Task Force on the Impact of the Affordable Housing Crisis established under subsection (b)(1).

(b)(1) There is established a bipartisan task force to be known as the Task Force on the Impact of the Affordable Housing Crisis.

(2)(A) The Task Force shall be composed of 18 members, of whom—

(i) 1 member shall be appointed by the Majority Leader of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives, who shall serve as co-chair of the Task Force;

(ii) 1 member shall be appointed by the Minority Leader of the Senate and the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives, who shall serve as co-chair of the Task Force;

(iii) 4 members shall be appointed by the Majority Leader of the Senate;

(iv) 4 members shall be appointed by the Minority Leader of the Senate;

(v) 4 members shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives; and

(vi) 4 members shall be appointed by the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives.

(B) Each member of the Task Force shall be an academic researcher, an expert in a field or policy area related to the purpose of the Task Force, or an individual who has experience with government programs related to the purpose of the Task Force.

(C) The co-chairs of the Task Force may appoint and fix the pay of additional staff to the Task Force.

(D) Any Federal Government employee may be detailed to the Task Force without reimbursement from the Task Force, and the detailee shall retain the rights, status, and privileges of his or her regular employment without interruption.

(E) Members of the Task Force may be allowed travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, at rates authorized for employees of agencies under subchapter I of chapter 57 of title 5, United States Code, while away from their homes or regular places of business in the performance of services for the Task Force.

(3) Appointments to the Task Force shall be made not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

(4)(A) A member of the Task Force shall be appointed for the life of the Task Force.

(B) Any vacancy in the Task Force—

(i) shall not affect the powers of the Task Force; and

(ii) shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment.

(5) The Task Force shall meet not later than 30 days after the date on which a majority of the members of the Task Force have been appointed.

(6)(A) The Task Force shall meet at the call of the co-chairs of the Task Force.

(B) A majority of the members of the Task Force shall constitute a quorum, but a lesser number of members may hold hearings.

(c)(1) The Task Force shall utilize available survey and statistical data related to the purpose of the Task Force to complete a comprehensive report to—

(A) evaluate and quantify the impact that a lack of affordable housing has on other areas of life and life outcomes for individuals living in the United States, including—

(i) education;

(I) employment;

(II) income level;

(III) health;

(IV) nutrition;

(V) access to transportation;

(VI) the poverty level of the neighborhood in which individuals live;

(VII) regional economic growth;

(VIII) neighborhood and rural community stability and revitalization; and

(IX) other areas of life and life outcomes related to the purpose of the Task Force necessary to complete a comprehensive report;

(B) evaluate and quantify the costs incurred by other Federal, State, and local programs due to a lack of affordable housing; and

(C) make recommendations to Congress on how to use affordable housing to improve the effectiveness of other Federal programs and improve life outcomes for individuals living in the United States.

(2) The Task Force shall publish in the Federal Register a notice for a public comment period of 90 days on the purpose and activities of the Task Force.

(3) Not later than the date on which the Task Force terminates, the Task Force shall submit to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs and the Committee on Finance of the Senate and the Committee on Financial Services and the Committee on Ways and Means of the House of Representatives and make publicly available a final report that—

(A) contains the information, evaluations, and recommendations described in paragraph (1); and

(B) is signed by each member of the Task Force.

(d)(1) The Task Force may hold such hearings, take such testimony, and receive such evidence as the Task Force considers advisable to carry out this section.

(2)(A) The Task Force may secure directly from any Federal department or agency such information as the Task Force considers necessary to carry out this section.

(B) On request of the co-chairs of the Task Force, the head of a Federal department or agency described in subparagraph (A) shall furnish the information to the Task Force.

(3) The Task Force may use the United States mails in the same manner and under the same conditions as other Federal departments and agencies.

(e) The Task Force shall terminate not later than 2 years after the date on which all members of the Task Force are appointed under subsection (b).

(f) The co-chairs of the Task Force shall carry out this Act using amounts otherwise made available to the Office of Policy Development and Research within the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

SA 3551. Mr. RUBIO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 22, line 10, strike the period at the end and insert the following: ''*: Provided further*, That of the amounts made available under this heading, not less than $200,000 shall be used for activities to better understand mechanisms that result in toxins being present in harmful algal blooms.''.

On page 65, line 5, strike the period at the end and insert the following: ''*: Provided further*, That of the amounts made available under this heading, not less than $5,000,000 shall be used to investigate health impacts from exposure to harmful algal blooms and cyanobacteria toxins, and to develop innovative methods to monitor, characterize, and predict blooms for early action.''.

SA 3552. Ms. STABENOW (for herself, Mr. PETERS, Mr. REED, Ms. DUCKWORTH, and Mr. CARDIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title II of division A, insert the following:

Using funds appropriated under this title, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency shall implement the recommendations described in the report of the Office of Inspector General of the Environmental Protection Agency entitled ''Management Weakness Delayed Response to Flint Water Crisis'', numbered 18-P-0221, and dated July 19, 2018, to ensure clean and safe water compliance under the Safe Drinking Water Act (42 U.S.C. 300f et seq.).

SA 3553. Ms. COLLINS (for Mr. MANCHIN) proposed an amendment to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; as follows:

On page 145, line 16, strike ''2020.'' and insert ''2020: *Provided further*, That of the amount appropriated under this heading, not less than $1,000,000 shall be used to support and augment new and ongoing investigations into the illicit trade of synthetic opioids, particularly fentanyl and its analogues, originating from the People's Republic of China: *Provided further*, That not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Treasury, in coordination with the Administrator of the Drug Enforcement Administration and the heads of other Federal agencies, as appropriate, shall submit a comprehensive report (which shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may include a classified annex) summarizing efforts by actors in the People's Republic of China to subvert United States laws and to supply illicit synthetic opioids to persons in the United States, including up-to-date estimates of the scale of illicit synthetic opioids flows from the People's Republic of China, to the Committee on Appropriations, the Committee on Homeland Security, and the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Appropriations, the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, and the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate.''.

SA 3554. Ms. STABENOW (for herself, Mr. PETERS, and Mr. BROWN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title II of division A, add the following:

Using amounts appropriated by this Act, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection agency shall reestablish the Great Lakes Advisory Board, without significantly restructuring the member composition or objectives of the Great Lakes Advisory Board as described in the Great Lakes Advisory Board charter dated June 13, 2016.

SA 3555. Mr. DONNELLY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 181, between lines 12 and 13, insert the following:

SEC. 203. Notwithstanding any other provision of this division—

(1) the total amount provided under the heading ''SALARIES AND EXPENSES''under the heading ''OFFICE OF NATIONAL DRUG CONTROL POLICY'' under the heading ''EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT AND FUNDS APPROPRIATED TO THE PRESIDENT'' in title II shall be increased by $1,600,000; and

(2) the total amount provided under the heading ''FEDERAL DRUG CONTROL PROGRAMS HIGH INTENSITY DRUG TRAFFICKING AREAS PROGRAM (INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)''under the heading ''OFFICE OF NATIONAL DRUG CONTROL POLICY'' under the heading ''EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT AND FUNDS APPROPRIATED TO THE PRESIDENT'' in title II shall be increased by $20,000,000.

SA 3556. Mr. DONNELLY (for himself and Mrs. ERNST) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 535, line 17, insert before the period at the end the following: ''*: Provided further*, That not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall complete the rulemaking to define the term 'recreational vehicle' for purposes of the exemption for such vehicles from the manufactured home procedural and enforcement regulations under part 3282 of title 24, Code of Federal Regulations''.

SA 3557. Ms. WARREN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. ENDING BANKING FOR HUMAN TRAFFICKERS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the ''End Banking for Human Traffickers Act of 2018''.

(b) INCREASING THE ROLE OF THE FINANCIAL INDUSTRY IN COMBATING HUMAN TRAFFICKING.—

(1) TREASURY AS A MEMBER OF THE PRESIDENT'S INTERAGENCY TASK FORCE TO MONITOR AND COMBAT TRAFFICKING.—Section 105(b) of the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7103(b)) is amended by inserting ''the Secretary of the Treasury,'' after ''the Secretary of Education,''.

(2) REQUIRED REVIEW OF PROCEDURES.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Financial Institutions Examination Council, in consultation with the Secretary of the Treasury, the private sector, victims of severe forms of trafficking in persons, advocates of persons at risk of becoming victims of severe forms of trafficking in persons, and appropriate law enforcement agencies, shall—

(A) review and enhance training and examinations procedures to improve the capabilities of anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism programs to detect financial transactions relating to severe forms of trafficking in persons;

(B) review and enhance procedures for referring potential cases relating to severe forms of trafficking in persons to the appropriate law enforcement agency; and

(C) determine, as appropriate, whether requirements for financial institutions are sufficient to detect and deter money laundering relating to severe forms of trafficking in persons.

(3) INTERAGENCY TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS TARGETING MONEY LAUNDERING RELATED TO HUMAN TRAFFICKING.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 270 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Interagency Task Force to Monitor and Combat Trafficking shall submit to the Committee on Financial Services and the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs and the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate, and the head of each appropriate Federal banking agency—

(i) an analysis of anti-money laundering efforts of the United States Government and United States financial institutions relating to severe forms of trafficking in persons; and

(ii) appropriate legislative, administrative, and other recommendations to strengthen efforts against money laundering relating to severe forms of trafficking in persons.

(B) REQUIRED RECOMMENDATIONS.—The recommendations under subparagraph (A) shall include—

(i) feedback from financial institutions on best practices of successful programs to combat severe forms of trafficking in persons currently in place that may be suitable for

broader adoption by similarly situated financial institutions;

(ii) feedback from stakeholders, including victims of severe forms of trafficking in persons, advocates of persons at risk of becoming victims of severe forms of trafficking in persons, and financial institutions, on policy proposals derived from the analysis conducted by the task force referred to in subparagraph (A) that would enhance the efforts and programs of financial institutions to detect and deter money laundering relating to severe forms of trafficking in persons, including any recommended changes to internal policies, procedures, and controls relating to severe forms of trafficking in persons;

(iii) any recommended changes to training programs at financial institutions to better equip employees to deter and detect money laundering relating to severe forms of trafficking in persons;

(iv) any recommended changes to expand information sharing relating to severe forms of trafficking in persons among financial institutions and between such financial institutions, appropriate law enforcement agencies, and appropriate Federal agencies; and

(v) recommended changes, if necessary, to existing statutory law to more effectively detect and deter money laundering relating to severe forms of trafficking in persons, where such money laundering involves the use of emerging technologies and virtual currencies.

(4) LIMITATION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to—

(A) grant rulemaking authority to the Interagency Task Force to Monitor and Combat Trafficking; or

(B) authorize financial institutions to deny services to victims of trafficking, victims of severe forms of trafficking, or individuals not responsible for promoting severe forms of trafficking in persons.

(5) DEFINITIONS.—As used in this subsection—

(A) the term ''appropriate Federal banking agency'' has the meaning given the term in section 3(q) of the Federal Deposit Insurance Act (12 U.S.C. 1813(q));

(B) the term ''severe forms of trafficking in persons'' has the meaning given such term in section 103 of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7102);

(C) the term ''Interagency Task Force to Monitor and Combat Trafficking'' means the Interagency Task Force to Monitor and Combat Trafficking established by the President pursuant to section 105 of the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7103);

(D) the term ''law enforcement agency'' means an agency of the United States, a State, or a political subdivision of a State, authorized by law or by a government agency to engage in or supervise the prevention, detection, investigation, or prosecution of any violation of criminal or civil law; and

(E) the terms ''victim of a severe form of trafficking'' and ''victim of trafficking'' have the meanings given the terms in section 103 of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7102).

(c) COORDINATION OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING ISSUES BY THE OFFICE OF TERRORISM AND FINANCIAL INTELLIGENCE.—

(1) FUNCTIONS.—Section 312(a)(4) of title 31, United States Code, is amended—

(A) by redesignating subparagraphs (E), (F), and (G) as subparagraphs (F), (G), and (H), respectively; and

(B) by inserting after subparagraph (D) the following:

''(E) combating illicit financing relating to severe forms of trafficking in persons;''.

(d) INTERAGENCY COORDINATION.—Section 312(a) of title 31, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(8) INTERAGENCY COORDINATION.—The Secretary of the Treasury, after consultation with the Undersecretary for Terrorism and Financial Crimes, shall designate an office within the OTFI that shall coordinate efforts to combat the illicit financing of severe forms of trafficking in persons with—

''(A) other offices of the Department of the Treasury;

''(B) other Federal agencies, including—

''(i) the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons of the Department of State; and

''(ii) the Interagency Task Force to Monitor and Combat Trafficking;

''(C) State and local law enforcement agencies; and

''(D) foreign governments.''.

(e) DEFINITION.—Section 312(a) of title 31, United States Code, as amended by this section, is further amended by adding at the end the following:

''(9) DEFINITION.—In this subsection, the term 'severe forms of trafficking in persons' has the meaning given such term in section 103 of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7102).''.

(f) ADDITIONAL REPORTING REQUIREMENT UNDER THE TRAFFICKING VICTIMS PROTECTION ACT OF 2000.—Section 105(d)(7) of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7103(d)(7)) is amended—

(1) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A)—

(A) by inserting ''the Committee on Financial Services,'' after ''the Committee on Foreign Affairs,''; and

(B) by inserting ''the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs,'' after ''the Committee on Foreign Relations,'';

(2) in subparagraph (Q)(vii), by striking ''; and'' and inserting a semicolon;

(3) in subparagraph (R), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(4) by adding at the end the following:

''(S) the efforts of the United States to eliminate money laundering relating to severe forms of trafficking in persons and the number of investigations, arrests, indictments, and convictions in money laundering cases with a nexus to severe forms of trafficking in persons.''.

(g) MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR THE ELIMINATION OF TRAFFICKING.—Section 108(b) of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7106(b)) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(13) Whether the government of the country, consistent with the capacity of the country, has in effect a framework to prevent financial transactions involving the proceeds of severe forms of trafficking in persons, and is taking steps to implement such a framework, including by investigating, prosecuting, convicting, and sentencing individuals who attempt or conduct such transactions.''.

SA 3558. Mr. TOOMEY (for himself, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. MENENDEZ, and Mr. KENNEDY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in division A, insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used by the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to develop, implement, or enforce any regulation that allows gasoline that contains greater than 10 percent ethanol by volume to qualify for a waiver under section 211(h)(4) of the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7545(h)(4)).

SA 3559. Mr. TOOMEY (for himself, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. MENENDEZ, and Mr. MANCHIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in division A, insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used by the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to develop, implement, or enforce any regulation to reallocate obligations waived under section 211(o)(9) of the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7545(o)(9)) to obligated parties that did not receive such waivers.

SA 3560. Mr. RUBIO (for himself, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Mr. WYDEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network and the appropriate divisions of the Department of the Treasury shall submit to Congress a report on any Geographic Targeting Orders issued since 2016, including—

(1) the type of data collected;

(2) how the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network uses the data;

(3) whether the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network needs more authority to combat money laundering through high-end real estate;

(4) how a record of beneficial ownership would improve and assist law enforcement efforts to investigate and prosecute criminal activity and prevent the use of shell companies to facilitate money laundering, tax evasion, terrorism financing, election fraud, and other illegal activity; and

(5) the feasibility of implementing Geographic Targeting Orders on a permanent basis on all real estate transactions in the United States greater than $300,000.

SA 3561. Mr. COTTON (for himself, Mr. HATCH, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. PERDUE, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. SASSE, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. RUBIO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in division B, insert the following:

SEC. _____. REPORT RELATING TO ASSETS OF IRANIAN LEADERS AND SENIOR POLITICAL FIGURES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 270 days after the date of the enactment of this Act,

and annually thereafter (or more frequently if the Secretary of the Treasury determines it appropriate based on new information received by the Secretary) for the following 2 years, the Secretary of the Treasury shall, in furtherance of the Secretary's efforts to prevent the financing of terrorism, money laundering, and related illicit finance and to make financial institutions' required compliance with sanctions more easily understood, submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report containing—

(1) the estimated total funds or other assets held in accounts at United States and foreign financial institutions that are under direct or indirect control of each individual described in subsection (b) and a description of such funds or assets;

(2) an identification of any equity interest such an individual has in an entity on the list of specially designated nationals and blocked persons maintained by the Office of Foreign Assets Control of the Department of the Treasury or in any other entity with respect to which sanctions are imposed;

(3) a description of how such funds or assets or equity interests were acquired, and how they have been used or employed;

(4) a description of any new methods or techniques used to evade anti-money laundering and related laws, including recommendations to improve techniques to combat illicit uses of the United States financial system by individuals described in subsection (b);

(5) recommendations for how United States economic sanctions against Iran may be revised to prevent the funds or other assets described in paragraph (1) from being used by individuals described in subsection (b) to contribute—

(A) to the continued development, testing, and procurement of ballistic missile technology by Iran; and

(B) to human rights abuses;

(6) an assessment of the impact and effectiveness of United States economic sanctions programs against Iran;

(7) a description of how the Department of the Treasury assesses the impact and effectiveness of United States economic sanctions programs against Iran; and

(8) recommendations for improving the ability of the Department of the Treasury to rapidly and effectively develop, implement, and enforce additional economic sanctions against Iran if so ordered by the President under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.) or any other provision of law.

(b) INDIVIDUALS DESCRIBED.—The individuals described in this paragraph are the following:

(1) The Supreme Leader of Iran.

(2) The President of Iran.

(3) Members of the Council of Guardians.

(4) Members of the Expediency Council.

(5) The Minister of Intelligence and Security.

(6) The Commander and the Deputy Commander of the IRGC.

(7) The Commander and the Deputy Commander of the IRGC Ground Forces.

(8) The Commander and the Deputy Commander of the IRGC Aerospace Force.

(9) The Commander and the Deputy Commander of the IRGC Navy.

(10) The Commander of the Basij-e-Mostaz'afin.

(11) The Commander of the Qods Force.

(12) The Commander in Chief of the Police Force.

(13) The head of the IRGC Joint Staff.

(14) The Commander of the IRGC Intelligence.

(15) The head of the IRGC Imam Hussein University.

(16) The Supreme Leader's Representative at the IRGC.

(17) The Chief Executive Officer and the Chairman of the IRGC Cooperative Foundation.

(18) The Commander of the Khatam-al-Anbia Construction Head Quarter.

(19) The Chief Executive Officer of the Basij Cooperative Foundation.

(20) The head of the Political Bureau of the IRGC.

(21) The head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran.

(c) FORM OF REPORT; PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.—

(1) FORM.—Each report required by subsection (a) shall be submitted in unclassified form but may contain a classified annex.

(2) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.—The unclassified portion of a report required by subsection (a) shall be made available to the public and posted on a publicly available Internet website of the Department of the Treasury—

(A) in English, Farsi, Arabic, and Azeri; and

(B) in precompressed, easily downloadable versions that are made available in all appropriate formats.

(d) SOURCES OF INFORMATION.—In preparing a report required by subsection (a), the Secretary of the Treasury may use any credible publication, database, web-based resource, public information compiled by any government agency, and any information collected or compiled by a nongovernmental organization or other entity provided to or made available to the Secretary, that the Secretary finds credible.

(e) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that, in preparing reports required by subsection (a), the Secretary of the Treasury should consider acquiring information from sources that—

(1) collect and, if necessary, translate high-veracity, official records; or

(2) provide search and analysis tools that enable law enforcement agencies to have new insights into commercial and financial relationships.

(f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term ''appropriate congressional committees'' means—

(A) the Committee on Financial Services and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives; and

(B) the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate.

(2) FUNDS.—The term ''funds'' means—

(A) cash;

(B) equity;

(C) any other intangible asset the value of which is derived from a contractual claim, including bank deposits, bonds, stocks, a security (as defined in section 2(a) of the Securities Act of 1933 (15 U.S.C. 77b(a))), or a security or an equity security (as defined in section 3(a) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (15 U.S.C. 78c(a))); and

(D) any other asset that the Secretary determines appropriate.

SA 3562. Mr. RUBIO (for himself and Mrs. ERNST) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in division B, insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available to the Small Business Administration in this Act may be provided to a company—

(1) that is headquarted in the People's Republic of China; or

(2) for which more than 25 percent of the voting stock of the company is owned by affiliates that are citizens of the People's Republic of China.

SA 3563. Mr. BARRASSO (for himself, Mr. GARDNER, and Mr. DAINES) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 34, line 19, strike the period at the end and insert the following: '': *Provided further*, That of the funds made available under this heading, $10,000,000 shall be derived from the Indian Irrigation Fund established by section 3211 of the WIIN Act (Public Law 114–322; 130 Stat. 1749).''.

SA 3564. Mr. DURBIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in division B, insert the following:

SEC. _____. Section 7905(a) of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by inserting '', a Senate intern'' before '', and a student'';

(2) in paragraph (3), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(3) in paragraph (4), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(4) by adding at the end the following:

''(5) the term 'Senate intern' means an individual—

''(A) who serves in the office of a Senator or a committee of the Senate on a temporary basis for a period not to exceed 12 months (without regard to whether the individual is compensated for the service); and

''(B) whose service is primarily for the educational experience of the individual.''.

SA 3565. Mr. JOHNSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title VIII, add the following:

SEC. 821. AMENDMENTS TO THE SOAR ACT.

The Scholarships for Opportunity and Results Act (division C of Public Law 112-10) is amended—

(1) in section 3007(a)(5)(A)(i) (sec. 38-1853.07(a)(5)(A)(i) D.C. Official Code), by striking subclause (I) and inserting the following:

''(I) is fully accredited by—

''(aa) an accrediting body with jurisdiction in the District of Columbia and that is recognized by the Student and Visitor Exchange

English Language Program administered by the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement; or

''(bb) any international accrediting body that the Secretary may designate, after consultation with the grantee or grantees under section 3004(a); or'';

(2) in section 3008(h) (sec. 38-1853.08(h) D.C. Official Code)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking ''section 3009(a)(2)(A)(i)'' and inserting ''section 3009(a)'';

(B) by striking paragraph (2) and inserting the following:

''(2) The Institute of Education Sciences may administer assessments to students participating in the evaluation under section 3009(a) for the purpose of conducting the evaluation under such section.''; and

(C) in paragraph (3), by striking ''the nationally norm-referenced standardized test described in paragraph (2)'' and inserting ''a nationally norm-referenced standardized test''; and

(3) in section 3009(a) (sec. 38-1853.09(a) D.C. Official Code)—

(A) in paragraph (1)(A), by striking ''annually'';

(B) in paragraph (2)—

(i) in subparagraph (A), by striking clause (i) and inserting the following:

''(i) is rigorous; and''; and

(ii) in subparagraph (B), by striking ''impact of the program'' and all that follows through the end of the subparagraph and inserting ''impact of the program on academic achievement and educational attainment.'';

(C) in paragraph (3)—

(i) in the paragraph heading, by striking ''ON EDUCATION'' and inserting ''OF EDUCATION'';

(ii) in subparagraph (A)—

(I) by inserting ''the academic progress of'' after ''assess''; and

(II) by striking ''in each of grades 3'' and all that follows through the end of the subparagraph and inserting ''; and'';

(iii) by striking subparagraph (B); and

(iv) by redesignating subparagraph (C) as subparagraph (B); and

(D) in paragraph (4)—

(i) in subparagraph (A), by striking ''A comparison of the academic achievement of participating eligible students who use an opportunity scholarship on the measurements described in paragraph (3)(B) to the academic achievement'' and inserting ''The academic progress of participating eligible students who use an opportunity scholarship compared to the academic progress'';

(ii) in subparagraph (B), by striking ''increasing the satisfaction of such parents and students with their choice'' and inserting ''those parents' and students' satisfaction with the program''; and

(iii) by striking subparagraph (D) through (F) and inserting the following:

''(D) The high school graduation rates, college enrollment rates, college persistence rates, and college graduation rates of participating eligible students who use an opportunity scholarship compared with the rates of public school students described in subparagraph (A), to the extent practicable.

''(E) The college enrollment rates, college persistence rates, and college graduation rates of students who participated in the program as the result of winning the Opportunity Scholarship Program lottery compared to the enrollment, persistence, and graduation rates for students who entered but did not win such lottery and who, as a result, served as the control group for previous evaluations of the program under this division. Nothing in this subparagraph may be construed to waive section 3004(a)(3)(A)(iii) with respect to any such student.

''(F) The safety of the schools attended by participating eligible students who use an opportunity scholarship compared with the schools in the District of Columbia attended by public school students described in subparagraph (A), to the extent practicable.''.

SA 3566. Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. ISAKSON, and Mr. SULLIVAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in division C, insert the following:

SEC. ____. Out of amounts appropriated to the Food and Drug Administration under title VI, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, acting through the Commissioner of Food and Drugs, shall, not later than July 1, 2019, and following the review required under Executive Order 12866 (5 U.S.C. 601 note; relating to regulatory planning and review), issue advice revising the advice provided in the notice of availability entitled ''Advice About Eating Fish, From the Environmental Protection Agency and Food and Drug Administration; Revised Fish Advice; Availability'' (82 Fed. Reg. 6571 (January 19, 2017)), in a manner that is consistent with nutrition science recognized by the Food and Drug Administration on the net effects of seafood consumption.

SA 3567. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 172, beginning on line 20, strike ''That none of'' and all that follows through line 25.

SA 3568. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds made available by division A may be used to regulate any species of plant, fish, or wildlife under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.) or any other provision of law under which regulatory authority is based on the power of Congress to regulate interstate commerce as enumerated in clause 3 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution of the United States if that species is—

(1) found entirely within the borders of a single State; and

(2) not part of a national market for any commodity.

SA 3569. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Beginning on page 124, strike line 19 and all that follows through page 125, line 4.

SA 3570. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place insert the following:

LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND

SEC. 1____. Notwithstanding any other provision of division A, none of the funds appropriated from the Land and Water Conservation Fund by division A may be used by the Federal Government—

(1) to purchase land; or

(2) to carry out activities relating to the process of purchasing land.

SA 3571. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place insert the following:

SEC. 1____. None of the funds made available by division A may be used—

(1) to condition the issuance, renewal, amendment, or extension of any permit, approval, license, lease, allotment, easement, right-of-way, or other land use or occupancy agreement on the transfer of any water right, including sole and joint ownership, directly to the United States, or any impairment of title, in whole or in part, granted or otherwise recognized under State law, by Federal or State adjudication, decree, or other judgment, or pursuant to any interstate water compact; or

(2) to require any water user to apply for or acquire a water right in the name of the United States under State law as a condition of the issuance, renewal, amendment, or extension of any permit, approval, license, lease, allotment, easement, right-of-way, or other land use or occupancy agreement.

SA 3572. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Beginning on page 9, line 23, through page 10, line 3, strike the following: ''Appropriations herein made shall not be available for the destruction of healthy, unadopted, wild horses and burros in the care of the Bureau or its contractors or for the sale of wild horses and burros that results in their destruction for processing into commercial products.''.

SA 3573. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds made available by division A may be used to carry out the Diesel Emissions Reduction program under subtitle G of title VII of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16131 et seq.).

SA 3574. Mr. BOOZMAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title I of division A, insert the following:

SEC. 1____. (a) The Secretary of Agriculture shall conduct an inventory and evaluation of certain land, as generally depicted on the map entitled ''Flatside Wilderness Adjacent Inventory Areas'' and dated November 30, 2017, to determine the suitability of that land for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System.

(b) The inventory and evaluation required under subsection (a) shall be completed not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act.

SA 3575. Mr. NELSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in division D, insert the following:

SEC. ____. (a) The funds made available under this Act for the Self-Help Homeownership Opportunity Program of the Department of Housing and Urban Development shall be increased by an additional $5,000,000, in accordance with subsection (b), provided that not less than $720,000 of which shall be made available for low-income and very low-income families affected by any State-mandated fire.

(b) The additional amount provided under subsection (a) shall be made available—

(1) notwithstanding section 11(d) of the Housing Opportunity Program Extension Act of 1996 (42 U.S.C. 12805 note), to cover the cost of—

(A) acquiring land (including financing and closing costs), which may include reimbursing an organization, consortium, or affiliate, upon approval of any required environmental review, for nongrant amounts of the organization, consortium, or affiliate advanced before the review to acquire land;

(B) dwelling construction (including the cost of building materials and construction equipment); and

(C) installing, extending, constructing, rehabilitating, or otherwise improving utilities and other infrastructure; and

(2) for grants that allow for a maximum expenditure of not less than $20,000 per dwelling.

SA 3576. Mr. COONS (for himself and Mr. CARPER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in division D, insert the following:

SEC. _____. Notwithstanding any other provision of law—

(1) the deadline for expenditure of any funds made available for national infrastructure investments under title I of division C of the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2012 (Public Law 112–55; 125 Stat. 641) shall be September 30, 2019; and

(2) the deadline for expenditure of any funds made available for national infrastructure investments under title VIII of division F of the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2013 (Public Law 113–6; 127 Stat. 432) shall be September 30, 2020.

SA 3577. Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself, Mr. WYDEN, and Ms. CANTWELL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 235, lines 19 and 20, strike ''$241,600,000, to remain available until September 30, 2020: *Provided*,'' and insert ''$242,600,000, to remain available until September 30, 2020: *Provided*, That $19,000,000 shall be available for the women's business center program authorized under section 29 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 656): *Provided further*,''.

SA 3578. Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. CANTWELL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in division C, insert the following:

SEC. _____. In administering the pilot program established by section 779 of division A of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2018 (Public Law 115–141), the Secretary of Agriculture shall—

(1) ensure that applicants that are determined to be ineligible for the pilot program have a means of appealing or otherwise challenging that determination in a timely fashion; and

(2) in determining whether an entity may overbuild or duplicate broadband expansion efforts made by any entity that has received a broadband loan from the Rural Utilities Service, not consider loans that were rescinded or defaulted on, or loans the terms and conditions of which were not met, if the entity under consideration has not previously defaulted on, or failed to meet the terms and conditions of, a Rural Utilities Service loan or had a Rural Utilities Service loan rescinded.

SA 3579. Mr. WYDEN (for himself, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. CARDIN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. HARRIS, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MERKLEY, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, and Mr. WHITEHOUSE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. DISCLOSURE OF TAX RETURNS BY PRESIDENTS AND CERTAIN PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Title I of the Ethics in Government Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.) is amended—

(1) by inserting after section 102 the following:

''SEC. 102A. DISCLOSURE OF TAX RETURNS.

''(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

''(1) the term 'covered candidate' means an individual—

''(A) required to file a report under section 101(c); and

''(B) who is nominated by a major party as a candidate for the office of President;

''(2) the term 'covered individual' means—

''(A) a President required to file a report under subsection (a) or (d) of section 101; and

''(B) an individual who occupies the office of the President required to file a report under section 101(e);

''(3) the term 'major party' has the meaning given the term in section 9002 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986; and

''(4) the term 'income tax return' means, with respect to any covered candidate or covered individual, any return (within the meaning of section 6103(b) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986) related to Federal income taxes, but does not include—

''(A) information returns issued to persons other than such covered candidate or covered individual; and

''(B) declarations of estimated tax.

''(b) DISCLOSURE.—

''(1) COVERED INDIVIDUALS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—In addition to the information described in subsections (a) and (b) of section 102, a covered individual shall include in each report required to be filed under this title a copy of the income tax returns of the covered individual for the 3 most recent taxable years for which a return have been filed with the Internal Revenue Service as of the date on which the report is filed.

''(B) FAILURE TO DISCLOSE.—If an income tax return is not disclosed under subparagraph (A), the Director of the Office of Government Ethics shall submit to the Secretary of the Treasury a request that the Secretary of the Treasury provide the Director of the Office of Government Ethics with a copy of the income tax return.

''(C) PUBLICLY AVAILABLE.—Each income tax return submitted under this paragraph shall be filed with the Director of the Office of Government Ethics and made publicly available in the same manner as the information described in subsections (a) and (b) of section 102.

''(D) REDACTION OF CERTAIN INFORMATION.—Before making any income tax return submitted under this paragraph available to the

public, the Director of the Office of Government Ethics shall redact such information as the Director of the Office of Government Ethics, in consultation with the Secretary of the Treasury (or a delegate of the Secretary), determines appropriate.

''(2) CANDIDATES.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 15 days after the date on which a covered candidate is nominated, the covered candidate shall amend the report filed by the covered candidate under section 101(c) with the Federal Election Commission to include a copy of the income tax returns of the covered candidate for the 3 most recent taxable years for which a return has been filed with the Internal Revenue Service.

''(B) FAILURE TO DISCLOSE.—If an income tax return is not disclosed under subparagraph (A) the Federal Election Commission shall submit to the Secretary of the Treasury a request that the Secretary of the Treasury provide the Federal Election Commission with the income tax return.

''(C) PUBLICLY AVAILABLE.—Each income tax return submitted under this paragraph shall be filed with the Federal Election Commission and made publicly available in the same manner as the information described in section 102(b).

''(D) REDACTION OF CERTAIN INFORMATION.—Before making any income tax return submitted under this paragraph available to the public, the Federal Election Commission shall redact such information as the Federal Election Commission, in consultation with the Secretary of the Treasury (or a delegate of the Secretary) and the Director of the Office of Government Ethics, determines appropriate.

''(3) SPECIAL RULE FOR SITTING PRESIDENTS.—Not later than 30 days after the date of enactment of this section, the President shall submit to the Director of the Office of Government Ethics a copy of the income tax returns described in paragraph (1)(A).''; and

(2) in section 104—

(A) in subsection (a)—

(i) in paragraph (1), in the first sentence, by inserting ''or any individual who knowingly and willfully falsifies or who knowingly and willfully fails to file an income tax return that such individual is required to disclose pursuant to section 102A'' before the period; and

(ii) in paragraph (2)(A)—

(I) in clause (i), by inserting ''or falsify any income tax return that such person is required to disclose under section 102A'' before the semicolon; and

(II) in clause (ii), by inserting ''or fail to file any income tax return that such person is required to disclosed under section 102A'' before the period;

(B) in subsection (b), in the first sentence by inserting ''or willfully failed to file or has willfully falsified an income tax return required to be disclosed under section 102A'' before the period;

(C) in subsection (c), by inserting ''or failing to file or falsifying an income tax return required to be disclosed under section 102A'' before the period; and

(D) in subsection (d)(1)—

(i) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by inserting ''or files an income tax return required to be disclosed under section 102A'' after ''title''; and

(ii) in subparagraph (A), by inserting ''or such income tax return, as applicable,'' after ''report''.

(b) AUTHORITY TO DISCLOSE INFORMATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 6103(l) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(23) DISCLOSURE OF RETURN INFORMATION OF PRESIDENTS AND CERTAIN PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES.—

''(A) DISCLOSURE OF RETURNS OF PRESIDENTS.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall, upon written request from the Director of the Office of Government Ethics pursuant to section 102A(b)(1)(B) of the Ethics in Government Act of 1978, provide to officers and employees of the Office of Government Ethics a copy of any income tax return of the President which is required to be filed under section 102A of such Act.

''(ii) DISCLOSURE TO PUBLIC.—The Director of the Office of Government Ethics may disclose to the public the income tax return of any President which is required to be filed with the Director pursuant to section 102A of the Ethics in Government Act of 1978.

''(B) DISCLOSURE OF RETURNS OF CERTAIN CANDIDATES FOR PRESIDENT.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall, upon written request from the Chairman of the Federal Election Commission pursuant to section 102A(b)(2)(B) of the Ethics in Government Act of 1978, provide to officers and employees of the Federal Election Commission copies of the applicable returns of any person who has been nominated as a candidate of a major party (as defined in section 9002(a)) for the office of President.

''(ii) DISCLOSURE TO PUBLIC.—The Federal Election Commission may disclose to the public applicable returns of any person who has been nominated as a candidate of a major party (as defined in section 9002(6)) for the office of President and which is required to be filed with the Commission pursuant to section 102A of the Ethics in Government Act.

''(C) APPLICABLE RETURNS.—For purposes of this paragraph, the term 'applicable returns' means, with respect to any candidate for the office of President, income tax returns for the 3 most recent taxable years for which a return has been filed as of the date of the nomination.''.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 6103(p)(4) of such Code, in the matter preceding subparagraph (A) and in subparagraph (F)(ii), is amended by striking ''or (22)'' and inserting ''(22), or (23)'' each place it appears.

SA 3580. Mr. DAINES submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title I of division D, insert the following:

SEC. 1____. None of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available to the Department of Transportation by this Act or any other Act may be obligated or expended to implement, administer, or enforce the requirements of section 31137 of title 49, United States Code, or any regulation issued by the Secretary pursuant to such section, with respect to the use of electronic logging devices by operators of commercial motor vehicles, as defined in section 31132(1) of such title, transporting livestock, as defined in section 602 of the Emergency Livestock Feed Assistance Act of 1988 (7 U.S.C. 1471) or insects.

SA 3581. Mr. PETERS (for himself and Mr. YOUNG) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in division D, insert the following:

SEC. ____. Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall issue a report on efforts by the Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Environmental Protection Agency relating to the removal of lead-based paint and other hazardous materials, which shall include—

(1) a description of direct removal efforts by the Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Environmental Protection Agency;

(2) a description of education provided by the Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Environmental Protection Agency to other Federal agencies, local governments and communities, recipients of grants made by either entity, and the general public relating to the removal of lead-based paint and other hazardous materials;

(3) a description of assistance received from other Federal agencies relating to the removal of lead-based paint and other hazardous materials; and

(4) any best practices developed or provided by the Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Environmental Protection Agency relating to the removal of lead-based paint and other hazardous materials.

SA 3582. Mr. BROWN (for himself and Mr. PORTMAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title VII of division C, insert the following:

1890 LAND-GRANT COLLEGES, INCLUDING TUSKEGEE UNIVERSITY

SEC. 7____. (a) Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act, the amounts made available by this Act to carry out sections 1444 and 1445, respectively, of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3221, 3222) shall each be increased by $3,000,000.

(b) Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act, the amount made available under the heading ''(INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)'' under the heading ''AGRICULTURE BUILDINGS AND FACILITIES'' under the heading ''AGRICULTURAL PROGRAMS'' in title I shall be decreased by $6,000,000.

SA 3583. Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. BOOKER, Ms. HASSAN, and Mr. KING) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in Division A, insert the following:

SEC. ___. ADDRESSING PEDIATRIC CANCER RATES IN THE UNITED STATES.

(a) REPORT IDENTIFYING GEOGRAPHIC VARIATION OF TYPES OF PEDIATRIC CANCER.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall submit to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate, the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives, a report that provides details on the geographic variation in pediatric cancer incidence in the United States, including—

(1) the types of pediatric cancer within each of the 10 States with the highest age-adjusted incidence rate of cancer among persons aged 20 years or younger; and

(2) geographic concentrations of types and prevalence of pediatric cancers within each such State, in accordance with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines.

(b) SUPPORT FOR STATES WITH HIGH INCIDENCE OF PEDIATRIC CANCER.—Funds made available under the heading ''Toxic Substances and Environmental Public Health'' for the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry may be expended for public outreach and events to—

(1) inform residents and State and local health agencies in the 10 States with the highest age-adjusted incidence rate of cancer among persons aged 20 years or younger of possible contributing factors to pediatric cancer, including environmental exposures; and

(2) guide investigations relating to causes of variation in pediatric cancer incidence.

(c) STUDY OF PEDIATRIC CANCER FACTORS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 5 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall submit to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions of the Senate and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate, the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives, and the State health agencies of the States described in this paragraph, a report containing the results of a study conducted by the Secretary of the 10 States with the highest age-adjusted incidence rate of cancer among persons aged 20 years or younger to identify underlying contributing factors for pediatric cancer that are unique to each of such States.

(2) PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT.—Upon submission of the report under paragraph (1), the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall conduct public education and outreach activities to provide information to residents of the States included in the study under such subsection concerning the findings identified in such study and actions taken to identify and address contributing factors to pediatric cancer.

(3) FUNDING.—The Secretary may request such funds as may be necessary to carry out this subsection.

(d) PRIVACY.—The Secretary of Health and Human Services shall ensure that all information with respect to patients that is contained in the reports under this section is de-identified in a manner that protects the privacy of such patients.

SA 3584. Mr. WYDEN (for himself and Mr. BOOKER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. SMALL BUSINESS LOAN DATA COLLECTION.

Not later than December 31, 2018, the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection shall ensure that financial institutions subject to 704B of the Equal Credit Opportunity Act (15 U.S.C. 1691c–2) are complying with the requirements of that section.

SA 3585. Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself and Ms. HEITKAMP) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 41, line 4, strike the period and insert the following: '': *Provided further*, That of the amounts made available under this heading, $400,000 shall be made available to the commission established by section 3(a) of the Alyce Spotted Bear and Walter Soboleff Commission on Native Children Act (Public Law 114–244; 130 Stat. 981).''.

SA 3586. Mr. HATCH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 22, line 10, strike the period and insert the following: '': *Provided further*, That of the amounts made available under this heading, $69,614,000 shall be made available for the National Geospatial Program, of which not less than $3,800,000 shall be made available for the Federal Geographic Data Committee.''.

SA 3587. Mr. BARRASSO (for himself, Mr. BENNET, Mr. ENZI, and Mr. WHITEHOUSE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title VII of division C, insert the following:

SEC. ____. (a) Title I of the Rural Electrification Act of 1936 (7 U.S.C. 901 et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 19 the following:

''SEC. 20. LOANS FOR CARBON DIOXIDE CAPTURE AND UTILIZATION.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law (including regulations), in carrying out any program under this Act under which the Secretary provides a loan or loan guarantee, the Secretary may provide such a loan or loan guarantee to facilities employing commercially demonstrated technologies for carbon dioxide capture and utilization.''.

(b) Section 3 of the Rural Electrification Act of 1936 (7 U.S.C. 903) is amended—

(1) by striking ''There are'' and inserting the following:

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subsection (b)(2), there are''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(b) LOANS FOR CARBON DIOXIDE CAPTURE AND UTILIZATION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as are necessary to carry out section 20.

''(2) SEPARATE APPROPRIATIONS.—The sums appropriated under paragraph (1) shall be separate and distinct from the sums appropriated under subsection (a).''.

SA 3588. Mr. BARRASSO (for himself and Ms. CORTEZ MASTO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title IV of division A, insert the following:

APPLICATION OF BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT RULE

SEC. 4_____. (a) In this section, the term ''project'' means a system described in section 2801.9(a)(4) of title 43, Code of Federal Regulations (as in effect on the date of enactment of this Act).

(b) None of the funds made available by this Act shall be used to apply the rule of the Bureau of Land Management entitled ''Competitive Processes, Terms, and Conditions for Leasing Public Lands for Solar and Wind Energy Development and Technical Changes and Corrections'' (81 Fed. Reg. 92122 (December 19, 2016)) to a project that applied for a right-of-way under section 501 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1761) on or before December 19, 2016.

(c) The owner of a project that applied for a right-of-way under section 501 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1761) on or before December 19, 2016, shall be obligated to pay with respect to the right-of-way all rents and fees in effect before the effective date of the rule described in subsection (b).

SA 3589. Mr. SANDERS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 142, between lines 16 and 17, insert the following:

STUDY OF PERFLUOROALKYL AND POLYFLUOROALKYL SUBSTANCES IN GROUNDWATER

SEC. 433. (a) Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director of the United States Geological Survey (referred to in this section as the ''Director''), in consultation with the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (referred to in this section as the ''Administrator''), shall complete a study to conduct targeted monitoring of occurrences of perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances in groundwater in each region of the United States in areas in which the substances may be anticipated to be found and to which humans may be exposed, based on the best available information.

(b) The Director, in consultation with the Administrator, is encouraged to develop a public information campaign to inform impacted communities and the general public of potential exposure to perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances resulting from releases in groundwater.

(c) Not later than 15 months after the date of enactment of this Act and annually thereafter, the Director, in consultation with the Administrator, shall submit to the Committee on Environment and Public Works of the Senate, the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate, the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives, and the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives a report that describes the findings of the study completed under subsection (a).

SA 3590. Mr. SASSE (for himself, Mr. JONES, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. DAINES, Mrs. ERNST, Mr. RISCH, Mr. ENZI, and Mr. LANKFORD) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title I of division D, insert the following:

SEC. 1____. The Secretary of Transportation shall amend part 395 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations, to ensure that, in the case of a driver transporting livestock (as defined in section 602 of the Agricultural Act of 1949 (7 U.S.C. 1471)) or insects within a 300 air-mile radius from the point at which the on-duty time of the driver begins with respect to the trip—

(1) the on-duty time of the driver shall exclude all time spent—

(A) at a plant, terminal, facility, or other property of a motor carrier or shipper or on any public property during which the driver is waiting to be dispatched;

(B) loading or unloading a commercial motor vehicle;

(C) supervising or assisting in the loading or unloading of a commercial motor vehicle;

(D) attending to a commercial motor vehicle while the vehicle is being loaded or unloaded;

(E) remaining in readiness to operate a commercial motor vehicle; and

(F) giving or receiving receipts for shipments loaded or unloaded;

(2) except as provided in paragraph (5), the driving time under section 395.3(a)(3)(i) of that title is modified to a maximum of not less than 15, and not more than 18, hours within a 24-hour period;

(3) the driver may take 1 or more rest periods during the trip, which shall not be included in the calculation of the driving time;

(4) after completion of the trip, the driver shall be required to take a rest break for a period that is 5 hours less than the maximum driving time under paragraph (2);

(5) if the driver is within 150 air-miles of the point of delivery, any additional driving to that point of delivery shall not be included in the calculation of the driving time; and

(6) the 10-hour rest period under section 395.3(a)(1) of that title shall not apply.

SA 3591. Mr. LEE (for himself and Mr. BOOKER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used by the Secretary of Agriculture to provide payments under the environmental quality incentives program established under chapter 4 of subtitle D of title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839aa et seq.) for a practice that earns a negative score on the Conservation Practice Physical Effects matrix developed by the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

SA 3592. Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Ms. HARRIS, and Mr. BOOKER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 318, line 21, strike the period at the end and insert ": *Provided further*, That notwithstanding the table titled 'National Institute of Food and Agriculture, Research and Education Activities' in the report accompanying this Act, $19,000,000 shall be available for Minor Crop Pest Management (IR–4): *Provided further*, That the amount made available under this heading is increased by $7,087,000.''.

SA 3593. Mr. SCOTT (for himself and Mr. MANCHIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. POSITIVE CREDIT REPORTING PERMITTED.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 623 of the Fair Credit Reporting Act (15 U.S.C. 1681s–2) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(f) FULL-FILE CREDIT REPORTING.—

''(1) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection, the following definitions shall apply:

''(A) ENERGY UTILITY FIRM.—The term 'energy utility firm' means an entity that provides gas or electric utility services to the public.

''(B) UTILITY OR TELECOMMUNICATION FIRM.—The term 'utility or telecommunication firm' means an entity that provides utility services to the public through pipe, wire, landline, wireless, cable, or other connected facilities, or radio, electronic, or similar transmission (including the extension of such facilities).

''(2) INFORMATION RELATING TO LEASE AGREEMENTS, UTILITIES, AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICES.—Subject to the limitation in paragraph (3) and notwithstanding any other provision of law, a person or the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development may furnish to a consumer reporting agency information relating to the performance of a consumer in making payments—

''(A) under a lease agreement with respect to a dwelling, including such a lease in which the Department of Housing and Urban Development provides subsidized payments for occupancy in a dwelling; or

''(B) pursuant to a contract for a utility or telecommunications service.

''(3) LIMITATION.—Information about a consumer's usage of any utility service provided by a utility or telecommunication firm may be furnished to a consumer reporting agency only to the extent that the information relates to the payment by the consumer for the service of the utility or telecommunication service or other terms of the provision of the services to the consumer, including any deposit, discount, or conditions for interruption or termination of the service.

''(4) PAYMENT PLAN.—An energy utility firm may not report payment information to a consumer reporting agency with respect to an outstanding balance of a consumer as late if—

''(A) the energy utility firm and the consumer have entered into a payment plan (including a deferred payment agreement, an arrearage management program, or a debt forgiveness program) with respect to such outstanding balance; and

''(B) the consumer is meeting the obligations of the payment plan, as determined by the energy utility firm.''.

(b) LIMITATION ON LIABILITY.—Section 623(c) of the Consumer Credit Protection Act (15 U.S.C. 1681s–2(c)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2), by striking ''or'' at the end;

(2) by redesignating paragraph (3) as paragraph (4); and

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

''(3) subsection (f) of this section, including any regulations issued thereunder; or''.

(c) GAO STUDY AND REPORT.—Not later than 2 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to Congress a report on the impact of furnishing information pursuant to subsection (f) of section 623 of the Fair Credit Reporting Act (15 U.S.C. 1681s–2), as added by subsection (a) of this section, on consumers.

SA 3594. Mr. SCOTT (for himself and Mr. JONES) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____. Section 4(a) of the Real Estate Settlement Procedures Act of 1974 (12 U.S.C. 2603(a)) is amended—

(1) by striking ''itemize all charges'' and inserting ''itemize all actual charges'';

(2) by striking ''and all charges imposed upon the seller in connection with the settlement and'' and inserting ''and the seller in connection with the settlement. Such forms''; and

(3) by inserting after ''or both.'' the following: ''Charges for any title insurance premium disclosed on such forms shall be equal to the amount charged for each individual title insurance policy, subject to any discounts as required by State regulation or the title company rate filings.''.

SA 3595. Ms. COLLINS (for herself, Mr. KING, Mr. SANDERS, and Mrs. SHAHEEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019,

and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title VII of division C, insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available by this Act shall be used to enforce the requirement in the final rule entitled ''Food Labeling: Revision of the Nutrition and Supplement Facts Labels'', published in the Federal Register on May 27, 2016 (81 Fed. Reg. 33742), that any single ingredient sugar, honey, agave, or syrup (including maple syrup) that is packaged and offered for sale as a single ingredient food bear the declaration ''Includes 'X'g Added Sugars''.

SA 3596. Mr. ENZI submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 142, between lines 16 and 17, insert the following:

PROHIBITION OF USE OF FUNDS TO MAKE CERTAIN DEDUCTIONS FROM CERTAIN PAYMENTS TO STATES UNDER THE MINERAL LEASING ACT

SEC. 433. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to carry out section 35(b) of the Mineral Leasing Act (30 U.S.C. 191(b)).

SA 3597. Mr. TOOMEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. APPLICABLE RECOVERY PERIOD FOR QUALIFIED IMPROVEMENT PROPERTY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—None of the funds made available by this Act may be used by the Internal Revenue Service to conduct any enforcement activity related to the treatment of the applicable recovery period of qualified improvement property as a period of other than 15 years (20 years in the case of property required to use the alternative depreciation system under section 168(g) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986), consistent with the Joint Explanatory Statement of the Committee of the Conference (House Report 115-466) accompanying H.R. 1 of the 115th Congress (Public Law 115-97).

(b) DEFINITIONS.—Any term used in this section which is also used in section 168 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 shall have the meaning given such term under such section.

SA 3598. Mr. MORAN (for himself, Mr. UDALL, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. GARDNER, and Mr. BENNET) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 464, line 24, strike ''regulation.'' and insert the following: ''regulation: *Provided further*, That not less than $50,000,000 of the amount provided under this heading shall be for capital expenses related to safety improvements, maintenance, and the non-Federal match for discretionary Federal grant programs to enable continued passenger rail operations on long-distance routes (as defined in section 24102 of title 49, United States Code) on which Amtrak is the sole tenant of the host railroad and positive train control systems are not required by law (including regulations): *Provided further*, That in fiscal year 2019, Amtrak may not give notice under subsection (a) or (b) of section 24706 of title 49, United States Code, with respect to long-distance routes (as defined in section 24102 of title 49, United States Code) on which Amtrak is the sole tenant of the host railroad and positive train control systems are not required by law (including regulations), or otherwise initiate discontinuance of, reduce the frequency of, suspend, or substantially alter the schedule or route of rail service on any portion of such route operated in fiscal year 2018, including implementation of service permitted by section 24305(a)(3)(A) of title 49, United States Code, in lieu of rail service.''.

SA 3599. Mr. PERDUE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title VII of division C, insert the following:

SEC. ____. Section 4(e) of the Poultry Products Inspection Act (21 U.S.C. 453(e)) is amended by inserting ''including quail,'' before ''whether''.

SA 3600. Mr. BROWN (for himself and Mr. PORTMAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 464, line 24, strike the period at the end and insert '': *Provided further*, That a sufficient amount of funds available under this heading shall be available to restaff stations from which agents have been removed after January 1, 2018, and that averaged not less than 25 passengers per day during the period beginning on January 1, 2013, and ending on December 31, 2017.''.

SA 3601. Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Ms. WARREN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. (a) UNDUE HARDSHIP.—No funds made available in this or any other Act may be used to contest a claim, or to pay any contractor of the Federal Government that contests a claim, that is made—

(1) in any proceeding under section 523(a)(8) of title 11, United States Code, that excepting a debt from discharge would constitute an undue hardship; and

(2) by a debtor who—

(A) is receiving benefits under title II of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 401 et seq.) or title XVI of that Act (42 U.S.C. 1381 et seq.) on the basis of disability;

(B) has been determined by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to be unemployable due to a service-connected disability;

(C) is a family caregiver of an eligible veteran pursuant to section 1720G of title 38;

(D) is a member of a household that has a gross income that is less than 200 percent of the poverty line, and provides for the care and support of an elderly, disabled, or chronically ill member of the household of the debtor or member of the immediate family of the debtor;

(E) is a member of a household that has a gross income that is less than 200 percent of the poverty line, and the income of the debtor is solely derived from benefit payments under section 202 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 402); or

(F) during the 5-year period preceding the filing of the petition (exclusive of any applicable suspension of the repayment period), was not enrolled in an education program and had a gross income that was less than 200 percent of the poverty line during each year during that period.

(b) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term ''poverty line'' means the poverty line (as defined by the Office of Management and Budget and revised annually in accordance with section 673(2) of the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9902(2)) applicable to a household of the size involved.

(c) 85/15 RULE.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, for fiscal years 2019 through 2028, no funds made available in this or any other Act shall be provided, directly or indirectly, to any proprietary institution of higher education (as defined in section 102(b) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1002(b))) that derives less than 15 percent of the institution's revenue from sources other than Federal financial assistance provided under this or any other Act or any other Federal law, through a grant, contract, subsidy, loan, guarantee, insurance, or other means, including Federal financial assistance that is disbursed or delivered to an institution or on behalf of a student or to a student to be used to attend the institution, except that such assistance shall not include any monthly housing stipend provided under the Post-9/11 Educational Assistance Program under chapter 33 of title 38, United States Code.

SA 3602. Mr. BOOKER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in division C, insert the following:

SEC. _____. (a) None of the funds appropriated by this Act shall be used by the Secretary of Agriculture (referred to in this section as the ''Secretary'') to review or approve a budget or disbursement of funds for

a board, committee, or similar entity established to carry out a checkoff program to promote and provide research and information for a particular agricultural commodity without reference to specific producers or brands unless the Secretary first imposes a requirement on the board, committee, or similar entity to publish and make available for public inspection all budgets and disbursements of funds entrusted to the board, committee, or similar entity that are approved by the Secretary, immediately on approval by the Secretary.

(b) In carrying out subsection (a), the Secretary shall require that, for each disbursement of funds, a board, committee, or similar entity shall disclose—

(1) the amount of the disbursement;

(2) the purpose of the disbursement, including the activities to be funded by the disbursement;

(3) the identity of the recipient of the disbursement; and

(4) the identity of any third party that may receive the disbursed funds, including any contractor or subcontractor of the recipient of the disbursement, and the amount received by any third party.

SA 3603. Mr. CARPER (for himself, Ms. DUCKWORTH, and Mr. BOOKER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 10, line 10, strike ''$1,292,067,000'' and insert ''$1,292,567,000''.

On page 10, line 18, strike the period at the end and insert '': *Provided further*, That not to exceed $106,579,000 shall be used for planning and consultation, of which $500,000 shall be used to hire not less than 3 full time employees to carry out the Information, Planning and Consultation system within the Environmental Conservation Online System of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service.''.

On page 40, line 7, strike ''$134,673,000'' and insert ''$134,173,000''.

SA 3604. Mr. CARPER (for himself, Ms. DUCKWORTH, and Mr. BOOKER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 10, line 18, strike the period at the end and insert '': *Provided further*, That not less than $98,724,000 shall be used for recovery of species under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.), of which not less than $5,000,000 shall be used for the recovery of species at the greatest risk of extinction: *Provided further*, That the amount made available under this heading is increased by $5,000,000.''.

On page 40, line 7, strike ''$134,673,000'' and insert ''$129,673,000''.

SA 3605. Mr. CARPER (for himself, Ms. DUCKWORTH, and Mr. BOOKER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 10, line 10, strike ''$1,292,067,000'' and insert ''$1,293,067,000''.

On page 10, line 18, strike the period at the end and insert '': *Provided further*, That not less than $17,267,000 shall be used for the Science Support program of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, of which not less than $10,517,000 shall be used for adaptive science under that program.''.

On page 40, line 7, strike ''$134,673,000'' and insert ''$133,673,000''.

SA 3606. Mr. CARPER (for himself, Ms. DUCKWORTH, and Mr. BOOKER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 10, line 10, strike ''$1,292,067,000'' and insert ''$1,293,067,000''.

On page 10, line 12, strike ''$17,818,000'' and insert ''$18,818,000''.

On page 40, line 7, strike ''$134,673,000'' and insert ''$133,673,000''.

SA 3607. Ms. STABENOW (for herself, Mr. PETERS, Mr. REED, and Mr. CARDIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title II of division A, insert the following:

Using funds appropriated under this title, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency shall implement the recommendations described in the report of the Office of Inspector General of the Environmental Protection Agency entitled ''Management Weakness Delayed Response to Flint Water Crisis'', numbered 18-P-0221, and dated July 19, 2018, to ensure clean and safe water compliance under the Safe Drinking Water Act (42 U.S.C. 300f et seq.). If the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency does not implement 1 or more recommendations required by the preceding sentence, the Administrator shall submit to the Committees on Appropriations and Environment and Public Works of the Senate and the Committees on Appropriations and Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives a report explaining why the Administrator did not implement the recommendation and identifying specific actions the Administrator is implementing to address the concerns raised in the report.

SA 3608. Mr. REED submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 472, between lines 6 and 7, insert the following:

SEC. 163. None of the funds made available under this Act may be used for the implementation or furtherance of new policies detailed in the ''Dear Colleague'' letter distributed by the Federal Transit Administration to capital investment grant program project sponsors on June 29, 2018.

SA 3609. Mr. REED submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

In the matter under the heading ''CAPITAL INVESTMENT GRANTS'' under the heading ''FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION'' in title I of division D, insert before the period at the end the following: '': *Provided further*, That the Secretary shall treat the proceeds of a Federal loan as a non-Federal contribution toward project costs under section 5309 of title 49, United States Code, if the loan is repayable from non-Federal funds: *Provided further*, That any contingency funds identified by a project sponsor in excess of the funds necessary to satisfy a 50 percent probability threshold shall not be considered part of a grant agreement under the capital investment grant program unless such excess funds are expended: *Provided further*, That risk assessments for projects under consideration under subsections (d) and (e) of section 5309 of title 49, United States Code, shall not occur until after a project has entered the engineering phase, unless otherwise requested by the project sponsor''.

SA 3610. Mr. REED submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

In the matter under the heading ''ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS—FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION (INCLUDING RESCISSION)'' under the heading ''FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION'' in title I of division D, insert after section 162 the following:

SEC. 163. None of the funds made available under this Act may be used to alter or rescind guidance issued by the Secretary of Transportation for the capital investment grant program.

SA 3611. Mr. DURBIN (for himself and Mr. GRASSLEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title VII of division C, insert the following:

SEC. ____. The authority of the Secretary of Health and Human Services to regulate direct-to-consumer advertising of prescription drugs, pursuant to the authorities under sections 502(n) and 503C of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 352(n), 353c), shall include the authority to require such advertising to include an appropriate

disclosure of pricing information with respect to such drugs. The Secretary of Health and Human Services shall issue regulations to implement this section. A drug that is advertised to consumers without the information required by this section or its implementing regulations shall be deemed to be misbranded under section 502 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 352).

SA 3612. Mr. DURBIN (for himself and Mr. GRASSLEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title VII of division C, insert the following:

SEC. ____. Of the funds appropriated pursuant to this Act, no more than $1,000,000 shall be used by the Secretary of Health and Human Services to issue a regulation requiring that direct-to-consumer advertisements under section 502(n) of the Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act include an appropriate disclosure of pricing information with respect to such drugs.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I have 6 requests for committees to meet during today's session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority leaders.

Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today's session of the Senate:

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

The Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, July 25, 2018, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled ''The Race to 5G: Exploring Spectrum Needs to Maintain U.S. Global Leadership.''

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

The Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, July 25, 2018, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing on legislation and pending nominations.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

The Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, July 25, 2018, at 3 p.m., to conduct a hearing entitled ''An Update on American Diplomacy to Advance our National Security Strategy.''

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The Select Committee on Intelligence is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, July 25, 2018, at 9:30 a.m., to conduct a hearing on the nomination of Joseph Maguire, of Florida, to be Director of the National Counterterrorism Center, Office of the Director of National Intelligence, and Ellen E. McCarthy, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (Intelligence and Research).

THE JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE ON SOLVENCY OF MULTIEMPLOYER PENSION PLANS

The Joint Select Committee on Solvency of Multiemployer Pension Plans is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, July 25, 2018, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled ''How the Multiemployer Pension System Affects Stakeholders.''

SUBCOMMITTEE ON SPACE, SCIENCE, AND COMPETITIVENESS

The Subcommittee on Space, Science, and Competitiveness of the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, July 25, 2018, at 2:15 p.m., to conduct a hearing entitled ''Destination Mars: Putting American Boots on the Surface of the Red Planet.''

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME—H.R. 184 and H.R. 1201

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I understand that there are two bills at the desk, and I ask for their first reading en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bills by title en bloc for the first time.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 184) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the excise tax on medical devices.

A bill (H.R. 1201) 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.

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I now ask for a second reading, and I object to my own request, all en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection having been heard, the bills will be read for the second time on the next legislative day.

EAST ROSEBUD WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS ACT

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of H.R. 4645, which was received from the House.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 4645) to amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to designate certain segments of East Rosebud Creek in Carbon County, Montana, as components of the Wild and Scenic Rivers System.

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

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The bill (H.R. 4645) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

NATIONAL ADA LOVELACE DAY

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 592, submitted earlier today.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 592) designating October 9, 2018, as ''National Ada Lovelace Day'' and honoring the life and legacy of Ada Lovelace, the first computer programmer.

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

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I further 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. 592) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

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

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF GRACE HOPPER

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 593, submitted earlier today.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 593) honoring the life and legacy of Grace Hopper, professor, inventor, entrepreneur, business leader, and Rear Admiral of the Navy.

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

Mr. MORAN. I further 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. 593) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

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

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, JULY 26, 2018

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 9:30 a.m., Thursday, July 26;

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; further, that following leader remarks, the Senate resume consideration of H.R. 6147.

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

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. MORAN. 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, following the remarks of Senator HIRONO.

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

The Senator from Hawaii.

NOMINATION OF BRETT KAVANAUGH

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, the Senate has a constitutional duty equal to the President's to provide advice and consent on all judicial nominees, including the President's Supreme Court nominee, Brett Kavanaugh. Our advice-and-consent role requires us to view the totality of Judge Kavanaugh's record and experiences, including the documents from his time in the executive branch.

Judge Kavanaugh worked as a fellow in the first Bush administration's Office of the Solicitor General, for Ken Starr in the Office of the Independent Counsel investigating President Clinton, and in President George W. Bush's White House in the office of White House Counsel and as Staff Secretary to the President.

As has been the practice for previous Supreme Court nominees, the Judiciary Committee should ask for and receive all records related to his work in these roles. Any document requested of the Bush library or the National Archives should parallel similar requests made for other Supreme Court nominees.

Take the request sent by the committee for Elena Kagan's nomination. This is the letter requesting information for Elena Kagan. We simply substituted Judge Kavanaugh's name where Elena Kagan's name appeared. You probably can't see it, but the request letter is signed by then-chair of the Judiciary Committee, PATRICK LEAHY, and it was signed by our current Attorney General, but ranking member at that time, Jeff Sessions.

On May 18, 2010, just 8 days after her nomination to the Supreme Court by President Obama, the Judiciary Committee sent a bipartisan request to the Director of the Clinton Presidential Library asking for records from her time working at the White House and records related to her nomination to the DC Circuit. We should send a similar request for Judge Kavanaugh, just substituting Brett Kavanaugh's name for Elena Kagan's. However, the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, our colleague from Iowa, is refusing to work with us to request the totality of Judge Kavanaugh's record.

I have heard the objection to the request for all the records that rests on the volume of documents we might receive. The fact that there could be a lot of documents relevant to Judge Kavanaugh's time in the White House, or any relevant point in his career, is not the issue. The President knew there were a lot of documents related to Judge Kavanaugh. It was reported that the majority leader argued that Judge Kavanaugh's voluminous record could hurt his confirmation, tacitly acknowledging that the Senate would have to examine all of the documents.

Senator MCCONNELL understood that the record was relevant to the Senate's advice-and-consent responsibility in reviewing this nominee's qualifications and judicial philosophy. Even the nominee himself, Judge Kavanaugh, thinks the same. Judge Kavanaugh often refers to how his executive branch experience shapes his judicial philosophy.

In 2013, he wrote in a published law review article:

> When people ask me which prior legal experience has been most useful for me as a judge, I tell them I certainly draw on all of them, the clerkships, private practice at Kirkland, Independent Counsel's office, even college jobs on the Hill at Ways and Means, but the five-and-a-half years in the White House, especially the three years as Staff Secretary for President Bush, are among the most interesting and most instructive. . . .

In 2016, he repeated that sentiment almost word for word. Again, quoting Judge Kavanaugh:

> People sometimes ask what prior legal experience has been most useful for me as a judge. And I say, ''I certainly draw on all of them,'' but I also say that my five-and-a-half years at the White House and especially my three years as staff secretary for President George W. Bush were the most interesting and informative for me.

Judge Kavanaugh emphasized that the most interesting and informative experiences he had were at the White House as Staff Secretary. So, of course, the Senate Judiciary Committee ought to be able to review all of the records of his time in the White House.

The scope of the request that Democrats on the Judiciary Committee are proposing is so obvious and common sense that it is hard to believe it is a topic of debate. In normal times, there would not be any question about what the committee is entitled to see, and no responsible Senate would object.

But these are not normal times. In these times, we have Senators trying to cover for an irresponsible, dangerous President, who, like in anything else he does, wants to bulldoze his nominee's way onto the highest Court in the land for life.

In these not-normal times, the simplest of processes—getting access to the records of a Supreme Court nominee—has become politicalized, and in these not-normal times, we have to wonder why the standards have suddenly changed, and we have to ask ourselves what could possibly be hiding in those documents.

When the President proposes a nominee to the Supreme Court, we owe it to ourselves and to our country to thoroughly examine that nominee's record, to diligently question them about their records and judicial philosophy, and to make a reasoned judgment about their fitness for the job.

The American people rely on us in the Senate, and particularly in the Judiciary Committee, to perform our constitutional advice-and-consent duties to the best of our abilities.

So I urge my Republican colleagues to join us in calling for the full release of all documents related to Judge Kavanaugh's record and experiences. This has happened in the past. It has always happened, and it should happen again.

I yield the floor.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M. TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 9:30 a.m. tomorrow.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 7:31 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, July 26, 2018, at 9:30 a.m.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

SARAH JENNINGS RETIREMENT FROM THE CBO

HON. MAC THORNBERRY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 25, 2018

Mr. THORNBERRY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and recognize Sarah Jennings on her retirement after more than 19 years of exceptional service to the Congress at the Congressional Budget Office. Sarah will be retiring at the end of August. After working as a civilian nuclear test engineer for the U.S. Navy, an economic consultant, and an instructor at George Mason University, she began her congressional career in CBO's Budget Analysis Division in 1999. She worked as a principal analyst and then as the unit chief for the Defense, International Affairs, and Veterans' Affairs Cost Estimates Unit.

During her time at CBO, Sarah has been recognized as a knowledgeable and experienced manager. As the third longest tenured unit chief in the Budget Analysis Division, she has extensive knowledge of the program accounts in her unit and fosters an outstanding collegial environment where analysts respect each other and work well together.

Sarah has established an exceptional working relationship with the Armed Services Committees, which allows CBO to work on the proposals for the annual National Defense Authorization Act in an effective manner. During her tenure, she has taken a strategic and methodical approach to the analysis of legislative proposals as she assists her analysts in considering the budgetary effects of different proposals. Her support has made an important contribution to the Armed Services Committees' success in achieving the timely enactment of the National Defense Authorization Act each year. She deserves a well-earned retirement.

In short, with Sarah's retirement, the Congressional Budget Office will lose a great asset. Over the past 19 years, the Congressional Budget Office—and by extension, the Congress itself—has been fortunate to enjoy the dedication and insight that Sarah has brought to her work. I know my colleagues join me in extending our thanks and appreciation to Sarah for her service to our nation, and our very best wishes for a happy and productive retirement.

HONORING THE CAREERS OF WEST GENESSE LACROSSE COACHES MIKE MESSERE AND BOB DEEGAN

HON. JOHN KATKO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 25, 2018

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the careers of West Genesee lacrosse coaches Mike Messere and Bob Deegan.

In a career lasting over forty years, Coach Messere was responsible for leading the West Genesee Men's Lacrosse program to 846 wins and 15 New York State Class A Championships. Since the late 70s, Coach Messere brought unparalleled success to the program by instilling a mentality of hard-nose fundamental play into his players. Coaching alongside him for much of his career, Coach Deegan played an integral role in sustaining the program's long-term success by developing and implementing some of the most accomplished defensive schemes.

Thanks to the contributions made by Coach Messere and Coach Deegan, lacrosse is thriving in Central New York and has now become the fastest growing sport in the country. Over the course of their careers, hundreds of players who have gone through this distinguished program have later won national championships at the collegiate level and even become coaches of their own teams. Now as the careers of these coaches comes to a close, the two can rest assured that their legacy in the sport of lacrosse will live on in Central New York and beyond.

I am proud to honor the legendary careers of Coach Messere and Coach Deegan and want to thank them for spurring excitement and participation in the sport of lacrosse.

IN APPRECIATION OF COLLEEN ALTSTOCK AND HER SERVICE TO THE HOMELAND SECURITY COMMITTEE

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 25, 2018

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, as the Ranking Member of the Committee on Homeland Security, I rise to express my appreciation of Ms. Colleen Altstock upon the conclusion of her service to the Committee as a Pearson Foreign Policy Fellow and return to the Department of State.

Since joining the Committee in September 2017, Ms. Altstock has made valuable contributions to our legislative and oversight work by sharing her vast knowledge of counterterrorism and foreign affairs, especially with respect to U.S. policy toward Russia and China. She has been a reliable resource to both our staff and the Members of the Committee.

During her tenure on the Committee, Ms. Altstock shared her extensive knowledge of State Department programs such as its visa vetting and foreign assistance programs, including its counterterrorism grant and anti-corruption rule of law assistance programs. Ms. Altstock made valuable contributions to our staff's understanding of the State Department's visa operations by arranging a staff visit to State consular training facilities so that my staff could observe firsthand State's visa screening and fraud prevention techniques. Finally, Ms. Altstock prepared background memoranda on U.S. relations with Russia, North Korea, and Iran, including President Trump's Summit with North Korea's Kim Jong Un and the possible consequences of the U.S. decision to withdraw from the Iran nuclear agreement.

Ms. Altstock played a key role as a staffer on the Congressional Task Force on Election Security, a task force established by Democratic Leader NANCY PELOSI which I co-chaired with Rep. ROBERT BRADY (D–PA). She contributed greatly to the work of the Task Force, including assisting with writing the Task Force's final report and recommendations. Ms. Altstock was also instrumental in drafting H.R. 5011, the Election Security Act, which currently has co-sponsorship of over 100 Members of Congress. Ms. Altstock also contributed to over a half dozen Committee oversight hearings.

Throughout her time on the Committee, Ms. Altstock has displayed a high degree of professionalism and personal commitment to providing Members of the Committee and staff valuable insight and information. We thank Ms. Altstock for her service to the Committee and our country and wish her the very best as she returns to the U.S. Department of State.

RECOGNIZING JOHN ''LADDIE'' LAWRENCE

HON. JAMES A. HIMES

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 25, 2018

Mr. HIMES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize John ''Laddie'' Lawrence. For 50 years, Laddie has coached cross country and track at Staples High School in Westport, CT.

Laddie began his career in track by helping found the Staples High School cross country team, and shortly thereafter won the 1964 State Open title in the 400-meter run. Following high school, Laddie attended Southern Arkansas University on full athletic scholarship, where he was the resident assistant for the university's first racially integrated dorm.

After his time at Southern Arkansas, Laddie returned to Westport and within ten years became the head coach of the Staples High School track and cross-country teams. Under his tenure, the Staples Wreckers have been a force to be reckoned with, tallying hundreds of wins that included a streak of 222 dual meet victories and only one loss. I am proud to say that Laddie's many victories and extensive legacy have earned him inductions into the Fairfield County Interscholastic Athletic Conference Hall of Fame in 2002, the Connecticut High School Coaches Association Hall of Fame in 2004 and the National High School Athletic Coaches Hall of Fame in 2015.

In addition to his achievements as a coach, Laddie's influence extends to the thousands of student athletes whom he has coached. He has helped develop many Staples students into NCAA Division I athletes and productive, caring members of our community.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Laddie for his commitment to coaching thousands of athletes, who continue to carry the lessons of determination and fortitude that were instilled in them as runners.

FOUNDATION OF THE FEDERAL BAR ASSOCIATION CHARTER AMENDMENTS ACT OF 2017

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 23, 2018

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 5385, the GME Support Reauthorization Act of 2018.

H.R. 5385 amends the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize the program of payments to children's hospitals that operate graduate medical education programs.

Americans across our nation need care, and the Children's Hospital GME (CHGME) program has been utilized by hospitals across our country to train doctors who can provide that necessary aid.

I represent the 18th District of Texas which is home to the Methodist Hospital System, one of the largest medical institutions in the world.

H.R. 5385 will allow Houston to continue to recruit and train many talented doctors.

CHGME was created in 1999 because Congress recognized that a dedicated source of support for training in children's hospitals was necessary to strengthen the pediatric workforce.

Since then, CHGME funding has enabled children's hospitals to dramatically increase training overall, and in particular grow the supply of pediatric specialists—the area of greatest shortage in children's health care.

If CHGME is allowed to expire, we will lose the progress we have made in this field.

According to data from a 2017 Children's Hospital Association survey, pediatric specialty shortages continue to affect children's ability to receive timely, appropriate care.

The funds generated from this legislation. will help train the medical professionals we desperately need.

In a time when there are growing health disparities within our nation, it is important to address the needs of underserved urban areas.

The more medical professionals we train, the greater the likelihood that these underserved communities will have access to proper medical care.

CHGME funds the training of pediatric providers at eligible children's hospitals.

The 58 children's hospitals that receive CHGME funding train approximately half of the nation's pediatricians, more than 7,000 annually.

We should provide the funds necessary to train students in a profession that will benefit society.

We must train the very professionals who will one day save the life of a child.

I support this legislation because it will increase the quality of medical training in the United States.

I believe that H.R. 5385 improves upon a system that sets the bar for medical care internationally.

By passing H.R. 5385, CHGME can continue to succeed in bolstering research potential at these institutions as well as helping to cure a problem that supersedes political boundaries: children's illness.

I urge my colleagues to join me in voting for H.R. 5385.

RECOGNIZING THE 6TH ANNUAL TASTE OF ETHIOPIA

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 25, 2018

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 6th Annual Taste of Ethiopia. This yearly occasion celebrates and recognizes Colorado's Ethiopian immigrant community. The event encompasses an array of Ethiopian music, foods, arts, crafts, games and dances, creating an environment of cultural immersion. The event truly highlights the many wonderful and positive contributions our fellow Americans of Ethiopian descent make to better our community. Best of all, the event is designed to welcome everyone and every year more and more of our neighbors come to enjoy, experience, and learn more about the fascinating and deeply historic Ethiopian culture.

I am proud to represent the largest Ethiopian community in the State of Colorado in the United States House of Representatives. The Ethiopian community's dedication to work, family, and education truly exemplifies the values that strengthen our nation. I have had the privilege of attending the past Taste of Ethiopia events, and it is an honor for me to again take part in the festivities.

I would like to again offer my sincere congratulations to the organizers and volunteers of the Taste of Ethiopia for their dedication to promoting Ethiopian culture in the State of Colorado. Therefore, I include in the RECORD their names:

1. Fikru Ayele.
2. Girum Alemayehu.
3. Nebiyu Asfaw.
4. Bizuayehu Sebsebe.
5. Sofia Belew.
6. Adanech Dembel.
7. Yalemwork Tekola.
8. Senait Ketema.
9. Tilahun Dessie.
10. Selam Ayele.
11. Aynalem Mamo.
12. Helen Tekle.
13. Sossena Dagne.
14. Yohannes Mengistu.
15. Aschalew Agonafer.
16. Mequanent Mekuria.
17. Mahder Mengiste.
18. Admasu Chekole.
19. Elizabeth Moltot.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE USS ''TAPPAHANNOCK''

HON. ROBERT J. WITTMAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 25, 2018

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the USS *Tappahannock*, a Navy vessel with 34 years of service. On Sunday July 15th, the USS *Tappahannock* was memorialized in a ceremony on the Courthouse Green in Tappahannock, VA.

The USS *Tappahannock* was vital to the support of U.S. aircraft carriers, battleships, destroyers and other combatants during WWII, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War. During WWII, the ship earned six medals and nine battle stars. Additionally her sailors were credited with shooting down a Japanese bomber and rescuing sailors from ships that were sunk by Japanese aircraft. After WWII, the ship was briefly decommissioned before being put back into service for the Korean War and the Vietnam War. The USS *Tappahannock* was finally stricken from the Navy's roles in 1976 after its 34 years of service.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you to join me in honoring the USS *Tappahannock* for its admirable service to the protection of our Nation.

IN CELEBRATION OF THE FORT KNOX CENTENNIAL

HON. BRETT GUTHRIE

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 25, 2018

Mr. GUTHRIE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Fort Knox Centennial. Fort Knox plays a vital role in our national security, and I am extremely proud to represent Fort Knox in Congress.

After serving as a military installation going back to the Civil War, ground was officially broken for the installation we know today as Fort Knox on August 16, 1918. Established as an artillery camp during World War I, Fort Knox was used as an active training center and housed soldiers returning from the war. During World War II, Fort Knox was chosen to be the headquarters of the Armored Force, which trained soldiers in the use of armored vehicles, and remained the Armor headquarters until 2005. Since then, Fort Knox has been the home of a number of commands, including the Human Resources Command, Recruiting Command, and Cadet Command. Famously, Fort Knox is also home to the U.S. Department of Treasury's Bullion Depository. Fort Knox is a leader in military innovation with its award-winning energy conservation program.

Fort Knox is home to the future of our Armed Forces. Here's to the next 100 years.

CONGRATULATING ELIZABETH WENDE BREAST CARE ON OPENING ITS NEW LOCATION

HON. ELISE M. STEFANIK

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 25, 2018

Ms. STEFANIK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and congratulate Elizabeth Wende Breast Care on the grand opening of a new site in Carthage, New York.

Elizabeth Wende Breast Care leads the field in breast imaging and breast cancer diagnosis, and is well known for its state-of-the-art 3D mammography technology. In its fight against breast cancer, Elizabeth Wende Breast Care has partnered with Carthage Area Hospital to

bring its high-quality treatment within the reach of thousands of North Country residents by opening a new site in Carthage, New York. Residents will benefit from having Elizabeth Wende Breast Care's services right in their neighborhood.

On behalf of New York's 21st District, I want to congratulate Elizabeth Wende Breast Care on the opening of its new location in Carthage, New York. I look forward to hearing about the assistance they will provide to North Country residents, and I wish them the best of luck in the years to come.

SALUTING THE ROUND ROCK, TX CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

HON. JOHN R. CARTER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 25, 2018

Mr. CARTER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I salute my friends and neighbors of the Round Rock, TX Chamber of Commerce who were recently honored as the 2018 Chamber of the Year by the Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives. The Round Rock Chamber are richly deserving recipients of this prestigious award which recognizes the leadership role chambers have in their communities and excellence in operations and community leadership.

Throughout the years, the Chamber has fostered an unrivaled environment of economic success for the citizens of Round Rock. They've helped to employ over 25,000 Texans with over 10,000 investors supporting the local economy, making the Chamber one of the largest and most active business associations in Central Texas. Their efforts have been a critical part of Texas's strong economy and have been essential to making Round Rock a place where business thrives.

The Chamber continuously works to create economic opportunities for the people of Round Rock. In the past year alone, the Chamber has won $257 million in capital investment, brought 575 jobs to Round Rock, launched the Entrepreneurship Round Rock program, and increased opportunities for entrepreneurs young and old. When it comes to promoting education, talent development, and quality of life in the Round Rock Community, the Round Rock Chamber never rests.

The positive impacts made by the Chamber are among the many reasons I am proud to call the city of Round Rock my hometown. I celebrate their work and am glad to see them get the national recognition they deserve. I know that for the Chamber, as well as the citizens they're proud to serve, the best is yet to come.

FACEBOOK TRIES TO SILENCE THOMAS JEFFERSON AND THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 25, 2018

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, history tells us that President Thomas Jefferson had a love hate relationship with the press. At times Jefferson detested them, but he truly believed a free people required a free press. "The basis of our governments being the opinion of the people, the very first object should be to keep that right," words spoken by Jefferson to Edward Carrington in 1787. "And were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers, or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter. But I should mean that every man should receive those papers and be capable of reading them." Patriots, like Jefferson, secured these rights that folks enjoy today. Just because we may not like what we read, does not mean that it should be silenced.

It's no big surprise to me that the folks over at Facebook don't know the first thing about freedom and rights. Their latest attack, using digital censorship, has stirred up a firestorm. Just in case you haven't heard, the Liberty County *Vindicator*, a newspaper that publishes news for the City of Liberty, Texas and Liberty County, Texas posted the Declaration of Independence in twelve installments leading up to the Fourth of July. Casey Stinnett, managing editor, said that the first nine parts posted as schedule, but part ten, of the historic document did not appear. The Liberty County *Vindicator* received a notice from Facebook saying that the post "goes against our standards on hate speech." I'm a fierce advocate of the First Amendment protecting freedom of speech and press. This is, without a doubt, a flippant disregard and assault on the First Amendment by Facebook.

For over 131 years, the Liberty County *Vindicator* newspaper, has told the story of everyday America. It has documented community history in a way that will forever be available to future generations. Since the newspaper began operations in 1887, it has covered local events, business happenings, politics, tragedies, civic improvements, and so much more. The paper recently followed and covered Liberty High School's Lady Panthers Softball Team who won the Texas UIL State Class 4A Softball Champions. It has also followed wars and has told stories about our young freedom fighters from the area who returned home and some who did not return. It is everything a community newspaper should be. The *Vindicator* has always had its finger on the pulse of folks in Liberty, Texas.

Liberty's rich history of rugged Texas pioneers who settled near the Trinity River spans more than 180 years. Today, Liberty continues to live up to its rich legacy and community spirit of patriotism. One such family epitomizes the spirit of Liberty County—the patriotic Ripkowski brothers. Twelve brothers from Liberty County, Texas served in our military in various branches spanning from World War II to the Korean War. And they all survived the wars and returned to Liberty County, Texas. According to a pentagon spokesperson, there has never been another family with that many sons from the same parents to join the service in American history.

The Ripkowski brothers believed their service in the military was their duty as an American citizen. To them it was not performed for heroics or to gain medals, but to answer the honorable call of duty for their beloved country. Reality is that freedom doesn't come free. It is the United States military that has always been on the front lines to defend the liberties of all Americans, even the folks over at Facebook.

It is an honor to have represented the citizens of Liberty County in the United States House of Representatives. I commend the *Vindicator* for challenging its readers to read the Declaration of Independence. Freedom of speech and freedom of the press must ever be protected. Thomas Jefferson, who was the primary author of the Declaration of Independence, said, "our liberty depends on the freedom of the press, and that cannot be limited without being lost." The Founding Father and the third President of the United States, Thomas Jefferson, undoubtedly believed deeply in the freedom of speech and of the press.

Jefferson must have turned over in his grave when he heard that the Declaration of Independence was censored in America. America's defense of freedom and liberties is a struggle that never ends, and the Vindicator should continue to exercise the right to free speech and press, whether those that hate the First Amendment like it or not.

And that's just the way it is.

HONORING MR. MIKE PARNESS

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 25, 2018

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Mike Parness upon his retirement from a distinguished 40 year public service career in city management.

Mr. Parness grew up in Livermore, California and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from the University of Santa Clara. He continued his education at California State University, Hayward, where he earned a Master of Public Administration.

Mr. Parness worked as a City Administrator in Renton, Washington for eleven years before returning to California to serve as the City Manager for San Clemente for twelve years and later, Walnut Creek for almost five years. Since November of 2006 Mr. Parness has been the City Manager of Napa, California.

During his tenure at the City of Napa, Mr. Parness was a member of the Sunrise Rotary and served on the Board of Directors for the California City Management Foundation and the International City Management Foundation. As City Manager, he oversaw the construction of Fire Stations 4 and 5, the renovation of the Edward I. Barwick Jamieson Canyon Water Treatment Plant, the introduction of Measure T and the launch of the 10-mile Paving Program and Sidewalk Repair and Replacement Program. Mr. Parness played an essential role in the revitalization of downtown Napa, the expansion of public event space at the Oxbow Commons and the city's financial recovery after the Great Recession.

Mr. Parness also facilitated the growth of public areas during his career in Napa with the additions of Trancas Crossing Park, China Point Overlook Park, Third Street Overlook Park, and the renewal of Veterans Park. He is also a wonderful colleague. His quick wit, sense of humor and lively stories are cherished by those who work with him.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Parness is a passionate civil servant with an esteemed record for giving back to our community. It is therefore fitting and proper that we honor Mr. Mike Parness here today.

COMMENDING JESSICA ESPAILLAT, DAPHNE HERNANDEZ, MARIA PALOMARES CARRANCO, AND NEREYDA REYES ON THEIR SELECTION AS BENJAMIN A. GILMAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOLARS

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 25, 2018

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate four outstanding Houston residents on their reception of the Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship.

I offer my sincere congratulations to Ms. Jessica Espaillat, Ms. Daphne Hernandez, Ms. Maria Palomares Carranco, and Ms. Nereyda Reyes for their remarkable achievement of receiving the Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship.

The Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship builds young, well-rounded and diverse leaders who have the skills to contribute to our national security and public diplomacy efforts.

The scholarship program was established with the support of the late Congressman Benjamin A. Gilman of New York, whose leading contributions to study abroad educational programs continue to help many students develop the ability to communicate and understand the economic, social and political connections among nations.

The scholarship was established to provide recipients with the tools to develop international knowledge and language skills, as well as gain valuable career-enhancing experiences in their experiences abroad.

The Gilman program has enabled more than 25,000 outstanding Americans of diverse backgrounds to engage in a meaningful educational experience abroad, providing them with skills critical to our national security and economic competiveness.

Houston's contribution to this impressive list of talented individuals includes:

Ms. Jessica Espaillat, of the University of Houston, who studied abroad in Japan;

Ms. Daphne Hernandez, of Colby College, who studied abroad in Japan;

Ms. Maria Palomares Carranco, of the University of Texas at Austin, who completed her studies in Mexico; and

Ms. Nereyda Reyes, of Texas A&M University at College Station, who spent her time abroad studying in Belgium.

This is truly a wonderful accomplishment for the recipients, and I offer them my best wishes as they embark on the next steps of their educational journeys.

My office is always open to the scholarship recipients, and I encourage them to contact me for any help they may need with their future educational goals.

THANK YOU PAULINE M. BROWN

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 25, 2018

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I am grateful that a talented constituent Pauline M. Brown of Barnwell, South Carolina, has written an inspiring book entitled A Touch of Heaven. Beginning with love letters to her husband serving in Vietnam in 1968, she has continued writing, composing more than five hundred poems including the following from her book, A Friendly Hello (pg. 36).

A Friendly Hello
Always believe in the simplest things—
Sunshine and flowers, flags blowing in the wind,
The music of children, rain on a tin roof,
Afternoons spent with a cherished friend.
A friendly hello can make all the difference
In anyone's fragile state of mind.
Say ''I miss you,'' ''I love you,''
''God bless you, my friend,''
And the saddest of spirits will be realigned.
A friendly hello can dry the tears of heartache.
A little encouragement can rescue a lost cause.
Remember a friend who brought you back from despair,
And do the same for someone else, just because.

OFFICER CHRISTOPHER GRIGGS

HON. KEN BUCK

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 25, 2018

Mr . BUCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the remarkable courage of Sergeant Christopher Griggs, a law enforcement officer in Fort Morgan, Colorado.

On April 28, a man stole a semi-truck in Logan County, Colorado, and he proceeded to rampage though the town of Fort Morgan and the surrounding areas. With the police in pursuit, the semi-truck wrecked anything in its way, destroying cars and injuring several civilians.

In the midst of this chaos, Sergeant Griggs confronted the semi-truck outside the city of Fort Morgan. He soon realized that the situation was becoming serious enough that he must resort to lethal force to stop the semi-truck. As Sergeant Griggs loaded his rifle, the semi-truck violently rammed his patrol partner's car off the highway. In response, Sergeant Griggs quickly discharged multiple rounds at the semi-truck. Unharmed, the driver of the truck changed course and began to drive aggressively towards the officer. Thinking fast, Sergeant Griggs leapt into his patrol car and sped out of the way just in time to avoid being crushed by the semi-truck.

As the rampaging truck sped on into the night, Griggs and his partner continued pursuing it, eventually following it into the town of Brush, Colorado. Once again, Sergeant Griggs made the courageous decision to confront the semi-truck by firing at the driver, who was caught soon after.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to join the people of Fort Morgan in thanking Sergeant Griggs for his courage, quick-thinking, and dedication to protecting our community.

TRIBUTE TO MS. BETTY HENDERSON

HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 25, 2018

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable woman and outstanding South Carolinian, Betty Henderson, who exemplifies the epitome of dedicated community service.

Born in Branchville, Ms. Henderson served the citizens of Orangeburg County for twenty-eight years as the first African American Tax Assessor in the State of South Carolina. She also served for twelve years on the Town Council in Branchville, South Carolina, the first African American to serve on the body since post reconstruction. For 10 of those years, Ms. Henderson served as Mayor Pro Tem of Branchville.

Ms. Betty Henderson was one of the founders of the Orangeburg County Family Health Center. She has served on the Board of The Orangeburg Calhoun, Bamberg, Community Action Agency, the Trustee Board of the Regional Medical Center of Orangeburg and Calhoun Counties, the Orangeburg County Department of Social Services, and as a member of the Adult Literacy Board.

She served for over 20 years as Chairperson of the Orangeburg County Democratic Party and through her leadership many persons have been elected to public office. Her life includes membership in the White Rose Chapter I, Former Worthy Matron of White Rose Chapter I, former Queen of the National Order of the Eastern Star, LaCharm Club, founding member of the Concerned Citizens of District 94, and is a member and Chair of the Budget Committee of Canaan Baptist Church.

Ms. Henderson has raised three fine children, Shelia, Ernest, and Kathy, who have blessed her with four wonderful grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, I urge that you and my colleagues join me in honoring the selfless, service, outstanding leadership and remarkable achievements of this outstanding South Carolinian.

IN CELEBRATION OF MS. CARRIE PATTERSON THOMAS ON THE OCCASION OF HER 100TH BIRTHDAY

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 25, 2018

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Ms. Carrie Patterson Thomas on the occasion of her 100th birthday.

Carrie was born on August 5, 1918 in the town of Ninety-Six, South Carolina to Wince and Ida Dean Patterson. In 1923 at the inquisitive age of five, she moved with her parents and six siblings to Fort Lauderdale, Florida. She worked various jobs from picking vegetables and later worked as a domestic until she retired. Carrie met and married her late husband Mr. Harvey Thomas and have two lovely children, Earl Thomas and Betty DeVaughn.

Carrie has been a resident and community leader of Broward County for over 90 years. I am truly grateful for her selflessness and tireless service. She is a beloved life-long member of the New Mount Olive Baptist Church,

where she served on the mission society and often volunteered to help feed the homeless. She has worked hard under harsh conditions and unfair practices. She lived to witness many epic eras and events in history. And yet, through it all she has remained steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, and we know her labor is not in vain.

Mr. Speaker, on this momentous occasion, please join me in wishing Ms. Carrie Patterson Thomas a happy and wonderful 100th birthday.

CONGRATULATING LYNETTA GRINER—2018 FLORIDA FARMER OF THE YEAR

HON. NEAL P. DUNN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 25, 2018

Mr. DUNN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor an outstanding member of the Second Congressional District of Florida, Ms. Lynetta Griner. Ms. Griner was recently named the 2018 Florida Farmer of the Year. This designation makes her a finalist for the Southeast Regional Farmer of the Year Award.

Ms. Griner owns and operates Usher Land and Timber Inc. in Levy County, specializing in timber and cattle production. In 2013, she was named Florida's Woman of the Year in Agriculture and she was the first female president of the Florida Forestry Association.

Ms. Griner also served on the Suwannee River Management District's governing board for 14 years and with her family, she has raised more than $1 million for the Children's Miracle Network at the University of Florida Health Shands Children's Hospital.

In 2017, she was one of 15 farmers and ranchers from across the country to participate in an agriculture roundtable hosted by President Trump at the White House. Lynetta is a champion for Florida agriculture, and has dedicated her life to giving back to her community.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating Ms. Lynetta Griner, Florida's 2018 Farmer of the Year, and thanking her for her years of service to Florida.

CONGRATULATING TODD MAY

HON. ROBERT B. ADERHOLT

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 25, 2018

Mr. ADERHOLT. Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate Todd May, who has announced his retirement as Director of Marshall Space Flight Center.

Todd May is one of our nation's civil servants who has demonstrated outstanding leadership, management ability, and vision. He was appointed Marshall deputy director in August 2015 at the Nov. 13, 2015 retirement of Patrick Scheuermann, and was subsequently appointed Director.

The jobs Todd has excelled at are never easy, but the circumstances under which he took them, and excelled, are circumstances which represent especially challenging times.

During the early part of a new Administration, Todd, in 2011, led the Space Launch System (SLS) program. Despite different schools of thought in Washington, Todd took the program through a series of milestones, including a successful in-depth critical design review. Thanks to Todd's leadership, SLS was successfully handed off to the next manager when Todd was asked to be Marshall Space Flight Center Director.

Marshall has approximately 6,000 civil service and contractor employees, and an annual budget of approximately $2.5 billion. What some do not know is that Marshall has a heritage not only of excellence in launch development but also in NASA's other endeavors, including, for example, the engineering planning which allowed the Hubble Telescope to be refocused and to reach its full potential.

One of Todd's other previous jobs made him very qualified for this part of Marshall's work as well. Todd served as a deputy associate administrator in the Science Mission Directorate at NASA headquarters in Washington from 2007 to 08, responsible for a $5 billion portfolio of robotic programs and projects, including more than 100 spacecraft at various stages of formulation, development and operations.

Of course, there is no pressure at all in being appointed as Director of Marshall Space Flight Center—unless of course you notice the statues of Von Braun, and all the Saturn rockets which seem to meet your gaze no matter what direction you are driving.

I am not surprised that Todd excelled again at this broad management task. He brought out the best in his managers, kept Marshall viable as a competitor in various projects, and leaves Marshall in good shape to continue its key role in NASA's human exploration programs. His leadership also extends to concepts which will bear fruition in the future, such as nuclear thermal propulsion.

Despite his many jobs at NASA, and national recognition for his work by Aviation Week, I know that this young boy growing up in Fairhope, Alabama still counts, as one of his most enjoyable achievements, his engineering degree from Auburn University, and the title of Distinguished Engineer, bestowed on him by the University.

I wish Todd and his family all the best, and I know that whatever tasks he puts his hands to, he will be not only a success, but also a blessing to his community and to this nation.

TRIBUTE TO COMMANDER AND DISTRICT ENGINEER OF THE DETROIT DISTRICT, U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS, LIEUTENANT COLONEL DENNIS P. SUGRUE

HON. JOHN R. MOOLENAAR

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 25, 2018

Mr. MOOLENAAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the service of Lieutenant Colonel Dennis Sugrue as the Commander and District Engineer of the Detroit District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Since graduating from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point and receiving his commission in 1999, Lieutenant Colonel Sugrue has exemplified the Mission and Vision of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Lieutenant Colonel Sugrue's extensive career has taken him across the United States and around the world. From New York to Germany, to deployments in Kosovo and Afghanistan, where he did two tours, his dedication and leadership has been an asset in every position.

Lieutenant Colonel Sugrue has been recognized with numerous military awards and decorations including the Bronze Star, Meritorious Service Medal, Army Commendation Medal, and Army Achievement Medal, among others. These well-deserved accolades speak to Lieutenant Colonel Sugrue's leadership and commitment to service, which are amplified by his honor and integrity.

I had the pleasure of getting to know Lieutenant Colonel Sugrue during his tenure as commander of the Detroit District, which he assumed in July 2016. As the commander, he is responsible for carrying out the District's mission in Michigan, sections of Wisconsin, Minnesota and Indiana, as well as four of the Great Lakes. The District's 82,000 square miles of land includes 4,000 miles of Great Lakes shoreline and the Soo Locks, which are vitally important to the nation's economy and security.

Lieutenant Colonel Sugrue went above and beyond to understand the importance of natural resources and outdoor heritage to the state of Michigan and surrounding region. I especially commend his hard work to advance the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative and the Great Lakes navigation system, including combatting the spread of invasive species and construction of a new Soo Lock.

His expertise is second to none and we have been fortunate to have Lieutenant Colonel Sugrue at the helm of the Detroit District. It has been an honor and a privilege to know Lieutenant Colonel Sugrue over the past two years. I wish him, his wife Flori and sons Sean and Connor, all the best in the future.

RECOGNIZING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF REAR ADMIRAL PAMELA M. SCHWEITZER

HON. PAUL A. GOSAR

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 25, 2018

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to stand today to recognize the distinguished career of a remarkable constituent of mine, Rear Admiral Pamela A. Schweitzer. Rear Admiral Schweitzer is retiring after proudly serving her country for nearly 30 years.

After receiving her Bachelor's degree in biology in Biological Sciences from California State University Fullerton, Rear Admiral Schweitzer went on to earn a Doctor of Pharmacy from University of California San Francisco and an Ambulatory Care/Administrative Residency at University of California Irvine Medical Center. She is a Board Certified Ambulatory Care Pharmacist, and currently serves as Executive Master of Health Administration Program at the University of Southern California Sol Price School of Public Policy.

On August 7, 2014 Rear Admiral Schweitzer was appointed to be the first female Chief Professional Officer of Pharmacy for the United States Public Health Service. As Chief Pharmacy Officer, Rear Admiral Schweitzer was

responsible for providing leadership and coordination of USPHS pharmacy programs and professional affairs for the Office of the Surgeon General and the Department of Health & Human Services.

While serving her country, Rear Admiral Schweitzer worked in a variety of roles including, progressing in leadership responsibilities in the Indian Health Service, the Veterans Administration, as well as the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. She made an indelible mark within each of these organizations, which is a testament to her strong dedication to public service.

Rear Admiral Schweitzer has been recognized for her leadership contributions many times. These recognitions include receiving the National Council for Prescription Drug Programs Champion Award in 2017, American Society of Health-System Pharmacists William Zelmer Lecture Award in 2016, the University of California San Francisco Alumni Award in 2015, American Pharmacists Association Distinguished Federal Pharmacist Award in 2014, IHS Senior Pharmacist of the Year Award in 2013 and the USPHS Mary Louise Anderson Leadership Award in 2012.

Rear Admiral Schweitzer will always be remembered as someone who put her country and the well-being of others above all else. She will be greatly missed and I wish her the best in her retirement on behalf of a grateful nation.

ACKNOWLEDGING THE FIFTH ANNUAL GLOBAL FEST

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 25, 2018

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the fifth annual Global Fest, hosted by the City of Aurora, Colorado. The office of Parks, Recreation, and Open Space, as well as the office of International and Immigrant Affairs work tirelessly every year to showcase the diverse cultures of the city's residents, and I am proud to recognize their achievements in the House of Representatives.

The City of Aurora owns the title of Colorado's most diverse city and has a population of over 366,000, which makes it the third largest city in the state. Aurora includes about 70,000 immigrants and refugees who speak over 130 languages spoken and represent more than 140 different countries of origin. Global Fest is a wonderful opportunity for all Aurorans to share their rich cultural history with each other and those who come to participate from throughout Colorado.

Global Fest is a fully immersive cultural experience. Attendees sample diverse foods, listen to live music, discover traditional arts and view a range of cultural performances. At the festival, Coloradans can observe a variety cultural items and practices. They are also able to see the 'Parade of Nations' where representatives of an estimated 40 countries will march together carrying their respective flags from their countries of origin to demonstrate the multi-cultural spirit of the city.

Mr. Speaker, in my many years as an Aurora resident, I have had the privilege to witness its development from a small suburb of Denver into the bustling multicultural hub of economic activity it is today. The city embodies the melting pot that our nation rightfully idealizes. This is why Aurora is a special place. Global Fest is the singular annual event that best symbolizes what makes Aurora a remarkable city that I am proud to represent in the United States House of Representatives.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2019

SPEECH OF

HON. DIANA DeGETTE

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 18, 2018

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 6147) making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes

Ms. DEGETTE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak in opposition of this amendment, which would block funding for the enforcement of the EPA methane rule. This rule will combat climate change, protect public health, and capture a resource that would otherwise go to waste.

The EPA Methane rule will curb methane emissions by estimated 510,000 short tons per year by 2025. This will represent a savings of $100 million in natural gas that would otherwise leak into the atmosphere. It is important to remember that it is not only methane leaking out of oil and gas facilities. This rule would prevent the release of 210,000 short tons of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) which are a threat to public health. When released, these compounds form ozone, which the EPA has linked to asthma, heart attacks, strokes, and numerous other health conditions. Ozone is particularly harmful to vulnerable populations such as children, the elderly, and people with preexisting conditions. My own district is part of a Clean Air Act non-attainment area where elevated ozone is a perennial hazard.

The health benefits of limiting methane and VOC leaks led Colorado to institute its own regulations for containing leaks and preventing the release of these compounds in 2014. Those rules, which served as the template for EPA's rule, balanced the need for responsible energy development with the need to protect public health and even had support from companies in the oil and gas industry. Colorado's oil and gas industry has continued to thrive even as they are required to find and stop leaks. Clearly a rule requiring companies find and fix leaks is a win-win, allowing for responsible energy development and protecting public health at the same time.

Furthermore, accidental methane release exacerbates climate change as methane is several times more potent as a greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide. Enforcing this rule would provide a climate change benefit equal to taking 8.5 million cars off the road. The need to combat climate change is only going to grow more pressing as the world faces increased harm from droughts, fires, and extreme weather. Colorado is already regularly facing low snowpack and devastating fire seasons.

Colorado's experience demonstrates both the need and the benefits of rules curbing methane leaks. Blocking enforcement of this rule will lead to wasted natural gas, increased greenhouse gas emissions, and worse public health. That is why I encourage my colleagues to oppose this amendment and allow EPA to enforce the methane rule.

IN HONOR OF MR. WILLIAM ''BILL'' BATTLE

HON. ELIZABETH H. ESTY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 25, 2018

Ms. ESTY of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart to honor the life of my friend, Mr. William ''Bill'' Battle and to recognize his contributions to the State of Connecticut, especially to his community of Torrington, Connecticut. Bill passed away on July 20, 2018 at the age of 82, after a long life of dedicated service to his community.

Bill was born in New York, New York and was raised in New Haven, Connecticut. Bill attended New Haven public schools before enrolling at Howard University in Washington, D.C. After college, Bill joined the Army where he worked on computers. Bill continued in computers when he left the Army, traveling the world for IBM. Bill eventually returned to Connecticut to be near his ailing mother. It was here where he met his wife Darlene, who was working as a nurse's aide. The two married in 1994, and after their son was born they moved to Torrington.

After moving to Torrington, Bill fell in love with the small city. Serving as the economic development commissioner for a brief time, Bill worked to celebrate Torrington's educational excellence and attract young families while reviving the city's downtown through a focus on the arts and small business. In addition to working closely with town leaders to improve the city's economy, Bill also advocated for children and education in Torrington. Serving on the Board of Directors for the Connecticut Academy of the Arts in Torrington, Bill helped bring the arts back to the Torrington community and is credited for helping start the international film forum.

Ultimately, Bill loved anything intellectual and enjoyed discussing ideas with his fellow community members. While working as the campaign coordinator for former Democratic Senator Joe Lieberman, Bill would frequently have dinner at the Republican campaign headquarters because he just wanted to engage in political discourse. His Republican colleagues stated that all Bill ever wanted was to see Torrington do better.

Those who knew Bill knew that nothing gave him more pride than seeing his children succeed. Bill could often be seen wearing a Yale hat to show his immense delight when his son, Darnell, was accepted to the University.

I met Bill seven years ago and was immediately impressed by his passion, his knowledge, his energy, and his fearlessness in taking on tough issues and those in power. His commitment to democracy and his belief that we all could—and should—do better inspired

me and everyone who was lucky enough to know him.

Mr. Speaker, Bill Battle led a life as an engaged community member and community activist. Therefore, it is fitting and proper that we honor his life and memory here today. I offer my deepest condolences to his wife, Darlene and his children, Carla, Darnell, Violetta, and William and to all of his family. Those of us who knew Bill will cherish his memory, and his legacy will live on in our community.

RECOGNIZING THE CAREER OF DONALD E. CORNFORTH, M.D.

HON. KEVIN McCARTHY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 25, 2018

Mr. McCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the career of Dr. Donald E. Cornforth, a radiologist and businessman serving the communities of Bakersfield and Delano in Kern County, California. One of the leading voices of our local medical community, Donald is retiring after committing nearly two decades of his life to bettering the quality of life for the people of Kern County.

Though he would leave his biggest mark on the City of Bakersfield, Donald was born and raised in Media, Pennsylvania. Upon graduating high school, he began his journey west, attending Colorado State University at Fort Collins and graduating with his Bachelor's degree in 1964. He furthered his medical education in California, studying four years at the Loma Linda University School of Medicine and graduating as a Doctor of Medicine in 1968. Around this time, the United States was embroiled in the Vietnam War, and for five years Donald served his nation in the United States Army, attaining the rank of Major before being honorably discharged in 1972.

In 1975, Donald was certified by the American Board of Radiology and began a lifelong career in medicine. Before moving to Bakersfield, Donald practiced radiology across Wisconsin and Colorado, and even taught at King Fahad Hospital in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. During this period, he accumulated a reputation for his medical talent and technical acumen, performing Colorado's first percutaneous trans-renal kidney stone extraction in 1982, and the first percutaneous trans-renal UPJ endopyeloplasty in 1983—a world first.

For all his contributions to medicine, however, perhaps the biggest impact Donald made in his career came with his decision to move to Bakersfield in the early 1990's. Upon arriving in Bakersfield, he established himself as one of Kern County's premiere medical professionals, and since 1991, he has led a number of medical practices, most significantly Quest Imaging Medical Associates and Adventist Health Bakersfield. Through Quest Imaging, Donald brought cutting-edge technology to our community that was previously unavailable to Kern County residents, and the company remains a cornerstone of Bakersfield's medical community. Donald has been a fixture at San Joaquin Community Hospital, serving as the head of its Stroke Program and providing his talent as a radiologist for years. For over ten years, Donald has also given his time and talent to the community of Delano, frequently making the trek to Delano Regional Medical Center to provide radiological services.

Donald retires leaving an indelible impression on the community he has called home for two decades. He will be remembered fondly in the Kern County community for his brilliant mind, his tireless work ethic, his philanthropy, and his pioneering, entrepreneurial spirit that pushed him from the suburbs of Philadelphia around the world and back again. I will miss discussing health policy with him, and I know many of his former patients will miss him for his kindness and attentive bedside manner.

As he begins this new chapter of his life, on behalf of our community, Judy and I wish him, his wife, Edna, and his two children all best.

HONORING THE LIFE OF REAR ADMIRAL JOHN E. DOMBROSKI

HON. NEAL P. DUNN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 25, 2018

Mr. DUNN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Rear Admiral John E. Dombroski. Admiral Dombroski passed away July 1, 2018 and left a legacy of service to God, country, and family that we all should aspire to emulate. The Admiral was raised in Beacon Falls, Connecticut, graduated from Trinity College in 1967, and attended Cornell Law School.

He entered the United States Navy in 1969 and served on the USS *Moale* where he earned qualification as the combat information center officer, and subsequently served on USS *Luiseno* as executive officer. Admiral Dombroski served in a variety of posts in the Judge Advocate General's Corps, culminating his exceptionally distinguished career as the Chief Judge of the Navy-Marine Corps, Court of Criminal Appeals.

Admiral Dombroski and his wife Julie Ann eventually settled in Tallahassee, Florida. He continued to live a life of service as a Rotarian and dedicated member of Saint Peter's Anglican Cathedral, where he dedicated time to instruct weekly men's bible study classes in his home. Loved and cherished by family and friends, highly decorated by his nation, and honored by all those with whom he came in contact, Rear Admiral John E. Dombroski dedicated his life to the mission of leaving this world better than he found it. Admiral Dombroski is survived by his wife Julie Ann, their daughter Christine Jecko and her husband Sean, and his son Matthew and his wife, Tori. He was a devoted grandparent to Ann, Jonathan, and Savannah, and a loving brother to his sister, Andrea Redden.

The Admiral was a giant of a man and his presence will be missed. Mr. Speaker, please join me in honoring Rear Admiral John E. Dombroski for his life of service to God and man.

RECOGNIZING BROWARD COMMUNITY & FAMILY HEALTH CENTERS

HON. DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 25, 2018

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, as we approach National Community Health Center Week, August 12 through 18, it is my privilege to recognize the tremendous and meaningful work of Broward Community & Family Health Centers, Inc., a Federally Qualified Community Health Center located in Broward County and Florida's 23rd Congressional District.

Broward Community & Family Health Centers is a non-profit, community-owned and operated health provider serving uninsured and medically underserved people.

Community health centers have become an essential provider for comprehensive, high-quality preventive health care for all patients, regardless of their ability to pay. They have become the core primary care destination for millions in our country—especially for minorities and our most vulnerable populations.

Under the leadership of my dear friend CEO Rosalyn Frazier, Broward Community & Family Health Centers expand access to quality health care for all people and contain health care costs by fostering prevention and integrating the delivery of primary care with aggressive outreach, patient education, translation, and other enabling services.

Broward Community & Family Health Centers has made great strides in the Florida health care system by maintaining high standards of accountability, demonstrating cost effectiveness and efficiency in the delivery of care, and empowering communities to address unmet health needs and reduce health disparities, preventable deaths, costly disabilities, and communicable diseases.

I applaud the important contributions of Broward Community & Family Health Centers in safeguarding health and improving the quality of life for people in Broward County, and I look forward to continuing to help Rosalyn Frazier and her team serve our community for many years to come.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO DWIGHT ALBERT ''D.A.'' SHARPE

HON. KAY GRANGER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 25, 2018

Ms. GRANGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay special tribute to a dear friend, a fine Texan and a great American, Dwight Albert Sharpe. Known as "D.A." Sharpe to his friends, he graduated to heaven on July 12, 2018.

D.A. was one of my first and most ardent supporters and his inspiring and encouraging messages encouraged me and others on a regular basis.

My friend D.A. was born June 24, 1939, in Ballinger, Texas. He was a graduate of Woodrow Wilson High School in Dallas and held a bachelor of business administration degree from the University of Texas at Austin. D.A. married his wife, Suzanne Margaret Boggess, in New Orleans, Louisiana in 1962, where their three children were later born. The family resided in St. Louis County, Missouri between 1972 to 1982 in Dallas between 1982 to 1999, and for the last 19 years, in Aurora, Wise County.

D.A. served as the chairman of the Republican Party of Wise County from 2000 and 2008. Even in retirement, D.A. remained active as a national and state GOP delegate. In

addition to his political service, D.A.'s professional pursuits were in the fields of technology, as well as in administrative management for non-profit Christian entities. In 2004, he retired as the Executive Administrator for the Senior Pastor at Highland Park Presbyterian Church .

D.A. studied genealogy extensively, tracing his ancestry back more than 1,300 years. He also found genealogical relationships to 20 of the 45 U.S. Presidents. Above all else, D.A. was privileged to call himself a fifth-generation Texan. His great, great grandfather, Judge Felix Benedict Dixon, immigrated from Ohio to Texas in 1841, when it was still the Republic of Texas. D.A.'s lineage also has roots going back in America as a sixth-generation United States citizen, being a descendant of American Revolutionary soldier, Lt. George P. Sharp, of New York.

D.A. is survived by his wife, Suzanne Margaret Boggess Sharpe and their three children: Taylor Marcus Sharpe; Tiffany Lenn Sharpe Westmoreland and her husband, Steven O. Westmoreland; and Todd Wittman Sharpe, and his wife, Carrie Ann Maxwell Sharpe. There are seven grandchildren: Katherine Michelle, John David (Jack), Lily Taylor, Sarah Todd and Samuel Lee (Sam) Westmoreland; and Luke Maxwell and Brooke Eden Sharpe.

Though D.A. is no longer with us, his memory will not be forgotten by those of us who were privileged enough to know him. I ask Members to please pray for my dear friend D.A. Sharpe and his family during this difficult time.

IN HONOR OF THE 100TH BIRTHDAY OF LADELLE COCHRAN

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 25, 2018

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I recognize the 100th birthday of Ladelle Cochran.

Ladelle was born on August 29, 1918 in Dallas, Georgia.

He is a Veteran of World War II and was awarded the Bronze Star Medal. Ladelle retired from the Anniston Army Depot after working there for 25 years.

Ladelle was married to the late June Saxon for 59 years and was blessed with five children, three grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

He is a member of Gladeview Baptist Church and is an avid Atlanta Braves and Alabama Crimson Tide fan.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in wishing Ladelle Cochran a very happy 100th birthday.

RECOGNIZING FRANCES GIVENS OF FONTANA

HON. NORMA J. TORRES

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 25, 2018

Mrs. TORRES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Frances Givens, a resident of our 35th Congressional District in Fontana, California, who was well known as a fierce advocate for senior citizens.

Fran Givens dedicated her life to promoting issues important to senior citizens such as affordable housing, increased availability of gerontology doctors, transportation, and access to and coordination of all available services. Fran served in the Senior Assembly of the California Senior Legislature from 2006 to 2014, where she was a leader among the volunteer body whose mission it is to enhance the quality of life for older Californians and their families.

As a committed advocate, Fran never missed an opportunity to raise attention to issues that affect senior citizens. Fran frequently served as a public speaker for senior citizen issues on the radio, at City Council meetings, clubs, dinners, and fundraisers. She could also be found passing out hundreds of brochures about the California Senior Legislature, to elevate the mission of the group.

The state of California is home to incredible people who possess a spirit of public service and a commitment to their communities. Fran was a champion for senior citizens' issues. Her advocacy efforts have made lasting contributions to the community of Fontana, the state of California, and beyond.

In 2014, I had the honor of awarding Fran the Woman of the Year Lifetime Achievement Award, a well-deserved recognition of her exemplary record of community service.

On July 5th of this year, Fran passed away at the age of 83. Her legacy teaches us all to relentlessly devote ourselves to what we care most about, and for that I would like to recognize Frances Givens.

TRIBUTE TO MALL CHANEY ON HER 75TH BIRTHDAY

HON. DON YOUNG

OF ALASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 25, 2018

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a person of great merit on the occasion of her 75th birthday. It is often stated that the United States is great because it is a nation of immigrants. Mr. Speaker, I would agree with this statement with the addition of the word legal in front of immigrants. Mall Chaney is an example of such a person who worked within the law to become a citizen of the United States. I understand that it is not an easy task.

Mall was born in Estonia in 1943 in the middle of World War II. At that time Estonia was in peril at the hands of Russia as well as Germany. However, it was her parents' concern about Russia that caused them to flee. Russia had seized her mother's brother and sent him to Siberia never to be heard from again. As a professional chemist, Mall's father feared being pressed into Russia's weapons development program or much worse.

When Mall was about six months old the family consisting of her mother, father, and sister fled under cover of night with basically nothing but the clothes on their backs. The family spent several years in a Swedish refugee camp and then in the general population of Sweden. In 1951 Mall and her family were sponsored by a family friend from Canada and were able to migrate to Canada.

Mall lived in Canada until she married John Chaney, a resident of Florida, in 1982. Mall became a U.S. citizen and has paid homage to the United States by respecting our laws, becoming a respected and loved member of the community, the state of Florida, and the country.

Happy Birthday Mall, and best wishes.

EQUITABLE ACCESS TO CARE AND HEALTH ACT

HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 25, 2018

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Equitable Access to Care and Health Act, or the EACH Act, which seeks to provide a bipartisan, common-sense exemption to the Affordable Care Act for those who uniquely rely on religious methods of healing.

In my home state of Massachusetts, we are very proud of our healthcare system, the system which, as my colleagues know, formed the basis for the Affordable Care Act, the law from which so many Americans benefit today.

As the Massachusetts legislature contemplated the direction of its successful healthcare system, lawmakers saw fit to provide an exemption from its insurance requirements for sincerely held religious beliefs. The exemption grants reprieve for Massachusetts residents who would not otherwise use our traditional healthcare system even if they did carry traditional health insurance. At its essence, the EACH Act seeks to extend a similar reprieve for Americans who would not otherwise benefit from the system created under the Affordable Care Act.

Thank you to my colleague Mr. DAVIS of Illinois for his leadership on this issue. I urge my colleagues to support this bipartisan legislation.

CELEBRATING THE WORK AND LEGACY OF EULA L. BECK

HON. JOHN R. CARTER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 25, 2018

Mr. CARTER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I celebrate the extraordinary work and legacy of Eula L. Beck, or ''Sis'' as most affectionately call her, who has been an active supporter of Central Texas Communities her whole life. Her resume tells the story of a woman unafraid to contribute both her time and energies to a multitude of organizations that rely on volunteerism and social engagement to make good communities great.

Sis was raised just south of Killeen on a ranch near Maxdale and has led a life devoted to causes bigger than herself. Her extraordinary career began at Camp Hood where she supported war efforts during WWII. From there, she worked to upgrade Camp Hood to Fort Hood and served as a crucial advocate to make Fort Hood the model for military bases that it is today. Sis' influence in Central Texas didn't stop there. She has engaged in a multitude of endeavors ranging from owning a local Killeen TV station to establishing the

Killeen branch of Union State Bank, where she has served on the Board for many years. At every stop along the way, she's built bridges of friendship and has worked tirelessly to support and enhance her community.

Sis also exhibits a passion for education that has contributed greatly to the prosperity of Central Texas. Inspired by her niece who didn't have easy access to a local library, Sis worked to establish a library in Florence, Texas, which is now named after her. Sis also aided in efforts to fund the creation of both Central Texas College and Texas A&M Central Texas. Young and old alike are thankful for the positive contributions Sis has made to literacy and education in her community.

Some people go through life wondering if they made a difference. Eula L. Beck doesn't have that problem. Her inspiring and extensive career leaves no doubt that Central Texas is a better place because of her. I celebrate her life and devotion to her beloved community and wish her nothing but the best in the future.

CONFERENCE REPORT TO H.R. 5515, THE NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2019

HON. MAXINE WATERS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 25, 2018

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I would like to acknowledge the work of Financial Services Committee Democratic staffer Daniel McGlinchey on the title of this bill pertaining to reforms to the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BILLY LONG

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 25, 2018

Mr. LONG. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, July 24, 2018, I was unable to vote on any legislative measures. Had I been present, I would have voted the following:

(Roll No. 368) On ordering the previous question providing for consideration of H.R. 6199, the Restoring Access to Medication and Modernizing Health Savings Accounts Act of 2018; providing for proceedings during the period from July 27, 2018, through September 3, 2018—yes.

(Roll No. 369) On adoption of the rule providing for consideration of H.R. 6199, the Restoring Access to Medication and Modernizing Health Savings Accounts Act of 2018; providing for proceedings during the period from July 27, 2018, through September 3, 2018—yes.

(Roll No. 370) On ordering the previous question providing for consideration of H.R. 184, the Protect Medical Innovation Act of 2017; and H.R. 6311, the Increasing Access to Lower Premium Plans and Expanding Health Savings Accounts Act of 2018—yes.

(Roll No. 371) On adoption of the combined rule providing for consideration of H.R. 184, the Protect Medical Innovation Act of 2017; and H.R. 6311, the Increasing Access to Lower Premium Plans and Expanding Health Savings Accounts Act of 2018—yes.

(Roll No. 372) On passage of H.R. 184, the Protect Medical Innovation Act—yes.

WELCOME SAMANTHA JOSEPHINE CROWE

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 25, 2018

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I am happy to congratulate Major Andrew Crowe, former Military Fellow of South Carolina's Second Congressional District, and his wife, Major Michelle Crowe, of Alexandria, Virginia, on the birth of their new baby girl, Samantha Josephine Crowe. Samantha Josephine Crowe was born on July 23, 2018, at Fort Belvoir Community Hospital. Samantha weighed seven pounds and 15 ounces and measured 22.2 inches long.

I would also like to congratulate Samantha's grandparents, Carol and Donald Long, Edward Brunt, and Cheri and Robert Crowe. Congratulations and best wishes to the entire family as they are blessed with their newest addition of pure pride and joy.

IN LOVING MEMORY OF JANET MARIE TORRISI-MOKWA

HON. ANN WAGNER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 25, 2018

Mrs. WAGNER. Mr. Speaker, it is with a heavy heart that I rise to honor the passing of Janet Marie Torrisi-Mokwa. Jan was a dear friend and a dedicated leader in the St. Louis community. While we mourn this tragedy, I would like to celebrate Janis life and her many contributions to Missouri. She was a passionate advocate for an array of issues she held near and dear to her heart, including the protection of animals, the empowerment of women, and care for those in need.

Jan recently celebrated 25 years of marriage to her husband Joseph Mokwa. She is also survived by her mother, Marie Torrisi; brother John Torrisi and his wife Claudia; nieces, Kaci and Amy; stepdaughter, Aimee Goodrich; and grandchildren, Danny, Julia, and Josephine.

Jan was one of those people who was truly larger than life. She had a warm presence, an infectious positivity, and an unparalleled effect on others. Today we honor her insatiable spirit her countless contributions to our community, and the lasting impact she had on people from all walks of life.

In His Sermon on the Mount, we are reminded by our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, that those who mourn are blessed and will be comforted. I pray that during this difficult time, the Mokwa family, their friends, and neighbors are graced with that blessing from the Lord. Mr. Speaker, our community will dearly miss Jan's tremendous energy and bright smile. Her upbeat attitude and persistence will continue to live in each and every person she touched.

DR. BENJY FRANCES BROOKS CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL GME SUPPORT REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2018

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 23, 2018

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 4100, the Foundation of the Federal Bar Association Charter Amendments Act of 2017.

H.R. 4100 amends title 36 of the United States Code to revise the Federal charter for the Foundation of the Federal Bar Association, to prohibit the use of race, color, religion, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, or national origin in determining eligibility for service as an officer or director.

The Federal Bar Association is the nation's premiere association for practitioners of federal law and as such should be open to all regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity.

Currently, the FBA recognizes the importance of nondiscrimination and has adopted a diversity statement that includes race, gender, ethnicity, national origin, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, and gender identity.

Diversity statements are valuable but they do not carry the weight of law.

The addition of a nondiscrimination provision to the FBA Charter is an important action and when gender identity is an enumerated protected characteristic in the law, transgender people will be protected from discrimination.

Discrimination on the basis of gender identity is a form of sex discrimination, and laws prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sex protect transgender people.

Numerous federal circuit and district courts opinions have held that our nation's nondiscrimination laws that prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex protect transgender people from discrimination, including Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Equal Credit Opportunity Act, and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.

The EEOC determined in Macy v. Holder that Title VII's prohibitions on sex discrimination also prohibit discrimination on the basis of gender identity.

This decision is binding on the federal government with respect to employment practices.

Our laws work best when there are clear expectations.

While gender identity will be covered by the sex nondiscrimination provision, it is better to enumerate gender identity.

Listing out protected characteristics helps those making determinations about membership understand their obligations and those seeking membership understand their rights.

By passing H.R. 4100, we can prevent discrimination by ensuring gender identity is a protected characteristic.

I urge my colleagues to join me in voting for H.R. 4100.

HONORING GERALDINE JAMES PETTIE

HON. LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 25, 2018

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise to remember Geraldine James Pettie, a longtime Washingtonian, a dedicated public servant, a devoted spouse, a loving mother, an attentive grandmother and great grandmother, a cherished sister, an adored friend and neighbor. Mrs. Pettie passed away quietly on July 18, 2018, at her home in Washington, DC at the age of 91.

I never had the honor of meeting Mrs. Pettie, but my chief of staff, Victor Castillo, has shared many wonderful stories and anecdotes with me about his wonderful, welcoming neighbor. In tribute to Mrs. Pettie's life efforts and to share with my colleagues and the nation the story of Geraldine Pettie, I would like to include in the RECORD the obituary memorializing her which was included in program for her funeral services at Mount Zion United Methodist Church today.

A CELEBRATION OF THE LIFE OF GERALDINE JAMES PETTIE

MAY 5, 1927–JULY 18, 2018

Geraldine Audrey James Pettie was born May 5, 1927, in Sandy Level, Virginia. She was the first child of the late Morris E. and Veatrice Jackson James. Geraldine was united in marriage to the late Lynwood E. Pettie on August 18, 1950, and to that union two children were born.

Gerry, as she was affectionately known, attended the public schools of Pittsylvania County, Virginia, and received her Bachelor's degree from Virginia State College in 1946. She taught in the Pittsylvania County school system until moving to Washington, DC, in 1951. It was then Gerry began her career with the Department of Defense, retiring from the National Security Agency in 1979 after 27 years of service. Although Gerry could not share details about her responsibilities at NSA, the pride she felt for the work she did was obvious.

Upon moving to Washington, DC, Gerry joined Mount Zion United Methodist Church and was an active member until the untimely death of her husband in 1989. She also maintained her affiliation with the Ridgeway United Methodist Church back home.

After retiring, she was able to dedicate more time to her greatest joys—her grandchildren, the Kappa Alpha Psi Silhouettes, and antiquing. Gerry and Lynwood loved finding and restoring antiques. They traveled extensively in pursuit of their hobby and together opened a small antique store—LYN & GERRY—in Maryland. Some of their antiquing trips were combined with Kappa and Silhouette activities, often arriving at conference hotels with a car packed full of their ''treasures''.

Gerry devoted herself to her family. Her daughters and grandchildren were the pride of her life. Gerry was always armed with a collection of her kids' business cards and graduation photos which she proudly shared. In her final years, her greatest happiness came from the years spent living with her devoted sister, Lucille, in Gretna, Virginia. Lucille's in-laws embraced Gerry and treated her as one of their own. They became known as the ''Golden Girls'' and everyone around town enjoyed witnessing their obvious love for each other.

Gerry departed this life peacefully on Wednesday, July 18, 2018. She leaves to cherish her memory, her devoted daughters, Deborah Pritchett and Jan Whitley; four grandchildren, Kimberly Pritchett, Derek Whitley, Dara Whitley Champ, and Dana Whitley; one great-grandchild, Anthony Champ, Jr.; one sister, Lucille J. Younger; one brother, Morris E. James (Rosa) and one son-in-law, Michael Pritchett; one grandson-in-law, Anthony Champ; two nephews, Ronald Turner (Rita) and Lindell Younger; one niece, Lisa Turner; and a host of other relatives and friends.

Mrs. Pettie was laid to rest at Fort Lincoln Cemetery in Brentwood, Maryland alongside her beloved spouse Lynwood.

RECOGNIZING EARLE FRANCIS JONES ON THE RECEIPT OF THE REGINALD ''REG'' GILLIAM AWARD FOR LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT

HON. G. K. BUTTERFIELD

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 25, 2018

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize my dear friend, Earle Francis Jones who today is being honored by the Washington Government Relations Group with the Reginald ''Reg'' Gilliam Award for Lifetime Achievement for his decades of government relations work in Washington. Mr. Jones is most deserving of this great honor and I ask my colleagues to join me in offering our congratulations.

Mr. Jones was born in Washington, D.C. to Earle Sr. and the former Sylvia Carroll and raised here in our Nation's Capital. He is a product of the District of Columbia Public School system where he attended historic Coolidge High School and exceled in sports, music, and community service. Mr. Jones was highly academic and upon graduating from High School, went on to attend the internationally renowned American University. He later attended the University of California at Berkeley where he received his Juris Doctor Degree from the Boalt Hall School of Law.

Following law school, Mr. Jones began practicing at the firm of Holland and Hart in Denver, Colorado. He eventually left the firm to serve the Regional Transportation District as one of their legal representatives. He then entered into private practice.

Mr. Jones then served for two years on the Judicial Ethics Advisory Board as the Ethics Counselor for Colorado lawyers. He was recommended by a justice of the Colorado Supreme Court to serve in this important position. Earle served in that capacity for two years and was also an adjunct Law Professor at the University of Denver.

Returning to the National Capital Region, Mr. Jones joined Tele-Communications, Inc. (TCI) in 1989 where he served as Division Director for Government Affairs and then its Federal Communications Commission Washington Counsel. He then served as Director of Government Affairs for TCI's five-state Mid-Atlantic region.

For three years, Mr. Jones led Washington, DC's District Cablevision as its General Manager and oversaw Comcast's acquisition of District Cablevision from AT&T in 2001.

Mr. Jones joined Comcast as Vice President of Government Affairs for its Eastern Division, and in January 2009, he joined Comcast Corporation's Washington Federal Government Affairs office where he continues to serve with distinction as their senior public policy representative on Capitol Hill.

Over decades of work, Mr. Jones has developed strong relationships with members of Congress and their staff. This is particularly true among members of the Congressional Black Caucus who regularly seek his advice and counsel.

Mr. Speaker, I have had the high honor of knowing and working with Mr. Jones for more than a decade. As a member of Congress, I have many relationships on Capitol Hill, but none exceed the bond of friendship that I enjoy with Mr. Jones; he is one of the kindest individuals I've ever come to know. I've always been impressed by his honesty, integrity, and commitment to others.

Mr. Jones has generously given his time to serve on the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation Corporate Advisory Council where he advised the CBCF's Board of Directors on policy, special initiatives, and leadership development. There is no doubt that his service on the Council furthered the CBCF's mission to advance the global black community by developing leaders, informing policy, and educating the public. His professional drive is exceeded only by his love for family.

Mr. Jones is married to the former Linda Eatmon whose family is from my congressional district in Winton, North Carolina. They were married in 1998 and together have one son Steve, daughter-in-law Heather, and two grandchildren, Ryan and Rachael.

Mr. Jones' steadfast leadership and dogged commitment to honesty and integrity enabled him to earn the trust and respect of his friends, colleagues, congressional staffers, and countless members of Congress. Like so many others, I am honored to know Earle Jones and call him my friend.

On behalf of the United States House of Representatives and the people of the First Congressional District of North Carolina, I congratulate Earle Francis Jones upon his selection to receive the Reginald ''Reg'' Gilliam Award for Lifetime Achievement. It could not go to a more deserving individual.

IN REMEMBERANCE OF COLONEL DAVID ELLIS

HON. ROBERT J. WITTMAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 25, 2018

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in solemn remembrance of the life of Colonel David Alton Ellis, a retired Air Force veteran, husband, father, and grandfather from Fredericksburg, Virginia. Mr. Alton admirably served in the U.S. Air Force and will be remembered for his selfless devotion to his community.

Colonel Ellis was born on October 30, 1937, in Fredericksburg, Virginia. He is an alumnus of the University of Tennessee, where he earned a B.S. in Liberal Arts. He received his master's degree in International Affairs from Catholic University. Col. Ellis spent over 31 years in the Air Force where he served in Air Defense Surveillance. After his time in the Air

Force, Col. Ellis worked on the Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations (JLC), represented the National Association for Uniformed Services (NAUS) and helped advocate for veterans issues at the state level with the Governor and the Virginia General Assembly. His advocacy and support through the JLC was vital to several areas of state veteran's services, especially benefit services, the Virginia Veteran and Family Support program, state veteran's cemeteries, and the Virginia War Memorial.

Col. Ellis is survived by his wife Sally; daughter Tracy; stepsons Stephen, Jeff, and Shawn; nine grandchildren; and sister Louise. I extend my deepest condolences to his family members and anyone who had the privilege of knowing this fine gentleman. Col. Ellis was a very loved man whose service both to his community and our nation, will be dearly missed.

Mr. Speaker, I implore you and my colleagues to join me as we honor the memory of Colonel David Alton Ellis.

IN HONOR OF WENDELL LAWRENCE'S SERVICE TO KENTUCKY

HON. BRETT GUTHRIE

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 25, 2018

Mr. GUTHRIE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Wendell Lawrence upon his retirement as Executive Director of the Lincoln Trail Area Development District (LTADD) on August 1, 2018, after 35 years of service and more than 20 years as Executive Director. LTADD provides economic and workforce development services for Breckinridge, Grayson, Hardin, Larue, Meade, Nelson, and Washington Counties in Kentucky's Second District.

Wendell began his lifetime of service in the U.S. Army and retired as a captain from the U.S. Army Reserve after serving for 23 years. He has worked for LTADD since 1983, where he has proven himself an invaluable member of our local community and advocate for the region. Under his leadership, LTADD has grown and has helped countless Kentuckians find jobs.. Wendell has worked with Fort Knox, other community stakeholders, and the government to direct resources to the Lincoln Trail area, and our community is better off for his service.

I want to thank Wendell for his years of service to our community. He will be missed, but I wish him and his family the best in his retirement.

CONGRATULATING THE ST. LAWRENCE CENTRE ON THE OPENING OF ITS NEW SPORTS COMPLEX

HON. ELISE M. STEFANIK

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 25, 2018

Ms. STEFANIK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and congratulate the St. Lawrence Centre Shopping and Entertainment Mall on the grand opening of its new Sports Complex.

The St. Lawrence Centre is a mall in Massena, New York, that has experienced impressive business growth since it was built in 1990. To continue serving the residents of St. Lawrence County, the St. Lawrence Centre is opening a brand new Sports Complex attached to the mall. The Complex features a 1,300 person-capacity field turf that can host activities year-round ranging from professional sports to children's birthday parties. The opening of this complex, along with the addition of new stores to the mall, will bring together members of the community and help stimulate the local economy.

On behalf of New York's 21st District, I want to congratulate the St. Lawrence Centre on the grand opening of its new Sports Complex. Efforts to expand the mall exemplify successful business growth in Northern New York, and I look forward to seeing the St. Lawrence Centre continue to flourish.

THE AMERICAN LEGION 100TH ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATIVE COIN ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 24, 2018

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, today I will vote against the 39th short term extension of the National Flood Insurance Program that did not provide any reform whatsoever.

I've been working to improve the flood insurance program for over 20 years. The current program is ever deeper in debt, does not provide the right incentives to move people out of harm's way, and misses an opportunity for at least a small set of incremental improvements to save money and make America's families and businesses safer.

I know this extension will pass but I want to register in the strongest possible terms my insistence that we get on with the business of having a sustainable safe flood insurance program that is so important to so many Americans. The time to start this is now and this short-term extension fails that test.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. VICKY HARTZLER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 25, 2018

Mrs. HARTZLER. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, July 24, 2018, I was unable to vote. Had I been present, I would have voted as follows: on roll call no. 368, YEA; on roll call no. 369, YEA; on roll call no. 370, YEA; on roll call no. 371, YEA; and on roll call no. 372, YEA.

HONORING MAGISTRATE JUDGE JAMES E. SEIBERT

HON. DAVID B. McKINLEY

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 25, 2018

Mr. McKINLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor my long time friend, Judge James E. Seibert as he transitions into retirement after 33 years of service to the people of West Virginia.

Judge Seibert graduated from West Virginia University's College of Law in 1969.

Upon graduation, he joined the Law Firm of Seibert and Kasserman in Wheeling, West Virginia.

In 1985, Judge Seibert entered public service as a Magistrate Judge for the Northern District of West Virginia.

But as much as he is recognized for his service on the bench, he is known for his contributions to the community, having served as: Chairman of the Ohio County Bar Association, President of the Wheeling-Ohio County Planning Commission, Chairman of Saint Vincent's Home, The Mental Hygiene Commissioner, President of the Wheeling Auto Club, and served on the Board for the Oglebay Park Children's Association.

I thank, Judge Seibert for his 33 years of service and wish him, his wife Jenny, his three adult children, and three grandkids all the best.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 25, 2018

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, on July 23, 2018 I missed a series of Roll Call votes. Had I been present, I would have voted "YEA" on No. 366 and 367.

On July 24, 2018 I missed a series of Roll Call votes. Had I been present, I would have voted "YEA" on No. 368, 369, 370, 371, and 372.

CELEBRATING THE EXTRAORDINARY WORK AND LEGACY OF VICTOR VILLARREAL

HON. JOHN R. CARTER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 25, 2018

Mr. CARTER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I celebrate the extraordinary work and legacy of Victor Villarreal, Ph.D. This Lone Star State native has led a life of continual service to Central Texas. His leadership, vision, and commitment to hard work has made the growing city of Leander, TX a great place to live and work.

Dr. Vic served the City of Leander as a councilmember from 2005–2009, which included a term as Mayor Pro-Tem. Knowing that Leander deserves a first-class higher-education institution, his tenure was focused on bringing an Austin Community College (ACC) campus to his beloved community.

Dr. Vic unselfishly gave countless hours over the span of a decade toward making an ACC campus in Leander a reality. Those who worked alongside him describe the time, planning, and effort he put in to bringing a college campus to Leander as a true labor of love. Dr. Vic's leadership led to the establishment of ACC's San Gabriel campus; classes will begin in Fall 2018. His commitment to higher education in Leander didn't end there as Dr. Vic served as a member and a Vice Chairman of

the ACC Board of Trustees before becoming Chairman.

Many go through life wondering if they've made difference; Dr. Vic doesn't have that problem. I'm glad civic-minded leaders like him are working hard to improve their communities. He's led Leander to new heights and positioned his beloved city to continue into a bright future. I salute his work, congratulate him on his achievements, and wish him nothing but the best for the years ahead.

RECOGNIZING THE 2018 SISTER CITIES INTERNATIONAL ANNUAL CONFERENCE

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 25, 2018

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 2018 Sister Cities International Annual Conference. For 2018, the conference will take place in my hometown of Aurora, Colorado, from the 2nd to the 4th of August. This is both Aurora's and Colorado's first time hosting this important international conference. I look forward to participating in it as a guest and as a speaker.

First established in 1984, the Sister Cities International Annual Conference joins together numerous government officials, national leaders, business leaders, and diplomats for dialogue on many important global issues. The focus of this year's conference is Cities Leading the Way. It will showcase how, ''in an era of unrest, cities across the globe are leading efforts to create smarter, healthier, more inclusive, and more innovative communities.''

I am proud to attend this prestigious event and look forward to observing how its participants will offer ideas on how to resolve important global issues and promote cross-cultural dialogue at the highest level. Colorado is a world leader in a variety of fields, including agriculture, energy, medical research, natural resources, and tourism. There are numerous tours and guest speakers Colorado will provide to inform and assist the participants as they develop ideas and solutions. I am confident that all will look back upon the conclusion of the conference and recognize that Aurora was a wonderful place to meet.

The Conference made the decision to award the 2018 event to Aurora thanks to the efforts of many, but I want to note particularly the leadership of my late friend and Aurora's biggest booster, Mayor Stephen Hogan. I know it would have meant a great deal to Mayor Hogan to have participated in and to have opened this conference. I am confident that Aurora's new Mayor, Bob LeGare, will ensure that it will be a great success. Finally, I wish to recognize the work of Sister Cities International led by Board Chair, Tim Quigley, and Aurora Sister Cities International led by Board Chair, Dr. Christopher Ward.

TRIBUTE TO YOUNG STAFF MEMBERS FOR THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS ON BEHALF OF THE PEOPLE OF THE 18TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT OF TEXAS AND THE UNITED STATES

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 25, 2018

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, as Members of Congress we know well, perhaps better than most, how blessed our nation is to have in reserve such exceptional young men and women who will go on to become leaders in their local communities, states, and the nation in the areas of business, education, government, philanthropy, the arts and culture, and the military.

We know this because we see them and benefit from their contributions every day. Many of them work for us in our offices as junior staff members, congressional fellows, or interns and they do amazing work for and on behalf of the constituents we are privileged to represent.

Mr. Speaker, I believe there is no higher calling than the call to serve a cause larger than ourselves. That is why I ran for public office. I was inspired to serve by President Kennedy who said, ''Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country,'' and by the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. who said, ''Everybody can be great because anybody can serve. . . . You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love.''

By this measure, there are several other great young men and women who served as volunteers this year in my offices. They may toil in obscurity but their contributions to the constituents we serve are deeply appreciated. That is why today I rise to pay tribute to 13 extraordinary young persons for their service to my constituents in the 18th Congressional District of Texas and to the American people. They are:

Callie Lucia from Texas Christian University; Kelly Clifford from New York University; Matthew Marion from the University of Colorado; Farah Mechref from Texas Tech University; Chaniqua Nelson from Howard University; Zohair Alam from the University of Houston; Sabri Siraj from Arizona State University; Naomi Stelivan from Fisk University; Andy Hong from Brown University; Mariam Boguifo from Texas Tech University; Rishal Jagtap from Langley High School; Ritwik Jagtap from Langley High School; and Fangxin 'Amy' Yu from The Madeira School.

Mr. Speaker, the energy, intelligence, and idealism these wonderful young people brought to my office and those interning in the offices of my colleagues help keep our democracy vibrant. The insights, skills, and knowledge of the governmental process they gain from their experiences will last a lifetime and prove invaluable to them as they go about making their mark in this world.

Because of persons like them the future of our country is bright and its best days lie ahead. I wish them all well.

Mr. Speaker, I am grateful that such thoughtful committed young men and women can be found working in my office, those of my colleagues, and in every community in America. Their good works will keep America great, good, and forever young.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Thursday, July 26, 2018 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

JULY 31

10 a.m.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

Subcommittee on Communications, Technology, Innovation, and the Internet

To hold hearings to examine the internet and digital communications, focusing on the impact of global internet governance.

SR–253

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

To hold hearings to examine reducing health care costs, focusing on decreasing administrative spending.

SD–430

Committee on the Judiciary

To hold an oversight hearing to examine immigration enforcement and family reunification efforts.

SH–216

AUGUST 1

9:45 a.m.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

Business meeting to consider S. 2242, to amend the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 to clarify the authority of the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration with respect to post-storm assessments, S. 2773, to improve the management of driftnet fishing, S. 2861, to prosecute, as a Federal crime, the assault or intimidation of a passenger train crew member to the same extent as such actions against aircraft crew members are prosecuted, S. 3119, to allow for the taking of sea lions on the Columbia River and its tributaries to protect endangered and threatened species of salmon and other nonlisted fish species, S. 3143, to provide for a coordinated Federal program to accelerate quantum research and development for the economic and national security of the United States, S. 3265, to require the Secretary of Commerce to undertake certain activities to support

waterfront community revitalization and resiliency, S. 3273, to improve the safety, efficiency, and reliability of the movement of goods through ports and intermodal connections to ports, an original bill entitled, ''Space Frontier Act of 2019'', and the nominations of Rick A. Dearborn, of Oklahoma, to be a Director of the Amtrak Board of Directors, and Martin J. Oberman, of Illinois, to be a Member of the Surface Transportation Board.

SD–G50

10 a.m.

Committee on Foreign Relations

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of R. Clarke Cooper, of Florida, to be an Assistant Secretary (Political-Military Affairs), and John Cotton Richmond, of Virginia, to be Director of the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking, with the rank of Ambassador at Large, both of the Department of State.

SD–419

Committee on the Judiciary

To hold hearings to examine pending nominations.

SD–226

10:30 a.m.

Committee on Environment and Public Works

Business meeting to consider pending calendar business; to be immediately followed by a hearing to examine the Environmental Protection Agency's agenda, focusing on protecting the environment and allowing America's economy to grow.

SD–406

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

Subcommittee on Space, Science, and Competitiveness

To hold hearings to examine the search for life, focusing on utilizing science to explore our solar system and make new discoveries.

SR–253

Committee on Veterans' Affairs

To hold hearings to examine S. 3184, to amend title 38, United States Code, to modify the requirements for applications for construction of State home facilities to increase the maximum percentage of nonveterans allowed to be treated at such facilities, S. 1596, to amend title 38, United States Code, to increase certain funeral benefits for veterans, S. 2881, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to seek to enter into an agreement with the city of Vallejo, California, for the transfer of Mare Island Naval Cemetery in Vallejo, California, S. 1952, to improve oversight and accountability of the financial processes of the Department of Veterans Affairs, S. 1990, to amend title 38, United States Code, to increase the amounts payable by the Department of Veterans Affairs for dependency and indemnity compensation, to modify the requirements for dependency and indemnity compensation for survivors of certain veterans rated totally disabled at the time of death, S. 2485, to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide payment of Medal of Honor special pension under such title to the surviving spouse of a deceased Medal of Honor recipient, S. 2748, to amend title 10, United States Code, to require members of the Armed Forces to receive additional training under the Transition Assistance Program, S. 514, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a pilot program to provide access to magnetic EEG/EKG-guided resonance therapy to veterans, H.R. 299, to amend title 38, United States Code, to clarify presumptions relating to the exposure of certain veterans who served in the vicinity of the Republic of Vietnam, H.R. 5418, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out the Medical Surgical Prime Vendor program using multiple prime vendors, an original bill entitled, ''Veterans Dental Care Eligibility Expansion and Enhancement Act of 2018'', an original bill entitled, ''VA Hiring Enhancement Act'', an original bill to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish a program to award grants to persons to provide and coordinate the provision of suicide prevention services for veterans transitioning from service in the Armed Forces who are at risk of suicide and for their families, and an original bill entitled, ''Modernization of Medical Records Access for Veterans Act''.

SR–418

Daily Digest

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, page S5315–S5391

Measures Introduced: Sixteen bills and two resolutions were introduced, as follows: S. 3262–3277, and S. Res. 592–593. **Pages S5360–61**

Measures Passed:

Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Amendment Act: Senate passed S. 2779, to amend the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act of 2001, after withdrawing the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute, and agreeing to the following amendment proposed thereto: **Pages S5319–20**

Murkowski (for Flake) Amendment No. 3541, in the nature of a substitute. **Page S5320**

East Rosebud Wild and Scenic Rivers Act: Senate passed H.R. 4645, to amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to designate certain segments of East Rosebud Creek in Carbon County, Montana, as components of the Wild and Scenic Rivers System. **Page S5390**

National Ada Lovelace Day: Senate agreed to S. Res. 592, designating October 9, 2018, as "National Ada Lovelace Day" and honoring the life and legacy of Ada Lovelace, the first computer programmer. **Page S5390**

Honoring the Life and Legacy of Grace Hopper: Senate agreed to S. Res. 593, honoring the life and legacy of Grace Hopper, professor, inventor, entrepreneur, business leader, and Rear Admiral of the Navy. **Page S5390**

Measures Considered:

Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act—Agreement: Senate continued consideration of H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, taking action on the following amendments proposed thereto: **Pages S5316–19, S5320–56**

Adopted:

By a unanimous vote of 98 yeas (Vote No. 168), Moran Amendment No. 3433 (to Amendment No. 3399), to prohibit the use of funds to revoke certain exceptions. **Pages S5339–40**

By 95 yeas to 4 nays (Vote No. 169), Udall Modified Amendment No. 3414 (to Amendment No. 3399), to express the sense of Congress relating to the importance of long-distance passenger rail routes. **Pages S5339–40**

By a unanimous vote of 99 yeas (Vote No. 170), Collins (for Manchin) Amendment No. 3553 (to Amendment No. 3399), to make an amount available for the Office of Terrorism and Financial Intelligence of the Department of the Treasury to investigate the illicit trade of synthetic opioids originating from the People's Republic of China. **Pages S5347–51**

Rejected:

By 25 yeas to 74 nays (Vote No. 171), Collins (for Paul) Amendment No. 3543 (to Amendment No. 3399), to reduce the amounts appropriated to comply with the spending limits under the Budget Control Act of 2011. **Pages S5347–52**

Pending:

Shelby Amendment No. 3399, in the nature of a substitute. **Pages S5316–19, S5320–56**

Murkowski Amendment No. 3400 (to Amendment No. 3399), of a perfecting nature. **Page S5316**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing for further consideration of the bill at approximately 9:30 a.m., on Thursday, July 26, 2018. **Pages S5390–91**

Messages from the House: **Pages S5358–59**

Measures Referred: **Page S5359**

Measures Read the First Time: **Pages S5360, S5390**

Executive Communications: **Page S5360**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages S5361–63**

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: **Pages S5363–74**

Additional Statements: **Pages S5357–58**

Amendments Submitted: **Pages S5374–90**

Authorities for Committees to Meet: **Page S5390**

Record Votes: Four record votes were taken today. (Total—171) **Pages S5340, S5351–52**

Adjournment: Senate convened at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 7:31 p.m., until 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, July 26, 2018. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Acting Majority Leader in today's Record on pages S5390–91.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

RACE TO 5G

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the race to 5G, focusing on exploring spectrum needs to maintain United States global leadership, after receiving testimony from Meredith Attwell Baker, CTIA, Dean R. Brenner, Qualcomm Incorporated, and Tom Stroup, Satellite Industry Association, all of Washington, D.C.; and Craig Cowden, Charter Communications, Denver, Colorado.

MARS

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: Subcommittee on Space, Science, and Competiveness concluded a hearing to examine destination Mars, focusing on putting American boots on the surface of the red planet, after receiving testimony from Salvatore T. Bruno, United Launch Alliance, LLC, Centennial, Colorado; Chris Carberry, Explore Mars, Inc., Stafford, Virginia; Dava J. Newman, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge; and Peggy Whitson, Spicewood, Texas.

AMERICAN DIPLOMACY

Committee on Foreign Relations: Committee concluded a hearing to examine American diplomacy to advance our national security strategy, after receiving testimony from Mike Pompeo, Secretary of State.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions: Committee ordered favorably reported the following business items:

S. 2554, to ensure that health insurance issuers and group health plans do not prohibit pharmacy providers from providing certain information to enrollees, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

H.R. 1222, to amend the Public Health Service Act to coordinate Federal congenital heart disease research efforts and to improve public education and awareness of congenital heart disease, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 2465, to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize a sickle cell disease prevention and treatment demonstration program and to provide for sickle cell disease research, surveillance, prevention, and treatment, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute; and

S. 3016, to amend the Public Health Service Act to improve essential oral health care for low-income and other underserved individuals by breaking down barriers to care, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute.

NOMINATIONS

Select Committee on Intelligence: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the nominations of Joseph Maguire, of Florida, to be Director of the National Counterterrorism Center, Office of the Director of National Intelligence, and Ellen E. McCarthy, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (Intelligence and Research), after the nominees testified and answered questions in their own behalf.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 38 public bills, H.R. 6501–6538; and 6 resolutions, H. Res. 1026, 1028–1032 were introduced.

Pages H7685–87

Additional Cosponsors: **Page H7688**

Reports Filed: Reports were filed today as follows:

Conference report on H.R. 5515, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2019 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes (H. Rept. 115–874); and

H. Res. 1027, providing for consideration of the conference report to accompany the bill (H.R. 5515) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2019 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes (H. Rept. 115–875). **Page H7685**

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he appointed Representative Lamborn to act as Speaker pro tempore for today. **Page H7159**

Recess: The House recessed at 11:36 a.m. and reconvened at 12 noon. **Page H7169**

Guest Chaplain: The prayer was offered by the Guest Chaplain, Bishop Irinej, Serbian Orthodox Diocese of Eastern America, New Rochelle, New York. **Pages H7169–70**

Suspensions—Proceedings Resumed: The House agreed to suspend the rules and pass the following measure. Consideration began Tuesday, July 24th.

The American Legion 100th Anniversary Commemorative Coin Act: S. 1182, amended, to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint commemorative coins in recognition of the 100th anniversary of The American Legion, by a ⅔ yea-and-nay vote of 366 yeas to 52 nays, Roll No. 373; **Page H7199**

Agreed to amend the title so as to read: "To extend the National Flood Insurance Program, and for other purposes.". **Page H7199**

VA Hospitals Establishing Leadership Performance Act: H.R. 5864, amended, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish qualifications for the human resources positions within the Veterans Health Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs, by a ⅔ yea-and-nay vote of 417 yeas with none voting "nay", Roll No. 374. **Pages H7199–H7200**

Making Available Information Now to Strengthen Trust and Resilience and Enhance Enterprise Technology Cybersecurity Act: The House agreed to take from the Speaker's table and pass S. 770, to require the Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology to disseminate resources to help reduce small business cybersecurity risks, as amended by Representative Webster (FL). **Pages H7201–02**

Agreed to amend the title so as to read: "To require the Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology to disseminate guidance to help reduce small business cybersecurity risks, and for other purposes.". **Page H7202**

Suspensions: The House agreed to suspend the rules and pass the following measures:

Long-Term Care Veterans Choice Act: H.R. 5693, amended, to amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to enter into contracts and agreements for the placement of veterans in non-Department medical foster homes for certain veterans who are unable to live independently; **Pages H7172–75**

Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act: Concur in the Senate amendment to H.R. 2353, to reauthorize the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006; **Pages H7175–94**

Condemning the violence, persecution, intimidation, and murders committed by the Government of Nicaragua against its citizens: H. Res. 981, amended, condemning the violence, persecution, intimidation, and murders committed by the Government of Nicaragua against its citizens; **Pages H7194–97**

Energy Diplomacy Act of 2018: H.R. 5535, amended, to amend the State Department Basic Authorities Act of 1956 regarding energy diplomacy and security within the Department of State; **Pages H7197–99**

Amending title 23, United States Code, to extend the deadline for promulgation of regulations under the tribal transportation self-governance program: H.R. 6414, to amend title 23, United States Code, to extend the deadline for promulgation of regulations under the tribal transportation self-governance program; **Pages H7639–40**

Save Our Seas Act: S. 756, amended, to reauthorize and amend the Marine Debris Act to promote international action to reduce marine debris; **Pages H7640–45**

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the lack of timely and predictable funding unnecessarily undermines the mission of the United States Special Operations Command and jeopardizes the security of the United States: H. Res. 1009, expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the lack of timely and predictable funding unnecessarily undermines the mission of the United States Special Operations Command and jeopardizes the security of the United States; **Pages H7645–47**

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the United States Air Force faces significant readiness challenges due to insufficient personnel levels, a shrinking and depleted aircraft fleet, and maintenance deferrals, all of which are affected by budgetary uncertainty and impede the Air Force's ability to meet ongoing and unexpected national security threats, putting United States national security at risk: H.R. 1010, expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the United States Air Force faces significant readiness challenges due to insufficient personnel levels, a shrinking and depleted aircraft fleet, and maintenance deferrals, all of which are affected by budgetary uncertainty and impede the Air Force's ability

to meet ongoing and unexpected national security threats, putting United States national security at risk; and **Pages H7647–49**

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that not fully resourcing the United States Army in a timely manner erodes the Army's ability to maintain readiness and poses risk to the Army's ability to conduct military operations: H. Res. 1007, expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that not fully resourcing the United States Army in a timely manner erodes the Army's ability to maintain readiness and poses risk to the Army's ability to conduct military operations. **Pages H7650–51**

Amending the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act to modify the definition of qualified health plan for purposes of the health insurance premium tax credit and to allow individuals purchasing health insurance in the individual market to purchase a lower premium copper plan: The House passed H.R. 6311, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act to modify the definition of qualified health plan for purposes of the health insurance premium tax credit and to allow individuals purchasing health insurance in the individual market to purchase a lower premium copper plan, by a recorded vote of 242 ayes to 176 noes, Roll No. 376. **Pages H7658–67**

Rejected the Frankel (FL) motion to recommit the bill to the Committee on Ways and Means with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith with an amendment, by a yea-and-nay vote of 187 yeas to 229 nays, Roll No. 375. **Pages H7665–66**

Pursuant to the Rule, an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 115–83 shall be considered as adopted, in lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Ways and Means. **Page H7658**

H. Res. 1011, the rule providing for consideration of the bills (H.R. 184) and (H.R. 6311) was agreed to yesterday, July 24th.

Restoring Access to Medication Act of 2018: The House passed H.R. 6199, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to include certain over-the-counter medical products as qualified medical expenses, by a yea-and-nay vote of 277 yeas to 142 nays, Roll No. 377. **Pages H7651–58, H7667**

Pursuant to the Rule, an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 115–82 shall be considered as adopted, in lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Ways and Means now printed in the bill. **Page H7651**

H. Res. 1012, the rule providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 6199) was agreed to yesterday, July 24th.

Cambodia Democracy Act of 2018: The House agreed to discharge from committee and pass H.R. 5754, to promote free and fair elections, political freedoms, and human rights in Cambodia, as amended by Representative Royce (CA). **Pages H7668–69**

Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Amendment Act of 2018: The House agreed to take from the Speaker's table and pass S. 2779, to amend the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act of 2001. **Pages H7670–72**

Meeting Hour: Agreed by unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 9 a.m. tomorrow, July 26th. **Page H7672**

Senate Referrals: S. 2278 was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce. S. 2779 was held at the desk. **Page H7684**

Senate Message: Message received from the Senate today appears on page H7169.

Quorum Calls—Votes: Three yea-and-nay votes and two recorded votes developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H7199, H7200, H7666, H7666–67, and H7667. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 8:34 p.m.

Committee Meetings

EXAMINING THE UPCOMING AGENDA FOR THE COMMODITY FUTURES TRADING COMMISSION

Committee on Agriculture: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Examining the Upcoming Agenda for the Commodity Futures Trading Commission''. Testimony was heard from Chris Giancarlo, Chairman, Commodity Futures Trading Commission.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Appropriations: Full Committee held a markup on FY 2019 Homeland Security Appropriations Bill; and the Revised Report on the Suballocation of Budget Allocations for FY 2019. The FY 2019 Homeland Security Appropriations Bill was ordered reported, as amended. The Revised Report on the Suballocation of Budget Allocations for FY 2019 was approved.

21ST CENTURY CURES IMPLEMENTATION: UPDATES FROM FDA AND NIH

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Health held a hearing entitled ''21st Century Cures Implementation: Updates from FDA and NIH''. Testimony was heard from Francis Collins, Director, National Institutes of Health; and Scott Gottlieb, Commissioner, Food and Drug Administration.

BACKGROUND ON RENEWABLE IDENTIFICATION NUMBERS UNDER THE RENEWABLE FUEL STANDARD

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Environment held a hearing entitled ''Background on Renewable Identification Numbers under the Renewable Fuel Standard''. Testimony was heard from Brent Yacobucci, Energy and Minerals Manager, Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress.

OVERSIGHT OF THE FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Communications and Technology held a hearing entitled ''Oversight of the Federal Communications Commission''. Testimony was heard from the following Federal Communications Commission officials: Ajit Pai, Chairman; Michael O'Rielly, Commissioner; Brendan Carr, Commissioner; and Jessica Rosenworcel, Commissioner.

BUDGET PRIORITIES FOR SOUTH ASIA

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific held a hearing entitled ''Budget Priorities for South Asia''. Testimony was heard from Alice G. Wells, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs, Department of State; and Gloria Steele, Senior Deputy Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Asia, U.S. Agency for International Development.

ASSESSING THE STATE OF FEDERAL CYBERSECURITY RISK DETERMINATION

Committee on Homeland Security: Subcommittee on Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Protection held a hearing entitled ''Assessing the State of Federal Cybersecurity Risk Determination''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

USING INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGY AND PRACTICES TO ENHANCE THE CULTURE OF PREPAREDNESS

Committee on Homeland Security: Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications held a hearing entitled ''Using Innovative Technology and Practices to Enhance the Culture of Preparedness''. Testimony was heard from Daniel Kaniewski, Deputy Administrator for Resilience, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security; Daniel Cotter, Director, First Responders Group, Science and Technology Directorate, Department of Homeland Security; Dereck Orr, Division Chief, Public Safety Communications Division, National Institute of Standards and Technology, Department of Commerce; and John V. Kelly, Senior Official Performing the Duties of the Inspector General, Office of Inspector General, Department of Homeland Security.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on House Administration: Full Committee held a business meeting to consider Committee Resolution 115–20. Committee Resolution 115–20 was adopted.

OVERSIGHT OF THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS' STRATEGIC PLAN PART 2

Committee on House Administration: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Oversight of the Library of Congress' Strategic Plan Part 2''. Testimony was heard from the following Library of Congress officials: Carla D. Hayden, Librarian of Congress; Kurt W. Hyde, Inspector General; and Dianne Houghton, Director of Strategic Planning and Performance Management.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURE

Committee on the Judiciary: Full Committee held a markup on H.R. 1872, the ''Reciprocal Access to Tibet Act of 2017''. H.R. 1872 was ordered reported, as amended.

MANAGEMENT CRISIS AT THE PUERTO RICO ELECTRIC POWER AUTHORITY AND IMPLICATIONS FOR RECOVERY

Committee on Natural Resources: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Management Crisis at the Puerto Rico Electric Power Authority and Implications for Recovery''. Testimony was heard from Eduardo Bhatia, Minority Leader, Senate of Puerto Rico; Bruce Walker, Assistant Secretary, Office of Electricity, Department of Energy; and public witnesses.

GAO HIGH RISK FOCUS: CYBERSECURITY

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Subcommittee on Information Technology; and Subcommittee on Government Operations held a joint hearing entitled ''GAO High Risk Focus: Cybersecurity''. Testimony was heard from Gene L. Dodaro, Comptroller General, Government Accountability Office; and Suzette Kent, Federal Chief Information Officer, Office of Management and Budget.

FEDERAL GRANT MANAGEMENT

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Subcommittee on Intergovernmental Affairs held a hearing entitled ''Federal Grant Management''. Testimony was heard from Michelle Sager, Director, Strategic Issues, Government Accountability Office; Andrea L. Brandon, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Office of Grants and Acquisition Policy and Accountability, Department of Health and Human Services; Natalie Keegan, Analyst, American Federalism and Emergency Management, Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress; and public witnesses.

CONFERENCE REPORT TO ACCOMPANY THE JOHN S. MCCAIN NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2019

Committee on Rules: Full Committee concluded a hearing on the Conference Report to accompany H.R. 5515, the ''John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019''. The Committee granted, by voice vote, a rule providing for the consideration of the conference report to H.R. 5515. The rule waives all points of order against the conference report and against its consideration. The rule provides that the conference report shall be considered as read. The rule provides that the previous question shall be considered as ordered without intervention of any motion except one hour of debate and one motion to recommit if applicable. The rule provides debate on the conference report is divided pursuant to clause 8(d) of rule XXII. In section 2, the rule provides that the Committee on Appropriations may, at any time before 3 p.m. on Thursday, August 2, 2018, file privileged reports to accompany measures making appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019. Finally, in section 3, the rule provides that H. Res. 1020 is laid on the table.

JAMES WEBB SPACE TELESCOPE: PROGRAM BREACH AND ITS IMPLICATIONS

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology: Full Committee held a begin hearing entitled ''James Webb Space Telescope: Program Breach and its Implications''. Testimony was heard from Jim Bridenstine, Administrator, National Aeronautics and Space Administration; and a public witness.

THE TAX LAW'S IMPACT ON MAIN STREET

Committee on Small Business: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''The Tax Law's Impact on Main Street''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

EXAMINING CHANGES TO SOCIAL SECURITY'S DISABILITY APPEALS PROCESS

Committee on Ways and Means: Subcommittee on Social Security held a hearing entitled ''Examining Changes to Social Security's Disability Appeals Process''. Testimony was heard from Patricia Jonas, Deputy Commissioner, Analytics, Review, and Oversight, Social Security Administration; Elizabeth Curda, Director, Education, Workforce, and Income Security Issues, Government Accountability Office; Will Morton, Analyst, Income Security, Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress; and public witnesses.

Joint Meetings

INNOVATION ECONOMY

Joint Economic Committee: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the innovation economy, entrepreneurship, and barriers to capital access, after receiving testimony from Phil Mackintosh, Nasdaq, Inc., New York, New York; Rachel King, GlycoMimetics, Inc., Rockville, Maryland; and Lisa Mensah, Opportunity Finance Network, Washington, D.C.

MULTIEMPLOYER PENSION SYSTEM AND STAKEHOLDERS

Joint Select Committee on Solvency of Multiemployer Pension Plans: Committee concluded a hearing to examine how the multiemployer pension system affects stakeholders, after receiving testimony from James P. Naughton, Northwestern University, Chicago, Illinois; Joshua D. Rauh, Stanford University Hoover Institution, Stanford, California; Timothy P. Lynch, Morgan Lewis and Bockius LLP, Annapolis, Maryland; and Kenneth Warren Stribling, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

ATTACKS ON ROMA IN UKRAINE

Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe: Commission received a briefing on attacks on Roma in Ukraine from Zemfira Kondur, Chiricli International Roma Women's Fund, and Oskana Shulyar, both of Kyiv, Ukraine; and Halyna Yurchenko, Roma Youth of Ukraine, Lviv.

CORRUPTION AND DOPING IN INTERNATIONAL SPORT

Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the state of play, focusing on globalized corruption, state-run doping, and international sport, after receiving testimony from Travis T. Tygart, United States Anti-Doping Agency, Colorado Springs, Colorado; Dagmar Freitag, Chairwoman of the German Bundestag Sports Committee, Berlin, Germany; Jim

Walden, Walden Macht and Haran, New York, New York; Katie Uhlaender, Breckenridge, Colorado; and Yuliya Stepanova, Kursk, Russia.

NEW PUBLIC LAWS

(For last listing of Public Laws, see DAILY DIGEST, *p. D851)*

H.R. 446, to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project. Signed on July 23, 2018. (Public Law 115–202)

H.R. 447, to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project. Signed on July 23, 2018. (Public Law 115–203)

H.R. 951, to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project. Signed on July 23, 2018. (Public Law 115–204)

H.R. 2122, to reinstate and extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project involving Jennings Randolph Dam. Signed on July 23, 2018. (Public Law 115–205)

H.R. 2292, to extend a project of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission involving the Cannonsville Dam. Signed on July 23, 2018. (Public Law 115–206)

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR THURSDAY, JULY 26, 2018

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies, to hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2019 for the Office of the United States Trade Representative, 9:45 a.m., SD–192.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: to hold hearings to examine the nominations of Rick A. Dearborn, of Oklahoma, to be a Director of the Amtrak Board of Directors, and Martin J. Oberman, of Illinois, to be a Member of the Surface Transportation Board, 10 a.m., SR–253.

Committee on Finance: to hold hearings to examine the nominations of Justin George Muzinich, of New York, to be Deputy Secretary, and Michael J. Desmond, of California, to be Chief Counsel for the Internal Revenue Service and an Assistant General Counsel, both of the Department of the Treasury, 9:30 a.m., SD–215.

Subcommittee on Taxation and IRS Oversight, to hold hearings to examine improving tax administration today, 10:30 a.m., SD–562.

Committee on Foreign Relations: business meeting to consider S. 1023, to reauthorize the Tropical Forest Conservation Act of 1998 through fiscal year 2021, S. 1580, to enhance the transparency, improve the coordination, and intensify the impact of assistance to support access to primary and secondary education for displaced children and persons, including women and girls, S. 3248, to restrict the provision by international financial institutions of loans and financial and technical assistance to the Government of Turkey, S. Res. 501, recognizing threats to freedom of the press and expression around the world and reaffirming freedom of the press as a priority in efforts of the Government of the United States to promote democracy and good governance, S. Res. 541, expressing the sense of the Senate that any United States-Saudi Arabia civilian nuclear cooperation agreement must prohibit the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia from enriching uranium or separating plutonium on its own territory, in keeping with the strongest possible nonproliferation ''gold standard'', S. Res. 571, condemning the ongoing illegal occupation of Crimea by the Russian Federation, the nominations of Joseph Cella, of Michigan, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Fiji, and to serve concurrently and without additional compensation as Ambassador to the Republic of Kiribati, the Republic of Nauru, the Kingdom of Tonga, and Tuvalu, and Denise Natali, of New Jersey, to be an Assistant Secretary (Conflict and Stabilization Operations), both of the Department of State, and routine lists in the Foreign Service, 10 a.m., S–116, Capitol.

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions: to hold hearings to examine modernizing apprenticeships to expand opportunities, 11 a.m., SD–430.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: Subcommittee on Regulatory Affairs and Federal Management, to hold hearings to examine the challenges and opportunities of the proposed government reorganization on Office of Personnel Management and General Services Administration, 10 a.m., SD–342.

Select Committee on Intelligence: to receive a closed briefing regarding certain intelligence matters, 2 p.m., SH–219.

House

Committee on Energy and Commerce, Subcommittee on Health, hearing entitled ''MACRA and MIPS: An Update on the Merit-based Incentive Payment System'', 10 a.m., 2123 Rayburn.

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Subcommittee on National Security; and Subcommittee on Government Operations, joint hearing entitled ''The Federal Trade Commission's Enforcement of Operation Chokepoint-Related Businesses'', 10 a.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, Full Committee, continue hearing entitled ''James Webb Space Telescope: Program Breach and its Implications'', 9:30 a.m., 2318 Rayburn.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

9:30 a.m., Thursday, July 26

Senate Chamber

Program for Thursday: Senate will continue consideration of H.R. 6147, Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act.

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

9 a.m., Thursday, July 26

House Chamber

Program for Thursday: Consideration of the Conference Report to Accompany H.R. 5515—National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019.

Extensions of Remarks, as inserted in this issue

HOUSE

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