

The details here are so important, and I want to make it very clear where we landed in this agreement.

To better improve career and technical education for students, workers, local businesses, and communities, this bill will require States, schools, and training programs to update education and job training programs to meet the needs of the local economy, ensuring students are being provided with the skills they need to find high-skill, high-wage, or in-demand jobs where they live.

Because the economy is constantly changing, and new equipment, technology, and curriculum are needed to help students and workers keep up with technological advancements, this bill would authorize a new innovation grant program to allow States to explore new and creative ways to improve career and technical education that use evidence-based measurements to ensure students are still receiving high quality education and training.

Updating career and technical education programs and promoting innovation is important, but we cannot lose sight of our top priority: improving the quality of the career and technical education students are receiving.

For that reason, this bill appropriately balances State and local flexibility with protections and guardrails to ensure our students are receiving the best possible education and training.

I want to dig a little deeper into these protections today because it is so important we get this right.

First, on the role of the Secretary of Education, I want to be very clear: This bill does not prohibit the Secretary's authority to oversee this law in any new way.

The Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act gives States the ability to determine what education and training is most needed in their communities and what accountability levels those programs have to meet.

At the same time, it ensures the Secretary has the ability and the authority to implement and enforce the law as we intended.

This bill allows the Secretary to issue rules to implement the law, including notifying Congress before a rule is issued and allowing Congress to provide input on those proposed rules.

Second, this bill includes a number of measures to support States and ensure their top priority is student success.

Because regions of the country have different needs and economies, this bill will allow States to set their own levels of performance, but each State must meet minimum requirements when they set those levels of performance, including ensuring our most vulnerable students are making meaningful progress and performance gaps in the States are closing.

Under current law, we have data on performance gaps and disparities, but no one is required to do anything about

those gaps. So for the first time, in this law, States and local recipients will not only have to report data on performance gaps and disparities, they will have to describe how they will address those disparities and gaps.

We also improved the quality of data in this bill. Right now, there are not many common definitions in the Perkins law, so it is hard for local businesses and communities to know which career and technical education programs are high quality and which programs need more resources to improve. This law establishes more common definitions so that the data collected going forward will be more meaningful and comparable among localities and States and will provide more actionable data to help local communities improve these programs.

As I mentioned before, this bill gives States and local CTE providers flexibility to design their own improvement programs for States or locals failing to meet 90 percent of the goals they set for themselves, but it also includes basic requirements to ensure low-performing programs improve in the specific areas they are underperforming, something all parents, educators, and community members want for the programs that serve their children—because, if programs don't have to improve and help the students and workers who need it most, there is no way our communities will be ready for the economic challenges the 21st century holds for us all.

Our bottom line should always be that we support students to succeed. If we aren't, then we have a responsibility to do better. This new law maintains the authority of the Secretary to hold States' feet to the fire to do just that.

Finally, I want to thank my negotiating partners in this legislation, Chairman ALEXANDER, Senator CASEY, and Senator ENZI, for working with me on a bipartisan bill that makes important, needed updates to career and technical education, while maintaining guardrails to ensure States and programs receiving Federal money are focused on providing students and workers with the skills they need and providing businesses with workers they need to compete in the 21st century economy.

I also want to take a moment to recognize the hard work and long hours our staff put in to make this a bill we were all proud to support.

I want to thank David Cleary, Bob Moran, Jake Baker, and Richard Petty from Senator ALEXANDER's office, Garnett Decosimo from Senator ENZI's office, and Julia Sferlazzo from Senator CASEY's office.

I want to thank members of my own staff, including my staff director Evan Schatz, my deputy staff director John Righter, and my education policy director Kara Marchione.

I also want to thank Amanda Beaumont, Katherine McClelland, Katharine Parham, Manuel Contreras, and

Mairead Lynn for their hard work and support.

This law shows that, if we keep students, workers, and businesses at the forefront, we can work together and build an economy that works for all.

Thank you.

FOREIGN INVESTMENT RISK REVIEW MODERNIZATION ACT

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, I wish to enter into a colloquy with Senators CRAPO and BROWN.

The integrity of our elections is a vital national security interest. It is imperative that our elections infrastructure—the technology and services needed to conduct our elections—remains free from foreign influence.

We know that our elections are under foreign threat from cyber attacks and disinformation efforts through social media. Our democratic process can also be manipulated through foreign investments in elections infrastructure. In fact, just this month, the Federal Bureau of Investigation notified Maryland officials that Russian oligarch Vladimir Potanin maintained a substantial investment in a firm used by the Maryland State Board of Elections to register voters and deliver online ballots.

This June, the Senate voted overwhelmingly in favor of the Foreign Investment Risk Review Modernization Act, legislation to enhance our national security by strengthening the review process of the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States, CFIUS. Specifically, the new law would allow CFIUS to review transactions beyond just those that could result in foreign control of a U.S. business, to include “other investments” by a foreign person in a U.S. business involved in U.S. critical infrastructure. Critical infrastructure, as defined by the Department of Homeland Security, DHS, includes election infrastructure, such as voter registration databases and associated systems, systems used to manage elections, voting systems, storage facilities for election and voting systems, and polling places, to include early voting locations.

I ask Senator CRAPO, do you agree that critical infrastructure, as defined by DHS, includes certain elections infrastructure?

Mr. CRAPO. Yes.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I ask Senator BROWN, do you agree that, once this bill is enacted into law, existing CFIUS authority is broadened to review certain “other investments” involving elections infrastructure by a foreign person?

Mr. BROWN. Yes.

ANIMAL DRUG USER FEE AMENDMENTS OF 2018

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the commitment letter

for the Animal Drug User Fee Agreements of 2018.

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

ANIMAL DRUG USER FEE AMENDMENTS OF 2018
ADUFA REAUTHORIZATION PERFORMANCE GOALS
AND PROCEDURES—FYS 2019 THRU 2023

The goals and procedures of the FDA Center for Veterinary Medicine (CVM) as agreed to under the “Animal Drug User Fee Amendments of 2018” are summarized as follows:

I. DEFINITIONS

1. For the application/submission goals below, the term “review and act on” is understood to mean the issuance of a complete action letter after the complete review of an animal drug application, supplemental animal drug application, or investigational animal drug submission which either (1) approves an animal drug application or supplemental application or notifies a sponsor that an investigational animal drug submission is complete or (2) sets forth in detail the specific deficiencies in such animal drug application, supplemental animal drug application, or investigational animal drug submission and, where appropriate, the actions necessary to place such an application, supplemental application, or submission in condition for approval. Within 30 days of submission, FDA shall refuse to file an animal drug application, supplemental animal drug application, or their reactivation, which is determined to be insufficient on its face or otherwise of unacceptable quality for review upon initial inspection as per 21 CFR 514.110. Thus, the Agency will refuse to file an application containing numbers or types of errors, or flaws in the development plan, sufficient to cause the quality of the entire submission to be questioned to the extent that it cannot reasonably be reviewed. Within 60 days of submission, FDA will refuse to review an investigational animal drug submission which is determined to be insufficient on its face or otherwise of unacceptable quality upon initial inspection using criteria and procedures similar to those found in 21 CFR 514.110. A decision to refuse to file an application or to refuse to review a submission as described above will result in the application or submission not being entered into the cohort upon which the relevant user fee goal is based. The Agency will keep a record of the numbers and types of such refusals and include them in its annual performance report.

2. A minor amendment is understood to mean information requested by FDA during the review of the application or investigational submission. FDA may request minor amendments to animal drug applications, supplemental animal drug applications, and investigational animal drug submissions during its review of the application or submission. At its discretion, the Agency may extend an internal due date (but not a user fee goal) to allow for the complete review of an application or submission for which a minor amendment is requested. If a pending application is amended with significant changes, the amended application may be considered resubmitted, thereby effectively resetting the clock to the date FDA received the amendment. The same policy applies for investigational animal drug submissions.

3. The term “submission date” means the date the FDA Center for Veterinary Medicine (CVM) Electronic Submission System (ESS) receives an application or submission. Upon receipt of an application or submission, the CVM ESS creates an electronic receipt that contains the date of receipt and is sent to the submitter.

4. The term “labeling supplement” is understood to mean certain applications as de-

scribed in 21 CFR 514.8(c)(2)(i)(A) and (D) that require approval of a supplemental application prior to distribution of the drug made using the change.

5. The term “presubmission conference” (PSC) is understood to mean one or more conferences between a potential applicant and FDA as described in 21 CFR 514.5 to reach a binding agreement establishing a submission or investigational requirement.

6. The term “dosage characterization” is understood to mean a justification of the dosage (dose or dose range, dosing frequency, and the dosing duration) and a characterization of the critical aspects of the dose response relationship related to each intended use and associated conditions of use.

II. APPLICATION/SUBMISSION GOALS

Beginning October 1, 2018, all applications and submissions under the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (FD&C Act) section 512(b) and 571 must be created using the eSubmitter tool and submitted to the Agency through CVM’s ESS.

1. *Original New Animal Drug Applications (NADAs)*

Review and act on 90 percent of original NADAs within 180 days after the submission date.

An application is incomplete if it would require additional data or information to enable the Agency to complete a comprehensive review of the application and reach a decision on the issue(s) presented in the application.

The Agency will review and act on 90 percent of reactivated applications:

i Within 180 days after the reactivated NADA submission date if the Agency determines and notifies the sponsor that the deficiencies are substantial;

ii Within 135 days after the reactivated NADA submission date if the Agency determines and notifies the sponsor that the deficiencies are not substantial; and the NADA reactivation must be submitted no more than 120 days after the Agency’s dated incomplete letter to qualify for the shorter review time; and

iii Within 180 days after the reactivated NADA submission date if the NADA reactivation is submitted after 120 days of the Agency’s dated incomplete letter or new substantial information is provided in the reactivated application.

The Agency will generally favor using the shorter reactivation timeframe of 135 days, where possible. The Agency will state in the incomplete letter the appropriate timeframe for review of the reactivation. Sponsors wishing to discuss the selected timeframe should contact the Agency prior to reactivation of the application. The shorter review time of 135 days for reactivated NADAs for which the deficiencies are determined not to be substantial is not intended to prevent the use of minor amendments during Agency review of an application.

2. *Administrative NADAs*

Review and act on 90 percent of administrative NADAs (NADAs filed after all scientific decisions already have been made as part of the investigational new animal drug process) within 60 days after the filing date.

3. *Non-manufacturing Supplemental Animal Drug Applications*

Review and act on 90 percent of non-manufacturing supplemental animal drug applications (i.e. supplemental animal drug applications for which safety or effectiveness data are required) within 180 days after the submission date.

A supplemental application is incomplete if it would require additional data or information to enable the Agency to complete a comprehensive review of the supplement and

reach a decision on the issue (s) presented in the supplement.

The Agency will review and act on 90 percent of reactivated supplements:

i Within 180 days after the reactivated supplemental NADA submission date if the Agency determines and notifies the sponsor that the deficiencies are substantial;

ii Within 135 days after the reactivated supplemental NADA submission date if the Agency determines and notifies the sponsor that the deficiencies are not substantial; and the reactivation to the supplemental application must be submitted no more than 120 days after the Agency’s dated incomplete letter to qualify for the shorter review time; and

iii Within 180 days after the reactivated supplemental NADA submission date if the reactivation to the supplemental application is submitted after 120 days of the Agency’s dated incomplete letter or new substantial information is provided in the reactivated supplement.

The Agency will generally favor using the shorter reactivation timeframe of 135 days, where possible. The Agency will state in the incomplete letter the appropriate timeframe for review of the reactivation. Sponsors wishing to discuss the selected timeframe should contact the Agency prior to the reactivation of the supplement. The shorter review time of 135 days for reactivated supplements for which the deficiencies are determined not to be substantial is not intended to prevent the use of minor amendments during Agency review of a supplemental application.

4. *Prior Approval Manufacturing Supplemental NADAs and Reactivations*

Review and act on 90 percent of Prior Approval manufacturing supplemental NADAs within 120 days after the submission date. A Prior Approval manufacturing supplemental NADA includes: one or more major manufacturing changes as described in 21 CFR 514.8(b)(2)(ii) and in accordance with Guidance for Industry 83 (Chemistry, Manufacturing, and Controls Changes to an Approved NADA or ANADA); and, changes submitted as “Supplement-Changes Being Effectuated in 30 Days” that require prior approval according to 21 CFR 514.8(b)(3)(v)(A). If a Prior Approval supplement does not clearly identify any major manufacturing changes, the Prior Approval supplement will be designated by the Agency as a “Supplement-Changes Being Effectuated” with a 180 days review goal (see “Supplement-Changes Being Effectuated Manufacturing Supplemental NADAs and Reactivations” below).

A submission is incomplete if it requires additional data or information to enable the Agency to complete a comprehensive review of the submission and reach a decision on the issue(s) presented in the submission. If the Agency determines that the deficiencies are not substantial for manufacturing supplements requiring prior approval, the Agency will allow the manufacturing supplements to be resubmitted as “Supplement Changes Being Effectuated in 30 Days” as described in 21 CFR 514.8(b)(3) and the drug made with the change can be distributed 30 days after the resubmission according to 21 CFR 514.8(b)(3)(iv). The Agency will review and act on 90 percent of these reactivated manufacturing supplements within 180 days after the resubmission date of a complete submission. If the Agency determines that the deficiencies remain substantial or new substantial information is provided, prior-approval is required according to 21 CFR 514.8(b)(3)(v)(A). The Agency will review and act on 90 percent of these reactivated manufacturing supplements within 120 days after the resubmission date of a complete submission.

5. *Supplements—Changes Being Effected Manufacturing Supplemental NADAs and Reactions*

Review and act on 90 percent of “Supplement—Changes Being Effected” manufacturing supplemental NADAs and reactivations submitted according to 21 CFR 514.8(b)(3)(vi) and in accordance with Guidance for Industry 83 (Chemistry, Manufacturing, and Controls Changes to an Approved NADA or ANADA), including manufacturing changes not requiring prior approval according to 21 CFR 514.8(b)(3) within 180 days after the submission date.

6. *Investigational New Animal Drug (INAD) Study Submissions*

Review and act on 90 percent of INAD study submissions within 180 days after the submission date.

An INAD study submission is incomplete if it would require additional data or information to enable the Agency to complete a comprehensive review of the submission and reach a decision on the issue(s) presented in the submission.

The Agency will review and act on 90 percent of resubmissions:

i Within 180 days after the resubmitted INAD study submission date if the Agency determines and notifies the sponsor that the deficiencies are substantial;

ii Within 60 days after the resubmitted INAD study submission date if the Agency determines and notifies the sponsor that the deficiencies are not substantial; and the resubmission must be submitted no more than 120 days after the Agency's dated incomplete letter to qualify for the shorter review time; and

iii Within 180 days after the resubmitted INAD study submission date if the resubmission is submitted after 120 days of the Agency's dated incomplete letter or new substantial information is provided in the resubmission.

The Agency will generally favor using the shorter resubmission timeframe of 60 days, where possible. The Agency will state in the incomplete letter the appropriate timeframe for review of the resubmission. Sponsors wishing to discuss the selected timeframe should contact the Agency prior to resubmitting the application. The shorter review time of 60 days for resubmissions for which the deficiencies are determined not to be substantial is not intended to prevent the use of minor amendments during Agency review of a submission.

Review and act on 90 percent of microbial food safety hazard characterization submissions within 100 days after the submission date.

7. *INAD Protocols without Data Submissions*

Review and act on 90 percent of INAD submissions consisting of protocols without data, that the Agency and the sponsor consider to be an essential part of the basis for making the decision to approve or not approve an NADA or supplemental NADA, within 50 days after the submission date.

An INAD protocol without data submission is incomplete if it would require additional information to enable the Agency to complete a comprehensive review of the protocol and reach a decision on the issue(s) presented in the protocol.

The Agency will review and act on 90 percent of resubmitted INAD protocol without data submissions:

i Within 50 days after the resubmission date if the Agency determines and notifies the sponsor that the deficiencies are substantial;

ii Within 20 days after the resubmitted INAD protocol without data submission if the Agency determines and notifies the spon-

sor that the deficiencies are not substantial; and the resubmission must be submitted no more than 120 days after the Agency's dated nonconcurrence letter to qualify for the shorter review time; and

iii Within 50 days after the resubmission date if the resubmission is submitted after 120 days of the Agency's dated nonconcurrence letter or new substantial information is provided in the resubmission.

The Agency will generally favor using the shorter resubmission timeframe of 20 days, where possible. The Agency will state in the non-concurrence letter the appropriate timeframe for review of the resubmission. Sponsors wishing to discuss the selected timeframe should contact the Agency prior to resubmission of the protocol without data. The shorter review time of 20 days for resubmitted INAD protocol without data submissions for which the deficiencies are determined not to be substantial is not intended to prevent the use of minor amendments during Agency review of a submission.

Sponsors are not required to submit study protocols for review. However, for each protocol voluntarily submitted prior to the commencement of the study that the Agency and the sponsor consider to be an essential part of the basis for making the decision to approve or not approve an animal drug application or supplemental animal drug application, the Agency will issue a complete action letter providing comments resulting from a complete review of the protocol. The complete action letter will be as detailed as possible considering the quality and level of detail of the protocol submission; will include a succinct assessment of the protocol; and will state whether the Agency agrees, disagrees, or lacks sufficient information to reach a decision that the protocol design, execution plans, and data analyses are adequate to achieve the objectives of the study.

If the Agency determines that a protocol is acceptable, this represents an agreement that the data generated by the protocol can be used to support a safety or effectiveness decision regarding the subject animal drug. The fundamental agreement is that having agreed to the design, execution, or analyses proposed in protocols reviewed under this process, the Agency will not later alter its perspectives on the issues of design, execution, or analyses unless the Agency by written order determines that a substantiated scientific requirement essential to the assessment of the study appeared after the Agency's protocol assessment, or public or animal health concerns unrecognized at the time of protocol assessment under this process are evident.

The Agency will permit comparability protocols as described in 21 CFR 514.8(b)(2)(v) to be submitted as protocols without substantial data in an INAD file. The Agency will review and act on 90 percent of INAD submissions consisting of protocols without substantial data within 50 days after the submission date of the protocol. For potentially more complex comparability protocols, for example sterile process validation protocols, the sponsor should discuss and have Agency concurrence regarding the appropriate filing strategy.

8. *Labeling Supplements*

Review and act on 90 percent of qualifying labeling supplements as described in 21 CFR 514.8(c)(2)(i)(A) and (D) within 60 days after the submission date. Qualifying labeling supplements are defined as those for which the sponsor provides and certifies a complete list of label changes made in the application and that CVM can determine upon initial review do not decrease the safety of drug use.

The Agency will review and act on 90 percent of non-qualifying labeling supplements within 180 days after the submission date.

Additional Performance Goals

Work Queue Review Procedures

The Agency will review all submissions in accordance with procedures for working within a queue. An application/submission that is not reviewed within the applicable Application/Submission Goal time frame (noted above) will be reviewed with the highest possible priority among those pending.

III. PRE-APPROVAL FOREIGN INSPECTIONS

The Agency and regulated industry are committed to improving the review and business processes that will facilitate the timely scheduling and conducting of pre-approval inspections (PAIs). To improve the timeliness and predictability of foreign PAIs, sponsors may voluntarily submit 1) at the beginning of the calendar year, a list of foreign manufacturing facilities that are specified in an animal drug application, supplemental animal drug application, or investigational animal drug submission and may be subject to foreign PAIs for the following fiscal year; and 2) a notification 30 days prior to submitting an NADA, a supplemental NADA, or INAD submission that informs the Agency that the application/submission includes a foreign manufacturing facility. Should any changes to the annual list occur after its submission to the Agency, the sponsor may provide the updated information to the Agency.

The Agency will keep a record of the number of foreign PAIs conducted for new animal drug applications, along with the average time for completing the PAIs, and include this information in its annual performance report. The time for completing the PAI is understood to mean the time from the inspection scheduling request through notification to the Center of inspectional findings.

IV. FOREIGN GMP INSPECTIONS

The Agency commits to working to implement the US-EU GMP Inspection Mutual Recognition Agreement starting in FY 2019 for establishments manufacturing animal/veterinary drugs. The Agency will provide annual progress updates to the industry.

1. *Supporting Information for Presubmission Conferences and INAD Protocols without Data Submissions*

The Agency and the regulated industry agree that data and/or information which uniquely describes the general attributes of the new animal drug (e.g. the known characteristics of the drug that can impact safety, effectiveness and/or quality) needs to be submitted early in the new animal drug development process in order to enable the parties to reach agreement at a presubmission conference or to begin review of a protocol. The intent of this provision is to avoid the submission of data or information between the presubmission conference and the submission of a protocol. Eligibility both for short justifications in protocols and for concurrent supporting data and protocol review described below is predicated on the sponsor submitting information early in the new animal drug development process.

The Agency will allow for the inclusion of this data and/or information in presubmission conferences; however it would not preclude holding a presubmission conference without such data.

The Agency will allow short justifications within INAD protocols without data submissions that are limited in scope (e.g., no more than ten pages or no more than two (peer-reviewed) journal articles).

The Agency will allow for the concurrent submission of supporting data (INAD H submissions) and protocols (INAD E submissions) provided that the protocol is not submitted until the supporting data has been in the Agency's queue for at least 50 days.

2. Dosage Characterization

The Agency and the regulated industry agree that dosage characterization is part of the effectiveness technical section of an investigational new animal drug file. In instances where data and/or information about the dosage is integral to the review of a protocol, the Agency and the regulated industry agree that this data and/or information should be submitted as supporting data (INAD H submission) well in advance of the protocol submission. Such information may be needed to ensure selection of optimal study time points and would be particularly important for novel drugs and drugs with modified-release characteristics.

3. Animal Drug Availability Act (ADAA) Combination Medicated Feeds Applications

Review and act on 90 percent of qualifying ADAA Combination Medicated Feeds Applications within 60 days after the submission date. An ADAA combination application will qualify for the 60 day review timeframe only if the following criteria are met:

- i. The regulatory requirements for an ADAA combination application have been met as outlined in 21 CFR 514.4(c)(2)(ii)
- ii. A presubmission conference has been conducted and either
 - a. No data are needed (i.e., no tissue residue non-interference study is required) and this is documented in the memorandum of conference for the presubmission conference; or
 - b. A justification for not conducting a tissue residue noninterference study has been submitted, reviewed and found acceptable under an INAD, prior to the submission of the ADAA combination application; or
 - c. A tissue residue non-interference study has been submitted, reviewed and found acceptable under an INAD, prior to the submission of the ADAA combination application.
- iii. No effectiveness or target animal safety data are required.
- iv. No manufacturing data requirements—sponsor can address in meeting assay non-interference, but data submission is not required.
- v. All other information is referenced to previous drug experience reports.
- vi. Sponsor makes submission and it includes: Bluebird labeling, Veterinary Feed Directive (if applicable).
- vii. Includes a request for categorical exclusion from the need to prepare an environmental assessment (EA); i.e., no EA required.
- viii. Reference to presubmission conference.
- ix. Right of reference (if applicable) to NADA(s) not owned by the filing sponsor of the ADAA combination application has been received by the Agency.

Review and act on 90 percent of ADAA combination applications within 100 days for those applications initially accepted for the 60-day timeframe but subsequently determined to need minor amendments.

If any of the above conditions cannot be met, the ADAA combination application will be given a 180-day review timeframe and placed in the original NADA application cohort.

4. Categorical Exclusions

Review and act on 90 percent of resubmissions of a previously completed Environmental Impact technical section within 60 days after the resubmission date where:

- i. A Categorical Exclusion was issued; and
- ii. All other technical sections have been submitted; and
- iii. Information contained in the other technical sections reveals a change in the conditions of use of the drug that may affect the previous determination of categorical exclusion.

5. Presubmission Conferences

Conduct 90% of qualifying presubmission conferences within a 60-day timeframe when all of the following conditions are met:

- i. All background materials, including presentations, have been submitted, and
- ii. A complete agenda has been agreed upon by the Agency and the sponsor

A sponsor and the Agency can mutually agree to exclude a particular presubmission conference from this performance goal. If a sponsor accepts a date beyond the 60-day timeframe for their scheduling purposes or is unable to meet with the Agency on Agency available dates, the submission will be excluded from the presubmission conference cohort.

6. Tissue Residue Method

Commence 90% of tissue residue method demonstrations within 120 days of completion of the “3-hour meeting” process or equivalent process milestone where there is a single laboratory validation tissue residue method demonstration.

V. WORKLOAD ADJUSTMENT

The workload adjustment will continue to be calculated per CVM Program Policy and Procedures Manual 1243.3022, except that, for purposes of calculating the workload adjustment, it has been agreed to reset the base years to FY 2014–FY 2018. There will be no workload adjustment for FY 2019. Workload adjustments are one-time adjustments, and are calculated annually.

RUSSIA INVESTIGATION

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, today I wish to discuss the importance of the Justice Department's independent investigation into Russia's interference in the 2016 Presidential election.

The interference with our election process by a hostile government was an attack on our democracy and a threat to our national security, carried out by Russian operatives at the direction of Vladimir Putin himself. As the intelligence community's unclassified report concluded, “We assess Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered an influence campaign in 2016 aimed at the U.S. presidential election. Russia's goals were to undermine public faith in the U.S. democratic process, denigrate Secretary Clinton, and harm her electability and potential presidency. We further assess Putin and the Russian Government developed a clear preference for President-elect Trump.”

Since Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein appointed Robert Mueller as special counsel to investigate Russia's attack, 32 indictments have been returned in connection with the investigation, including indictments against Russian individuals and companies, as well as former Trump campaign manager Paul Manafort and deputy campaign manager Rick Gates, who were charged with “conspiracy against the United States.” Mr. Mueller has also secured guilty pleas from other campaign advisers, including George Papadopoulos and Michael Flynn.

Despite this ample evidence of wrongdoing, the President has attempted to impede the Russia probe every step of the way, falsely branding it a “witch hunt.” So far, the Mueller

investigation has continued to produce results, despite these attacks. We must be clear that any attempt to remove special counsel Robert Mueller or Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein would take our Nation into uncharted territory. I am disturbed that, last week, a group of the President's allies in the House of Representatives filed unwarranted articles of impeachment against Mr. Rosenstein, who has worked to uphold the rule of law and ensure that the independent Russia investigation can continue.

Both Mr. Rosenstein and Mr. Mueller have admirable records of public service. Mr. Mueller, whose qualifications, experience, and character I have previously detailed on the floor, was a decorated hero of the Vietnam war, a U.S. Attorney, and a widely respected director of the FBI. There is no one better equipped to lead the Russia probe.

Mr. Rosenstein, like Mr. Mueller, also has a long and distinguished career in public service. A native of Philadelphia, Mr. Rosenstein graduated from the Wharton School and Harvard Law School, after which he clerked for Judge Douglas Ginsburg of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit.

He initially joined the Department of Justice nearly 30 years ago through the Attorney General's Honors Program. He started as a trial attorney with the Public Integrity Section of the Criminal Division, prosecuting public corruption cases. Mr. Rosenstein rose through the ranks, serving as counsel to the Deputy Attorney General; special assistant to the Assistant Attorney General in the Criminal Division; associate independent counsel in the Office of the Independent Counsel; and assistant U.S. attorney in Maryland. He was recognized for his work at the Department of Justice with a 1993 “Commendation Award” from the Criminal Division, a 1994 “Outstanding Contribution to Justice” award from the Office of the Deputy Attorney General, and a 1997 “Appreciation Award” from the Criminal Division's Public Integrity Section.

In 2001, he became Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General for the Tax Division, where he supervised the criminal sections, coordinated tax enforcement activities, and oversaw civil litigation. Then, in 2005, he returned to the Maryland U.S. attorney's office, this time as the top Federal prosecutor. He served as U.S. Attorney for over a decade, until he was nominated to become Deputy Attorney General in 2017. His nomination to this critically important post, at a critically important time for our Nation, was approved overwhelmingly by this body, by a vote of 94 to 6.

Mr. Rosenstein has a wealth of experience at the Department of Justice and has served our country and the American public with honor and distinction since he entered the legal profession. During his many years at the