

Asian carp that threaten our waterways. The list goes on and on. I know every community and every State could write its own list. This legislation matters to every Senator. It matters to all Americans.

I am grateful to Chairman SHELBY, Senator LEAHY, and subcommittee Chairmen MURKOWSKI, COLLINS, HOEVEN, and LANKFORD for all of their hard work. We have considered these bills carefully. We have voted on a number of amendments. This morning, we will consider more amendments and then pass this bill.

Now, this appropriations package is not the only important business the Senate has been working on this week.

Yesterday, we passed an important extension of the National Flood Insurance Program and sent it to the White House for the President's signature. We confirmed the 24th circuit court nominee already in this Congress, and we voted to proceed to conference with the House on the farm bill.

I understand this year marks the earliest, since at least 1965, that both the House and the Senate have passed a farm bill. Here in the Senate, it passed with the widest margin of any recorded vote in the history of this legislation. So Chairman ROBERTS and Senator STABENOW deserve our congratulations and appreciation. I look forward to serving as a conferee myself and to finishing up the farm bill prior to its expiration.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION BILL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, before we adjourn this week, the Senate will also finalize the John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019. Once we pass the conference report this week, this important legislation will head to the President's desk to become law, and we will have fulfilled one of this body's most solemn responsibilities.

The NDAA builds on the progress we made earlier this year in the bipartisan budget agreement, which provided for the largest year-on-year increase in funding for American Armed Forces in 15 years. This legislation authorizes programs that will contribute to the combat readiness of America's military to meet emerging and persistent global threats. It helps to ensure that our servicemembers and their families will receive the full support of a grateful Nation. When we pass the fiscal year 2019 National Defense Appropriations Act, which funds these programs, we will have gone yet further in meeting our commitments to an all-volunteer force.

The NDAA has global and nationwide significance, but it also has tremendous local importance. In representing the Commonwealth of Kentucky, I know just how significant an impact this legislation will have on some of our Nation's finest.

At Fort Campbell, members of the 101st Airborne Division and a number

of Special Operations units will benefit from the authorization of new investments in their training facilities.

At Fort Knox, the Army's Human Resources Command and Recruiting Command will receive the support they need to modernize officer personnel management, and the post will receive much needed certainty and authority for its energy savings program.

At the Blue Grass Army Depot, critical work to support chemical weapons demilitarization will continue because this bill authorizes the resources necessary to conduct safe operations.

Servicemembers will benefit from a well-deserved raise in military pay and expanded authority for military family housing and education.

So none of my colleagues need to look far to find examples of how the needs of our servicemembers will be met by the legislation before us.

Our colleagues on the Armed Services Committee carefully developed it. It reflects more than 300 amendments, and it rightly bears the name of our colleague and friend JOHN MCCAIN. I know he is proud of all this legislation accomplishes for our men and women in uniform.

I also thank the senior Senator from Oklahoma and the ranking member from Rhode Island for steering this bill through conference. I look forward to sending it to the President's desk this week.

TAX REFORM

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, on one final matter, the U.S. economy continues to receive a lot of attention.

In June, from the New York Times: "New milestones in jobs report signal a bustling economy."

In July: "Sales of small businesses are going through the roof."

Just yesterday, in the Wall Street Journal: "U.S. workers get biggest pay increase in nearly a decade."

Let's explore the last headline.

According to data from the Department of Labor, employee compensation grew by 2.8 percent over the past 12 months. That is the fastest employers have increased what they spend on employee pay and benefits in any 12-month period since the one that ended in September of 2008. Given what we know about the labor market, this is hardly surprising. From Main Street businesses to manufacturers, job creators are faced with heightened demand. That means more Americans can come off the sidelines and find a quality job, and that means that businesses compete to hire and retain workers.

Every week—practically every day—yields more impressive headlines, more testimony from middle-class families and small businesses about how this economy has improved their lives.

It has been little more than 7 months since a united Republican government passed historic tax reform, and it has been about as long since the House Democratic leader predicted our poli-

cies would bring about "Armageddon," and about 7 months since my friend the Democratic leader, here in the Senate, predicted that no part of tax reform would turn out to suit the needs of the American worker—none of it.

But Republicans saw past the scare tactics and did what we knew to be right for the country. We pursued a pro-growth agenda to get Washington's foot off the brakes that were restraining job creators, to take Washington's hand out of the pockets of working families, and to help create the conditions for communities across the country to succeed. Any one of these goals could have been a bipartisan priority, just like all of the other good work I have discussed this morning.

Tax reform, historically, had been bipartisan, but this time, our colleagues listened to the far left and decided to stand in complete partisan opposition to letting Americans keep more of their own money. Now the American people are reaping the benefits of a pro-growth, pro-opportunity agenda. Now they see whose policies benefit them.

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 beginning to wrap up the appropriations package, which includes the

fiscal year 2019 bills for the Subcommittees on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies; Financial Services and General Government; Agriculture, Rural Government, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies; as well as Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies, or T-HUD.

This is really quite an accomplishment this morning. It is perhaps not necessarily noted in the trade press out there, but the fact is, we are doing our business here. We are doing the business of lawmakers and legislators when it comes to our annual spending bills.

The fact that this is August 1 and we will be wrapping up in a matter of an hour or so, a couple of hours, 4 appropriations bills on top of the 3 that we have previously done—so 7 out of the 12 appropriations bills—is good progress. This is important progress. Some might say it is historic progress. I say it is progress that is long overdue.

I believe it is because of the leadership of Chairman SHELBY and Vice Chairman LEAHY. They came together to basically lay down a path forward for the Appropriations Committee, urging us, as chairmen of our respective subcommittees, to go back to a process that was a working and functioning process where we do the work of appropriators—not as authorizers but as appropriators—in advancing these multiple spending bills. In my view, where we are today is the result of good leadership at the committee, good leadership that says that committee work matters.

To be able to lead the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Subcommittee has been a very distinct privilege and an honor for me. These are areas that are clearly of interest to my home State. When we talk about our Nation's public lands, when we talk about support for our indigenous people and the agencies that support them—whether it is the BIA or the IHS—when we think about the arts and the contribution of the arts to our Nation, the issues that are within this subcommittee's jurisdiction are good, are important, and it is necessary that on an annual basis we work to advance these priorities.

We haven't been able to really advance them, not only not here on the full floor but actually through the full committee. It has been many years—actually, since fiscal year 2010 that we have had an interior bill before the full Senate for full consideration. So, again, this is truly a milestone.

As I mentioned, I want to thank Chairman SHELBY and Vice Chairman LEAHY for their leadership on this. I also want to acknowledge and thank Leader MCCONNELL for placing a priority on the appropriations process. He urged us to advance, without delay, this multitude of spending bills to return us back to regular order.

He set forth a pretty aggressive schedule for us. In fairness, there were a lot of folks out there who said: The

Senate is not going to do this one. There were a lot of skeptics who said: They can't get their act together on this one.

Well, it is kind of nice to be able to demonstrate that, in fact, we can, and we have, and we continue to do this good work. We are on track to meet our goal of avoiding what we have come to just accept as the regular course of business around here—that there is going to be a large omnibus package at the end of the year. Instead, we have allowed for a process on this floor where all Members of the Senate, not just those of us who serve on the Appropriations Committee but all of us, have an opportunity to weigh in, to dig in, and to review these measures that have come through the committee, offer up amendments, and have the ability to debate and amend them. Granted, we haven't had as many amendments on the floor as I think some of us might have wanted. We haven't had the hours-long debate on some of the, perhaps, more contentious matters, but what we have done is we have really focused on outlining the spending priorities and ensuring that we can find consensus. Finding consensus around here is the hard part of the responsibility because it means I have to stand down on some of my priorities, and others have to stand down on some of their priorities, in order for any of us to be able to advance the broader priorities.

So we are here with a process that has been delayed over the years, but I feel good, I feel optimistic that we have pushed the reset button when it comes to the Appropriations Committee and how we will be able to move forward.

We know there is more than just one body in the Congress, and we are going to have to deal with our colleagues on the other side, the House of Representatives, as we move into conference, but we can't get to conference until we have taken the first step, and we will be able to take the first step with these four appropriations bills that are part of this package this morning.

I want to highlight just some of the provisions in the Interior bill that our committee worked so hard on. As I mentioned, this is a subcommittee that has oversight in so many different areas. It is not only our Nation's public lands, it is matters relating to our Native people. It includes environmental issues with the EPA. It is arts and culture. So we have a broad array of responsibilities.

Some of the highlights here—folks are always very interested in what we have done to meet our responsibility when it comes to payments to those communities, those counties, those bureaus, and municipalities through the PILT Program, the Payment in Lieu of Taxes Program. We fully fund the PILT Program at \$500 million. This is going to be important to so many of our communities out there.

Another issue that has generated its level of support and some opposition in

terms of wanting to see some additional reforms is the Land and Water Conservation Fund Program. We fund LWCF at the current level of \$425 million to ensure that the important work that is advanced for conservation is able to proceed.

There is a lot of focus on what is happening with the devastating forest fires that we are seeing right now in the West, particularly in California. We provide robust levels for firefighting funding to ensure that both the Department of the Interior and the Forest Service have the resources they need at the time they need them. When you have a fire underway, they don't want us to be arguing about whether we have the resources. The resources are there, and we will be there to help.

I mentioned the matters that relate to our first people, American Indians, Alaska Natives. We do right by Indian Country within this bill.

For the two main agencies that deliver services for the Indian community, both the BIA—the Bureau of Indian Affairs—and the Indian Health Service, we have restored the cuts that were proposed of over \$1 billion in critical program funding. The bill increases funding for the IHS facilities program, for construction, maintenance, and sanitation facilities improvements. We hear, time after time, in Indian Affairs as well as in the Appropriations Committee about the dire situation with so many of our facilities within not only our Indian hospitals around the country but also within the schools, truly leaving these children behind. So we do provide substantial funding for the BIA to help with construction of Indian schools. Also, we include irrigation systems and public safety facilities, so truly the full picture there.

For both accounts, we provide the fully estimated level of contract support costs for healthcare. This is very significant in ensuring that we are being honest by these accounts. We are not forcing IHS to effectively dip into other pots of funding to fund another, so it is important that we fully fund contract support.

In IHS, we also provided \$10 million in critical new funding to provide grants to Tribes for combating the opioid crisis. So, again, we all know, all throughout the country, the issues we are facing with opioids. It is almost even more accentuated on our reservations and in many places where our Native peoples are facing this terrible scourge.

When it comes to public lands, how we did right by public lands—whether it is our Forest Service, the BLM, the National Park Service—is we worked to address contaminated land matters. We worked to provide support for construction and deferred maintenance not only within our National Park System but within our other public lands. We focused on areas of hazards. Most people didn't give a lot of thought to what was going on with volcanoes until

the situation we are seeing on the Big Island of Hawaii, and now there is a lot of attention. So we are making sure we are doing right in understanding some of our natural hazards, whether they are volcanoes or earthquakes. On mapping, which is so critical for us—USDS does such a great job on that—we need to be doing more.

We have also made responsible investments in the EPA that will lead to cleaner air and water. So within our bill, we provide additional funding to States that have delegated responsibility for environmental programs.

We provide an increase above last year's level for the Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds. This builds on critical water infrastructure in communities across the country. I think we all recognize, when it comes to that role, the mission of EPA—clean air, clean water. What are we doing to make sure they are able to fulfill that mission? These accounts truly do make a difference.

We also continue to provide the highest funding level ever for the WIFIA Program. This leverages Federal funds for water infrastructure projects, and these programs have a direct impact on improving water quality in communities around the country.

Then, another small category that is not small for the arts and the cultural communities—but, again, we do right by our Smithsonians here in our Nation's Capital, helping to ensure that the National Endowments for the Arts and Humanities receive the level of support that I believe is important.

Again, those are some of the greatest hits coming out of the Interior appropriations bill this morning. We have heard similar comments from my colleagues in the other three Departments, whether it is Financial Services, Agriculture, or Transportation and Housing.

Again, I look forward to working with colleagues as we advance these measures through the full process not only here in the Senate but in the conference with the House later.

I would like to close by again expressing my appreciation to my friend and the ranking member of the committee, Senator UDALL, who is here this morning. He and his staff have been excellent to work with, and I appreciate his efforts and those of his staff as we have worked to shape this bill so it reflects the priorities of Members on both sides of the aisle. I think we have worked very hard to do that. I know I am pleased with where we are right now with this measure.

I look forward to the passage of this bill, again, in working with him and my other colleagues, as we move through the conference process.

With that, I yield the floor and await the comments of my friend and ranking member, Senator UDALL.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. UDALL. Mr. President, thank you very much for the recognition.

I say to Chairman MURKOWSKI, thank you for those very kind words. It is, once again, always a pleasure to say we have worked with each other. I know there are issues sometimes we disagree on, but we listen to each other, we work through the issues, and we always come back to try to reach a financial result, and I think that is what the American people and what Alaskans and New Mexicans want us to do.

As the ranking member of the Interior Department's Appropriations subcommittee, I thank my colleagues for being part of a remarkable process on the floor this last week, and I want to again thank my chairman, Senator LISA MURKOWSKI, and commend her for managing the bill in the way she has managed it and the leadership she has shown in this.

I am particularly proud that we have moved this bill without the addition of contentious authorizing matters or poison pills, which is quite an accomplishment. What we really want is the appropriations process to work the way it has worked and let the authorizing process work. Senator MURKOWSKI has been involved in both of those things—authorizing and appropriations—as I have been.

Unfortunately, there are still some poison pill riders in the House bill. By voting to send the Senate Interior bill to the conference without adding controversial items, we are, as a body, telling the House we will reject these poison pills once again. That message is important because the funding in this bill is critical to meet wildland firefighting needs, it is important for supporting National Parks and Public Lands, and to continue the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

We need to pass a final bill to fund the Environmental Protection Agency, support arts and cultural institutions, and meet our Nation's trust and treaty responsibilities with our Nation's Tribes. As Senator MURKOWSKI well knows, she has a very large number of Tribes in Alaska, and I have a significant number of Tribes in New Mexico. We try to work very closely on those Tribal issues to see that Tribes are included, and we take care of those consultation, government-to-government, sovereignty issues.

There are other important issues to work through, including a proposal by the Department of the Interior to begin a major reorganization of the agency. Last week, the Department notified the subcommittee it plans to move forward during this fiscal year with efforts to change its regional boundaries, with more changes expected in fiscal year 2019.

While this request is only the first step, I want to note that I have been asking Secretary Zinke for months for information about the Department's plans, and I have yet to get answers to my questions. We have submitted very specific questions to him; we haven't gotten answers. I hope Chairman MURKOWSKI will work with me to ensure

that no changes are made without bipartisan agreement from Congress, Tribes, States, and stakeholders.

This is one of the many issues this subcommittee has on our very full plate as we move to reconcile the House and Senate Interior bills. I hope to be back on the floor of the Senate very soon with a conference report we can pass with broad support.

As I conclude, I would like to thank Chairman SHELBY and Vice Chairman LEAHY for providing outstanding leadership through this process. We wouldn't be here without the excellent work of the Appropriations full committee staff, including Shannon Hines, Chuck Kieffer, and Chanda Betourney, as well as my own subcommittee staff, Rachael Taylor, Ryan Hunt, and Melissa Zimmerman, and the excellent majority staff as well, led by Leif Fannesbeck.

I would also like to thank Senator MERKLEY, who serves on the Appropriations Committee with me, and I believe on my subcommittee, for his courtesies today to allow us to appear, talking to each other and having a colloquy.

Let me also say that Senator MERKLEY is a very important member of the Appropriations Committee. He stands up for all of these issues I talked about, and I thank him so much for that.

Mr. President, again I want to thank my colleagues for being part of a remarkable collaborative process on the Interior appropriations bill, as well as the other appropriations bills we have had on the floor this past week. I believe that with the amendments we have voted on and included, we have improved this bill and made it a stronger, bipartisan product.

I want to, again, thank my Chairman, Senator MURKOWSKI, and commend her and her very fine staff for managing this bill on the floor, and for working with me throughout the appropriations process.

I want to remind everyone that this bill came out of Committee on an affirmative vote of 31 to zero. I hope that it receives the same unanimous support when we pass it here in a short while.

While I believe this goes for all four bills, the Interior bill is filled with bipartisan priorities that all sides can and should support. I can't emphasize enough just how important the funding in this bill is for my home State of New Mexico and for so many States across the West.

Given how important this bill is, I am particularly proud that we have done all this without the addition of contentious authorizing matters or poison pill riders.

Unfortunately, our colleagues in the House have not followed suit. There are nearly three dozen riders in the House-passed bill, the majority of which are outright poison pills. For the most part, we have seen iterations of them over the last 8 years.

By voting to send the Senate appropriations bill to conference without

adding controversial items, we are, as a body, telling the House that we will reject these poison pill riders once again.

So I look forward to having the opportunity to conference this bill and to work to pass a clean appropriations bill on a bipartisan basis.

After all, we have so many important issues that we need to address, and we especially want to address them by the beginning of the fiscal year.

We must ensure that firefighting needs are met.

We must work to pass a bill that supports the core work that the Environmental Protection Agency does to protect human health and the environment.

We must work to meet our Nation's trust and treaty responsibilities by increasing funding for Tribal priorities, including healthcare, education, public safety, and social services.

We must fund our national parks and other public lands, protect our treasured landscapes through the Land and Water Conservation Fund and ensure that our Nation's arts and cultural institutions are supported with strong funding levels.

Finally, we must work through other important issues—including a proposal by the Department of the Interior to begin a major reorganization of the agency.

Last week, the Department notified the subcommittee that it plans to move forward with efforts to change the regional boundaries of its bureaus as part of a multiyear effort to reorganize the agency this fiscal year, starting in late August.

Our subcommittee is now reviewing the Department's request through its reprogramming process, which allows us 30 days to review and approve reprogramming proposals. I am cognizant that this request sets the stage for the Department to make other changes to agency operations as proposed in its fiscal year 2019 budget.

I have been asking Secretary Zinke for months for more information—basic information—about the Department's plans and how the reorganization will affect work on the ground with States, Tribes, and other partners. I want to know what happens to the Federal jobs that are currently located in New Mexico and other Western States.

So far, I have yet to get answers to my questions, and I have real concerns that the Department is intent to move forward with this first step before the agency has completed Tribal consultations, or fully answered the questions of states, Tribes, and Stakeholders about the big picture.

My questions are the same I would ask any administration: What is the cost-benefit analysis? Who will be moved and where? What are expected impacts to services? And what will the new structure and organizational chart be?

I hope my Chairman, Senator MURKOWSKI, will work with me as we try to

get answers during the conference process and will work with me to ensure that no organizational changes are made without a clear plan and without bipartisan agreement from Congress.

This is one of the many issues that this subcommittee has on our very full plate as we go about reconciling the House and Senate Interior bills, but I hope to be back here on the floor of the Senate very soon with a conference report we can pass with broad support.

As I conclude, I would like to thank Chairman SHELBY and Vice Chairman LEAHY for providing outstanding leadership that has culminated in this bill being ready for the Senate today. Passage of this bill is quite an achievement.

We wouldn't be here without the hard work of the full committee staff members, led by staff director Shannon Hines for the majority, and the lead staffers for the minority, staff director Chuck Kieffer and deputy staff director Chanda Betourney. I want to again highlight the excellent work of the staff members of the Interior Appropriations Subcommittee, whom I have already thanked in the record.

Mr. President, I yield to Senator MERKLEY.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I am glad to be here following my colleague who is the ranking member of the subcommittee and who has done such excellent work, as well as with the Senator from Alaska, in undertaking and really bringing together a vision for their subcommittee that we have needed on this floor for a long time—well done.

I stand here as the ranking member of the Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee. I am very pleased to be able to pass this bill today—or we will hopefully soon do so—with strong bipartisan support. Appreciation to the chairman of the subcommittee, Senator HOEVEN, and his excellent Appropriations Committee team, including Carlisle Clarke, Elizabeth Dent, Patrick Carroll, and Carlos Elias. They worked hand in hand with my team of Dianne Nellor, Jessica Schulken, Bob Ross, and Teri Curtin. I came to the floor the other day to speak to the excellent work Jessica Schulken has done over her career, serving for nearly two decades on the committee and just being a powerful, intelligent, persuasive, and insightful force in agricultural policy. I think, together, we have produced a very good bill. It provides funding for programs that are important to every American in every community, from the smallest rural town to the biggest city. And we rejected draconian cuts proposed in the President's budget.

Some of the essential items that we find in the Ag appropriations bill include rural development, which is very important to my State and my colleagues on both sides of the aisle—we

have so much going on in our rural towns. It is important to fund our rural business, rural utility service, and rural broadband. Rural business and rural broadband, by the way, were zeroed out by the President and faced draconian cuts. I am so pleased we were able to reach a bipartisan decision to support these rural development programs.

We also support nutrition for Americans. In our country, there is no reason Americans should be going hungry.

We also maintain international assistance, which largely means buying American food and shipping it overseas to places in the world that are desperate. I had the chance to visit some of those areas in Africa and see firsthand how important our contribution to the World Food Program is.

Our environmental programs assist farmers in the stewardship of the land. It is something they have in their hearts, and it is helpful to have the EQIP program and the NRCS to support them.

The Agricultural Research Service is essential and so important to the great diversity of crops we have in my State and the unending list of potential pests, problems, and diseases that occur. We have to continue that research. I recently visited, for example, a wheat research station, and it was fascinating to see. From a distance, you would say: Well, that is just another field of wheat; what could be the issues? Well, it turns out there are all kinds of important issues that require agricultural research. Then there is risk management for our farmers and having that structure to support them so they aren't wiped out in rough times.

It has been a pleasure to work on this subcommittee and to see the broader Appropriations Committee returning to regular order, bringing bills to the floor, having a chance for all Senators to have a say in the process. So here we are in a better place, and I hope it is a course that we can continue.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Democratic leader is recognized.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be given the floor and that my time be allocated to leader time.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NOMINATION OF BRETT KAVANAUGH

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, for several weeks, our Republican colleagues have been stonewalling our efforts to gain access to Judge Kavanaugh's full record on behalf of the Senate and, more importantly, on behalf of the American people. In doing so, they have discarded a tradition of bipartisan cooperation when it comes to requesting a nominee's record.

Whether or not you have been for a nominee, we used to all agree that the Senate should be able to review their

full record for the sake of transparency and openness, for a vote, to advise and consent on one of the most important jobs in the country and in the world, a lifetime job of tremendous power, not abstract power. The decisions the Supreme Court makes affect the daily lives of Americans. So this is just incredible.

For Justice Kagan, Democrats joined with the Republican minority to request all of her records. For Justice Sotomayor, Democrats did the same. We could have come up with some fake reasons why you couldn't get the records. We didn't. We believe in transparency and openness. But Republicans are doing a 180-degree reverse now that they are in charge, which leaves a very bad taste in our mouths and in the mouths of the American people. They are saying that what is good for the goose is not good for the gander; that transparency is fine when Democrats are in charge and nominating nominees but no transparency when Republicans are in charge.

Republicans are breaking from the bipartisan precedent, and they are requesting only a subset of Judge Kavanaugh's records from his time in the White House. Chairman GRASSLEY has asked for documents pertaining to Judge Kavanaugh's time in the White House Counsel's Office but none from his 3 years as Staff Secretary—arguably a more important and more revealing job.

Now, adding insult to injury—and this is utterly amazing—we have just learned that even when it comes to the documents concerning Kavanaugh's time in the White House Counsel's Office, the Senate is not likely to get the full picture even on that limited group of documents.

Chairman GRASSLEY has written to the National Archives and the Bush Library to request documents from when Kavanaugh was White House Counsel, and both are working to produce them. But, unlike at the National Archives, the Bush Library—and we know President Bush. I have a great deal of respect for him. I think he is a good man even though I disagreed with him on a whole lot. But he is a close friend of Kavanaugh's, who worked for him, and he is a loyal guy.

So what have they done? The Bush Library has hired a legal team—led by a Republican lawyer with close ties to President Bush and President Trump—to prescreen the documents from Kavanaugh's time in the White House Counsel's Office. They are doing the screening—this lawyer who worked for Bannon and who worked for Priebus and so many other Republicans. Pejoratively, you might say he is sort of a hack lawyer. He may be a fine lawyer. But he always works for Republicans. He is a very partisan man, and he is screening the documents that the public can see.

The legal team can cite Executive privilege—that is President Bush's prerogative—to deny the Senate some or

all of the documents, and we believe they may be claiming the discretion to determine whether a document is properly considered a Presidential record at all. That is something only the National Archives can do. They are non-partisan. They don't have any political pull.

The bottom line is this: The Republican lawyers overseeing the production of documents from the Bush Library may seek to deny the Senate access to documents the National Archives would otherwise bring. Is that incredible? So there is another layer. It is not even all the counsel's documents, because there is a lawyer—a tried-and-true doctrinaire Republican lawyer, tight with so many of the people in this administration—who is determining which documents we get to see and which documents we don't.

Knowing that, I recently wrote a letter to President Bush asking him a simple question: Will he, President Bush, make public Judge Kavanaugh's full record or not? I wanted to be sure there would be little or no daylight between what the Senate received from the Bush Library and what we received from the National Archives. Unfortunately, I did not get a simple answer; I got a reply from the lawyer hired by the Bush Library, draped in legalese and obfuscations, confirming that a team of private-sector lawyers are screening the documents—the limited number of documents—from when Kavanaugh was White House Counsel. He also made clear that “copies of records that the team of lawyers has reviewed and . . . approved for disclosure” would be made “available directly to the Committee.” That is in this letter right here sent by the lawyers.

Ironically, this offer was presented as a courtesy. Of course, it is plain as day—it means that Chairman GRASSLEY could access the prescreened documents from the Bush legal team and decline to wait for documents being processed by the National Archives, meaning the Senate and the public will only see what the partisan lawyers want us to see. Some courtesy.

This is not a fishing expedition. This is not an attempt to run out the clock. We are talking about a lifetime appointment to the highest Court in the land. The person who fills this vacancy on the Court will have the power to affect the lives of every single American, now and for decades. Democrats simply want his records to be made available to the Senate and to the public to judge for themselves whether President Trump's nominee is the right choice for our country. The American people deserve that right. But not only are Republicans blocking access to Kavanaugh's record when he was a senior member of the Bush administration, the documents they are requesting are being prescreened by lawyers on their side. It leads you to wonder over and over again, what are the Republicans trying to hide in

Kavanaugh's record? To go to such lengths to tie themselves in knots and pretzels to deny simple documents that people can read makes people ask: What are they hiding? What are they afraid of? Why can't we have open documents, as we had for Kagan and Sotomayor, President Obama's nominees? To go to such lengths to deny the Senate impartial access to this material is telling.

HEALTHCARE

Mr. President, on healthcare, today the Trump administration has finalized a plan for a type of health insurance that will essentially repeal protections on preexisting conditions and allow insurance companies to cover fewer benefits, not more. These so-called short-term plans are the very definition of a bait-and-switch. Under the guise of lower premiums, these plans lure Americans in, but they hardly cover anything.

The insurance company will tell you that this plan will cover you for this and that, and then when you read the fine print, it doesn't, even though you are paying a nice-size premium. So there will be no protections in these plans if you develop a preexisting condition. God forbid you find out your son or daughter has cancer. You need help. You are desperate for help. You want a healthy child above anything else. The insurance company can just kick you off. That is not what America should be.

These plans the administration is supporting—allowing, pushing—don't have any protections for preexisting conditions. Many don't cover basic services like maternity care and prescription drugs. How do you like that? You sign up for a plan—no prescription drugs. When you get sick, you discover you are on the hook for much more than you expected, maybe much more than you can afford.

There are stories of people having medical bills close to \$1 million after an insurer used a loophole in their junk plan to deny them coverage. We already know that many of the leading issuers of these junk plans spend less than half of the premiums they receive on healthcare. They pocket the money for profit and for salary, and the poor person who is covered hardly gets anything. There ought to be protections for that.

We don't live in the 1890s; we live in a modern-day America where we believe in the private capitalist system. But we have protections. We have learned through the centuries that people need them. But this administration, aided by some of our colleagues on the other side of the aisle—not all—just wants to roll back that clock for the benefit of the big, powerful industries, hurting average, middle-class Americans.

The Trump administration plans to increase premiums for middle-class families and for older Americans. So many who have preexisting conditions will have no choice but to remain in

comprehensive insurance, and their premiums will go way up. If you are over 50 before you get Medicare, you had better be wary of these too. Even if you don't want to buy the plan, it is going to cost you a lot more—your existing one. Insurers across the country have already cited the prospect of this rule as a major reason for the premium increases that are coming up in 2019, and who knows how much higher the premiums will go now that the rule is final.

Let me be clear. These new short-term plans are nothing short of junk insurance. They are junk insurance, and the President is pushing them, and our colleagues on the other side of the aisle—many of them, not all—are giving these junk plans a Good Housekeeping seal of approval at the obeisance of big, powerful industry interests. These plans will cost Americans more, both those who sign up for these plans and the many who do not. We Democrats will do everything in our power to stop these junk plans.

Instead of pushing new rules that weaken vital protections for people with preexisting conditions and raising the cost of healthcare for families, President Trump and Republicans in Congress should work together in a bipartisan fashion—as some have tried to do, including the Senator from Maine, who is standing behind me—to lower costs and help the most vulnerable Americans.

I yield the floor and relinquish my leader time.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I want to take a minute to thank Senator COLLINS and our staff for their hard work on the THUD bill. Their professionalism and dedication to a thoughtful, bipartisan process has been key to moving this bill smoothly through committee markup and the floor.

Specifically, I want to thank Dabney Hegg, Clare Doherty, Christina Monroe, Nathan Robinson, Jordan Stone, Gus Maples, Rajat Mathur, Jacob Press, and Jason Woolwine.

I would also like to thank the full committee staff: Chuck Kieffer, Shannon Hines, Chanda Betourney, Jessica Berry, David Adkins, and Jonathan Graffeo.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Maine.

AMENDMENTS NOS. 3464, 3522, 3524, AND 3402 TO
AMENDMENT NO. 3399

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I call up the following amendments and ask unanimous consent that they be reported by number: No. 3464, No. 3522, No. 3524, and No. 3402.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the amendments by number.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Maine [Ms. COLLINS], for others, proposes amendments numbered 3464, 3522, 3524, and 3402.

The amendments are as follows:

AMENDMENT NO. 3464

(Purpose: To provide for election security grants)

At the appropriate place in division B, insert the following:

SEC. _____. In addition to amounts made available for the Election Assistance Commission, \$250,000,000 shall be made available for election security grants: *Provided*, That, of the unobligated balances available under the heading "Treasury Forfeiture Fund", \$380,000,000 are hereby permanently rescinded not later than September 30, 2019.

AMENDMENT NO. 3522

(Purpose: To prohibit the use of funds to enforce standards of identity with respect to certain food)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds appropriated by this Act to the Food and Drug Administration shall be used to enforce standards of identity with respect to a food that would be considered adulterated or misbranded for the sole reason that the labeling of such food contains a common or usual name of another food, provided that the name of such other food on the label is preceded by a prominently displayed qualifying prefix, word, or phrase that identifies—

(1) an alternative plant or animal source that replaces some or all of the main characterizing ingredient or component of such other food; or

(2) the absence of a primary characterizing plant or animal source, or of a nutrient, allergen, or other well-known component, that is ordinarily present in such other food.

AMENDMENT NO. 3524

(Purpose: To appropriate funds to carry out programs relating to the innovation, process improvement, and marketing of dairy products)

On page 324, line 13, strike the colon and insert "; and of which \$7,000,000 shall be available for marketing activities authorized under section 204(b) of the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 (7 U.S.C. 1623(b)) to provide to State departments of agriculture, State cooperative extension services, institutions of higher education, and nonprofit organizations grants to carry out programs and provide technical assistance to promote innovation, process improvement, and marketing relating to dairy products:".

AMENDMENT NO. 3402

(Purpose: To prohibit the use of funds to carry out the District of Columbia's health insurance individual mandate)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds made available by Division B of this Act may be used by the government of the District of Columbia to carry out subtitle A of title V of the Fiscal Year 2019 Budget Support Act of 2018 (D.C. Bill 22-753) (requiring residents of the District of Columbia to have health insurance).

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to proceed with a closing statement for up to 3 minutes.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, as we near completion of the fiscal year 2019 appropriations bill for Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies, which has been in-

cluded in the appropriations package before this Chamber, I wish to thank all of my colleagues for working collaboratively with us.

The managers' amendment incorporates 14 T-HUD amendments, which adds to the deliberations that produced the bill that we brought to the floor. In drafting this bill, the ranking member, Senator JACK REED, to whom I am very grateful for his bipartisan collaboration, reviewed more than 800 requests and input from 70 Senators from both sides of the aisle. This truly is a bipartisan product. I also want to thank the staff for their diligence and commitment throughout this process.

Our Transportation-HUD bill makes important investments in our infrastructure and housing programs that will benefit communities and vulnerable families, seniors, young people, homeless veterans, and so many others across the Nation. Improving our infrastructure is also essential for economic growth, personal mobility, and the creation of jobs.

I am pleased that we were able to bring this spending bill to the floor so that Members have a full opportunity to analyze and debate this legislation rather than the past practice of moving all the appropriations bills in one enormous, 1,000-page omnibus. That is a great credit to the Senate, to the Appropriations Committee, and particularly its leaders, Senator SHELBY and Senator LEAHY, and to the majority and minority leaders as well. All of them worked together and made it a goal for us to report all 12 appropriations bills from the Appropriations Committee and bring them to the floor for full and open debate. That is how the process is meant to work. I want to thank my Members on both sides of the aisle and urge my colleagues to support the bill.

Mr. President, I wish to also speak about clarifying FDA regulations on "added sugar" labeling requirements. It is very important to our pure maple syrup and honey producers in the State of Maine.

I rise to thank my colleagues, including Chairman SHELBY, for including in the managers' package an amendment that I offered with Senators KING, SANDERS, HOEVEN, SHAHEEN, and LEAHY to help protect our pure maple syrup and honey producers from labeling requirements that could create widespread consumer confusion and negatively affect these industries.

Although FDA's "added sugars" labeling requirement is intended to help educate consumers about a product's contents, complications arise when it is applied to single-ingredient sweeteners like maple sugar or honey. The rule would require the label to state that all sugar in these products as "added sugar."

The Maine Maple Producers Association, along with the individual producers it represents, believes that the term "added sugar," when used with a

single ingredient sweetener, will confuse consumers and misrepresent the product's standard of identity.

Consumers may assume that high fructose corn syrup or cane sugar has been added to the maple syrup, which directly conflicts with the pure and natural image of the product.

Our amendment would ensure that no funds are used to enforce the "added sugars" requirement on any single ingredient sugar, honey, agave, or syrup that is packaged for sale as a single ingredient.

I am grateful that FDA has acknowledged the serious concerns expressed in the public comments and by Members of Congress, by declaring its intent to "swiftly formulate a revised approach." While we are committed to ultimately achieving an exemption for single-ingredient sweeteners, passage of this amendment is another signal of strong bipartisan, bicameral opposition to the requirement.

This is a commonsense solution to avoid harmful unintended consequences of a well-meaning rule, and I thank my colleagues for their support.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SULLIVAN). Under the previous order, all postclosure time has expired.

AMENDMENT NO. 3464

There will now be 2 minutes of debate, equally divided, prior to a vote in relation to the Leahy amendment No. 3464.

The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, today, I rise in opposition to the amendment offered by my friend and colleague from Vermont, Senator LEAHY. My colleagues have heard me stand at this same desk multiple times and speak on the issues underlying the Secure Elections Act, a piece of authorizing language that it is exceptionally important that we actually get passed. This is a bill that Senator KLOBUCHAR and I, along with Senators HARRIS, GRAHAM, COLLINS, HEINRICH, BURR, and WARNER, have worked on very hard to get done. It is something that is being discussed in the Intelligence Committee hearing that is going on right now. Some of the witnesses spontaneously raised its reforms as some of key steps that we need to take to secure our elections.

But what we are talking about today is not the authorizing language that is needed; it is appropriations dollars. Just 4 months ago, this body appropriated \$380 million to give to the States to help them in their elections. Ninety percent of those dollars have been transmitted, but most of that money is not out the door.

We have \$380 million that is in process, but it will be the end of next year before we know how the States have actually spent it. I believe it is far too early to add another one-quarter of a billion dollars, which is what this amendment would provide, to the States when we don't know how the first \$380 million has even been spent.

The Intelligence Committee did extensive research on how much was

needed, and the \$380 million amount was what was needed for the moment. I ask us to keep the funding at \$380 million and not add another one-quarter of a billion to that amount.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, our intelligence community unanimously agrees that Russia interfered in the 2016 elections and that there is an imminent threat to the 2018 elections. Our country, our democracy, is under attack, and we should respond. Let's heed the warnings of our intelligence agencies. The lights are blinking red. Let's listen to our State attorneys general and Secretaries of State.

My amendment does provide \$250 million for State election security grants to protect our upcoming election. It helps States improve election cybersecurity, replace outdated election equipment. We did provide, as the distinguished Senator said, \$380 million in fiscal year 2018. That was the first new funding for election security in years, but more is needed.

The President is not going to act. The duty has fallen to us. Let's not, after an election, find out that this country was defenseless against attacks from Russia, and then say: Oh, gosh, we should have done something.

This is not a partisan issue. Republicans and Democrats have to be concerned. I urge an "aye" vote on my amendment to secure our elections.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that all votes after the first in this series be 10 minutes.

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

The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

Mr. LEAHY. 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 legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE), and the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays were announced—yeas 50, nays 47, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 176 Leg.]

YEAS—50

Baldwin	Corker	Heitkamp
Bennet	Cortez Masto	Hirono
Blumenthal	Donnelly	Jones
Booker	Duckworth	Kaine
Brown	Durbin	King
Cantwell	Feinstein	Klobuchar
Cardin	Gillibrand	Leahy
Carper	Harris	Manchin
Casey	Hassan	Markey
Coons	Heinrich	McCaskill

Menendez	Sanders	Udall
Merkley	Schatz	Van Hollen
Murphy	Schumer	Warner
Murray	Shaheen	Warren
Nelson	Smith	Whitehouse
Peters	Stabenow	Wyden
Reed	Tester	

NAYS—47

Alexander	Graham	Perdue
Barrasso	Grassley	Portman
Blunt	Hatch	Risch
Boozman	Heller	Roberts
Capito	Hoeben	Rounds
Cassidy	Hyde-Smith	Rubio
Collins	Inhofe	Sasse
Cornyn	Isakson	Scott
Cotton	Johnson	Shelby
Crapo	Kennedy	Sullivan
Cruz	Lankford	Thune
Daines	Lee	Tillis
Enzi	McConnell	Toomey
Ernst	Moran	Wicker
Fischer	Murkowski	Young
Gardner	Paul	

NOT VOTING—3

Burr	Flake	McCain
------	-------	--------

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order requiring 60 votes for the adoption of this amendment, the amendment is rejected.

AMENDMENT NO. 3522

There will now be 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote in relation to the Lee amendment No. 3522.

The Senator from Utah.

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 3 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, a few years ago, a company in California called Hampton Creek, now known as JUST, Inc., started selling vegan—that is to say, eggless—mayonnaise. Just Mayo was one of hundreds of increasingly popular alternative foods developed in recent decades, marketed to vegetarians, vegans, and people with food allergies or other health concerns.

Understandably, as soon as Just Mayo started to win confidence, it started to attract the attention of top executives in the egg industry. Unfortunately, their intent was not to improve quality or reduce prices. It was, instead, to enlist the government in a pattern that would chill competition.

Under a 1938 Federal law, the Food and Drug Administration has the power to set so-called "standards of identity." Those are rules defining what does and does not qualify as a particular food product. Under these regulations, anything calling its "mayonnaise" has to have eggs in it. Just Mayo was being accused of being illegally labeled. It is not just mayonnaise.

Just the other week, the FDA announced a proposed rule that would ban the use of the term "milk" for nondairy products. The FDA says milk is "lacteal secretion . . . obtained by the complete milking of one or more healthy cows," and nothing else. The proposed rule change would wipe out almond milk, soy milk, and coconut milk off of our grocery store shelves.

Whatever their original value, these labeling requirements are outdated and

they are unnecessary. Consumers are not deceived by these labels. No one buys almond milk under the false illusion that it came from a cow. They buy almond milk because it didn't come from a cow.

The amendment I am offering would protect consumers from these "standards of identity" requirements, and they would protect them from this kind of abuse. Specifically, the amendment would prohibit funds from being used to enforce these rules against products simply because of their use of a common compound name—such as where a word or phrase identifies an alternative plant or animal source.

In other words, it would protect products like "almond milk," "goat cheese," and "gluten-free bread" from accusations of being illegally labeled. It belongs to consumers, not big agricultural companies. The role of government in the market is to protect competition, not any one competitor. The Federal Government has more important things to worry about than the fake scourge of almond milk.

I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wisconsin.

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 2½ minutes on this amendment.

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

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. President, I rise to urge my colleagues to oppose my colleague Senator LEE's amendment, which would interfere with the Food and Drug Administration's ability to enforce their regulations related to the names of dairy products. This amendment, if passed, would upend the FDA's review of nutrition innovation as part of its nutrition innovation strategy. It would short-circuit the agency's efforts to review standards of identity and other tools to provide meaningful, accurate information about food products to consumers, and it would block the agency from addressing the mislabeling of imitation products that use dairy names without meeting the legal requirements to use those terms.

The FDA currently has an open docket and the public is able to comment on these issues. We should all let that process play out.

But this isn't just an attack on the FDA's process. It is an attack on dairy farmers across the country and in my home State of Wisconsin. This attack couldn't happen at a worse time. Dairy farmers are facing extremely difficult times. In Wisconsin, last year we lost over 500 dairy farms, mostly small and medium family-size farms—almost 6 percent of the dairy farms operating in our State.

Dairy farmers in Wisconsin work hard to meet the various requirements for the milk they produce. This ensures that when a consumer buys a dairy product, it will perform in recipes as expected, and it will contain high-quality nutrients for those consumers.

I want to finish with one key point. There are already existing regulations on the books that define what constitutes dairy. However, the FDA has failed to enforce their own rules as imitation products have used dairy's good name for their own benefit.

I introduced the Dairy Pride Act to force the FDA to stop sitting on the sidelines and to enforce its own rules. Instead of blocking the FDA from doing its job as the Lee amendment would do, we should ensure that the FDA moves forward and enforces its own rules. Dairy farmers in Wisconsin shouldn't be asked to wait any longer.

I urge my colleagues to oppose the Lee amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question occurs on agreeing to amendment No. 3522, offered by the Senator from Utah, Mr. LEE.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, 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 Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE) and the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN).

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. ERNST). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 14, nays 84, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 177 Leg.]

YEAS—14

Booker	Heinrich	Schatz
Capito	Lee	Sullivan
Cassidy	Menendez	Toomey
Corker	Paul	Young
Cruz	Rubio	

NAYS—84

Alexander	Gillibrand	Murphy
Baldwin	Graham	Murray
Barrasso	Grassley	Nelson
Bennet	Harris	Perdue
Blumenthal	Hassan	Peters
Blunt	Hatch	Portman
Boozman	Heitkamp	Reed
Brown	Heller	Risch
Burr	Hirono	Roberts
Cantwell	Hoeven	Rounds
Cardin	Hyde-Smith	Sanders
Carper	Inhofe	Sasse
Casey	Isakson	Schumer
Collins	Johnson	Scott
Coons	Jones	Shaheen
Cornyn	Kaine	Shelby
Cortez Masto	Kennedy	Smith
Cotton	King	Stabenow
Crapo	Klobuchar	Tester
Daines	Lankford	Thune
Donnelly	Leahy	Tillis
Duckworth	Manchin	Udall
Durbin	Markey	Van Hollen
Enzi	McCaskill	Warner
Ernst	McConnell	Warren
Feinstein	Merkley	Whitehouse
Fischer	Moran	Wicker
Gardner	Murkowski	Wyden

NOT VOTING—2

Flake	McCain
-------	--------

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order requiring 60 votes for the adoption of this amendment, the amendment is rejected.

AMENDMENT NO. 3524

There will now be 2 minutes of debate, equally divided, prior to a vote in

relation to Baldwin amendment No. 3524.

The Senator from Wisconsin.

Ms. BALDWIN. Madam President, I rise to urge my colleagues to support my bipartisan amendment with my colleague Senator SUSAN COLLINS. It would spur innovation in the dairy business.

This amendment would do three simple things. It would foster the development of innovative dairy products that respond to consumer demand, support new and existing dairy entrepreneurs to develop their businesses and expand their markets, and provide technical assistance to dairy processors to update their manufacturing processes and meet consumer demand.

Dairy farmers are facing extremely difficult times. These farmers are facing retaliatory tariffs, uncertainty about trade deals and export markets, and low milk prices. This amendment would provide technical assistance and solutions for dairy entrepreneurs so that farmers, dairy co-ops, and other businesses can find new ways to compete, increase their efficiency, and find more homes for the surplus of milk that we have.

I urge my colleagues to support this amendment.

I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time is yielded back.

The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

Mr. COTTON. 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 assistant bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE) and 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 83, nays 15, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 178 Leg.]

YEAS—83

Alexander	Feinstein	Markey
Baldwin	Fischer	McCaskill
Barrasso	Gardner	McConnell
Bennet	Gillibrand	Menendez
Blumenthal	Graham	Merkley
Blunt	Grassley	Moran
Booker	Harris	Murkowski
Boozman	Hassan	Murphy
Brown	Hatch	Murray
Burr	Heinrich	Nelson
Cantwell	Heitkamp	Perdue
Cardin	Heller	Peters
Carper	Hirono	Portman
Casey	Hoeven	Reed
Collins	Hyde-Smith	Risch
Coons	Inhofe	Roberts
Cornyn	Isakson	Rounds
Cortez Masto	Johnson	Sanders
Crapo	Jones	Schatz
Donnelly	Kaine	Schumer
Duckworth	King	Shaheen
Durbin	Klobuchar	Shelby
Enzi	Leahy	Smith
Ernst	Manchin	Stabenow

Sullivan	Van Hollen	Wicker
Tester	Warner	Wyden
Thune	Warren	Young
Udall	Whitehouse	

NAYS—15

Capito	Daines	Rubio
Cassidy	Kennedy	Sasse
Corker	Lankford	Scott
Cotton	Lee	Tillis
Cruz	Paul	Toomey

NOT VOTING—2

Flake	McCain
-------	--------

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order requiring 60 votes for the adoption of this amendment, the amendment is agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 3402

There will now be 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote in relation to the Cruz amendment No. 3402.

The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CRUZ. Madam President, one of the most significant victories for the American people that was in the tax cut legislation we passed last year was that this body and the Congress came together and repealed the ObamaCare individual mandate.

The individual mandate is one of the cruelest and most unfair aspects of ObamaCare. Every year, the IRS fined about 6.5 million Americans because they couldn't afford health insurance. Sadly, the reaction of Democratic politicians in the District of Columbia is to reimpose those fines on the poorest residents in DC. My assumption is that many, if not all, of our Democratic colleagues will vote to do exactly that right now, but let me point out that in DC in 2015, 7,150 people were fined by the IRS and that of those, 75 percent made less than \$50,000 a year in income and 33 percent made less than \$25,000 a year in income. So if you vote to table this amendment, you are voting to raise taxes on low-income DC residents who are struggling to make ends meet.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, Senator SHELBY and I both worked hard through this process to keep out poison pill riders. This amendment is a partisan poison pill.

We talk about repealing the Federal mandate, but of course, by doing that, we saw a direct premium increase as a result of that repeal. The District of Columbia and States like Vermont passed their own mandates to keep premiums down. Just like Vermont, DC should have the authority to make its own laws. Instead of telling all of those people who claim we must have States' rights, here we are telling the District of Columbia: We will tell you what to do. That is not democracy.

So I move to table the amendment, and I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SHELBY. Madam President, I will be brief. I appreciate the Senator's amendment. On policy grounds, I would agree with Senator CRUZ 100 percent. My position on this, though, is clear, and I have consistently voted to repeal ObamaCare and the individual mandate. So it is with reluctance that I support the motion to table this amendment. I do so, I believe, for the good of the appropriations process. We have been able to cut a path back to regular order here by working together in a bipartisan manner. This amendment, I believe, would poison this, would eliminate the bipartisan support we have forged for this package. If we go down this road, I believe we will soon find ourselves back on the path to disorder in the appropriations process. I don't believe any of us want that.

So, again, I support the motion to table this amendment not because I oppose it on policy grounds but because I want to maintain the progress we are making in the appropriations process to go to regular order.

I thank the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion to table.

The yeas and nays were previously ordered.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE) and 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 54, nays 44, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 179 Leg.]

YEAS—54

Baldwin	Harris	Murray
Bennet	Hassan	Nelson
Blumenthal	Hatch	Peters
Booker	Heinrich	Reed
Boozman	Heitkamp	Sanders
Cantwell	Hirono	Schatz
Cardin	Jones	Schumer
Carper	Kaine	Shaheen
Casey	King	Shelby
Cassidy	Klobuchar	Smith
Collins	Leahy	Stabenow
Coons	Manchin	Tester
Cortez Masto	Markey	Udall
Donnelly	McCaskill	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Menendez	Warner
Durbin	Merkley	Warren
Feinstein	Murkowski	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Murphy	Wyden

NAYS—44

Alexander	Gardner	Perdue
Barrasso	Graham	Portman
Blunt	Grassley	Risch
Boozman	Heller	Roberts
Burr	Hoeben	Rounds
Capito	Hyde-Smith	Rubio
Corker	Inhofe	Sasse
Cornyn	Isakson	Scott
Cotton	Johnson	Sullivan
Crapo	Kennedy	Thune
Cruz	Lankford	Tillis
Daines	Lee	Toomey
Enzi	McConnell	Wicker
Ernst	Moran	Young
Fischer	Paul	

NOT VOTING—2

Flake	McCain
-------	--------

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—CONFERENCE REPORT TO ACCOMPANY H.R. 5515

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding rule XXII, following disposition of H.R. 6147, the Senate proceed to the consideration of the conference report to accompany H.R. 5515; that the cloture motion on the conference report be withdrawn; that there be up to 1 hour of debate on the conference report, with 30 minutes under the control of Senator RUBIO and 30 minutes under the control of the managers; and that following the use or yielding back of that time, the Senate vote on the adoption of the conference report without intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

SENATOR SHELBY'S 10,000TH VOTE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, very briefly, on another point, I want to take a moment, as we wrap up this appropriations package, to recognize the distinguished tenure and leadership of our chairman, RICHARD SHELBY.

Earlier this year, Senator SHELBY cast vote No. 10,000 right here on the Senate floor. Like so many of his accomplishments, that landmark seemed to slip by without a whole lot of fuss, but what a remarkable milestone in a very distinguished career.

I imagine this year's appropriations process holds special significance for our chairman. As he took the reins of the committee, he made clear that in working with Senator LEAHY, regular order would be the name of the game. He set his sights on restoring the kind of collaborative process that has historically made our institutions so unique. As we all know, that is a little bit easier said than actually done. Yet, the committee completed a markup process that reported out all 12 spending bills faster than it had in any year since 1988. That was three decades ago. When we close out this package, the Senate will have passed a majority of its annual appropriations measures by the beginning of August for the first time since 2000—18 years ago.

I am sure my fellow members of the Appropriations Committee would agree with me that this productivity is due, in large part, to the leadership of our chairman, RICHARD SHELBY.

So on behalf of the whole Senate, I want to thank him for the work he has done so far and for the accomplishments on behalf of the American people that are yet to come. I want to thank Senator LEAHY, as well, and all of our other colleagues on the committee for their contributions.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I would like to join my friend the majority leader in congratulating DICK SHELBY on his 10,000th vote. I knew him before he cast his first vote in the

Senate, when we were fellow Democrats in the House of Representatives. That was a long time ago.

But one thing has been consonant throughout his career: his decency, his honor, and, most of all, his desire to get things done for his home State of Alabama and for our country. That has led him to be an outstanding leader of the Appropriations Committee.

As the majority leader mentioned, we are working in a remarkably smooth, bipartisan way. We hope that is a precedent of things to come. We hope we will continue to work together and not let any outside forces mess that up—not to mention any names.

He is just a wonderful guy. He really is. We see each other in the gym in the morning. Let me tell you, SHELBY is as fit as ever, huffing and puffing away on the bike. That gives all of us solace because it means he has even more strength to guide us through the appropriations process for many years to come.

I wish to acknowledge his partner in this—they couldn't have done it without working together—Senator LEAHY. It is a great team, and we look forward to continued bipartisanship, compromise, and success.

The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. I yield to the Senator from Alabama.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SHELBY. Madam President, I thank Senator McCONNELL and Senator SCHUMER for their kind remarks. I hope my wife was listening to that. What the heck.

We have been working together, and we have to continue that to make the process work, to reach out to each other. Gosh, it is hard work. Senator LEAHY and I differ on a lot of things, but we are together on bringing regular order to the Appropriations Committee because I thought all along we owe it to the American people. We are accountable—both parties, both groups. That is what we have been about.

Thank you again to the leader and Senator SCHUMER for your kind remarks.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH). The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, I thank the senior Senator from Alabama for his kind words. I also thank our two leaders for their kind words. Senator SHELBY and I met with Senator McCONNELL and Senator SCHUMER earlier this year, and we said that we want to get the Senate back to what it should be and what it has been. What better way than to do it on the appropriations bills. I have served here longer than anybody in this body. I have seen it when it has worked and when it hasn't worked. Senator SHELBY and I felt we could do it.

I urge an "aye" vote on this final passage, second minibus package. Each of these were reported by the Appropriations Committee unanimously, Re-

publicans and Democrats voting together. Some of us said we couldn't agree on the Sun rising in the East, but we agreed.

Incidentally, my dear friend, the Senator from Alabama—I wish to note that the tie I am wearing is one that he and Dr. Shelby gave me for my birthday this year. I thought that might be a good touch.

I thank what both Senators McCONNELL and SCHUMER said. They worked very hard with us.

The Agriculture bill continues strong support for our country's farmers. It abandons the Trump budget's proposal to leave rural communities behind and instead invests in rural development and housing programs.

The Financial Services bill supports regulatory agencies that the American people rely on to protect them from unfair, unsafe or fraudulent business practices.

The Interior bill rejects the anti-science know-nothing agenda proposed by the Trump administration by protecting the Environmental Protection Agency from the President's proposed reckless and slashing cuts. It preserves investments that ensure our children and grandchildren will enjoy clean air and water. It supports our National Parks, which are treasures that must be protected for future generations.

Finally, thanks to the bipartisan budget agreement, the Transportation bill contains \$10 billion in new funding compared to fiscal year 2017 to invest in our Nation's housing and infrastructure. Every Member in this body knows of the urgent need to address the crumbling infrastructure that plagues each of our States. This is a good first step.

We are here today because Chairman SHELBY and I, along with the subcommittee chairs and ranking members, worked hard to produce bipartisan bills with input from both Republicans and Democrats. Over the past 2 weeks, the Senate voted on 11 amendments, and agreed to a manager's package that contained 46 amendments important to our Members.

This is the way the Senate is supposed to work: regular order.

Our bipartisan success is due to the SHELBY, LEAHY, McCONNELL, SCHUMER commitment to move through this process with bipartisan support, at spending levels agreed to in the bipartisan budget deal, and reject poison pill riders and controversial authorizing language.

The House, unfortunately, is pursuing a different path. They are taking up partisan bills filled with poison pill riders that cannot and will not pass the Senate. If our progress is to continue, the bills that come out of conference must be bills that can pass the Senate, which means they must be free of poison pills.

I am disappointed my election security grant amendment was rejected by the Senate. The integrity of our elections, which are the foundation of our democracy, should not be a partisan

issue. It is unfortunate that the Senate voted down funding our States need to help upgrade their election infrastructure and secure our elections from interference by Russia and other foreign adversaries ahead of the 2018 midterms. We need to heed the warnings of our intelligence agencies, of the lights blinking red, of the appeals from the attorneys general, the secretaries of State, and the State and local election officials who are sounding the alarm. This duty has fallen to us, and we must not later be found to have been asleep at the switch, with so much at stake.

But this minibus is the result of hard work and compromise on the part of the chair and ranking member of each subcommittee. While it is not perfect, it will touch the lives of the American people in every State from improving roads to protecting our forests, and I urge that Senators vote "aye" on final passage.

If we pass this bill today, we will have passed seven appropriations bills out of the Senate and have a firm commitment to take up two more in the coming weeks. It wouldn't have worked if the chairman had not committed himself to what the rest of us did but also the chairs and the ranking members of the subcommittees we have here—Senators HOEVEN, MERKLEY, MURKOWSKI, UDALL, COLLINS, REED, LANKFORD, and COONS.

I also want to thank the majority staff: Shannon Hines, David Adkins, and Jonathan Graffeo, as well as their subcommittee staff.

I often say that Senators are merely constitutional impediments to their staff. I know my staff has worked long hours. I might get home on a Saturday or Sunday, and they are still working, people like Charles Kieffer, Chanda Betourney, Jessica Berry, Rachael Taylor, Dianne Nellor, Dabney Hegg, Ellen Murray, and all of the subcommittee staff.

Finally, I wish to thank Jessica Shulkin, who is going to be leaving the Appropriations Committee in August after nearly 18 years for the Agriculture Subcommittee. Her expertise, her hard work, and her working in a bipartisan and professional way has advanced our Nation's agricultural policy, helped our rural communities, and has kept USDA and the FDA answerable to Congress. I wish Jessica all the best. She has been a pleasure to work with.

In conclusion, I have a list of all the staff, and I ask unanimous consent that it be printed in the RECORD.

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

VICE CHAIRMAN LEAHY LIST OF MINIBUS #2
STAFF FOR THE RECORD

Charles Kieffer, Chanda Betourney, Jessica Berry, Jay Tilton, Rachael Taylor, Ellen Murray, Dianne Nellor, Dabney Hegg, Ryan Hunt, Melissa Zimmerman, Teri Curtin, Diana Hamilton, Reeves Hart, Jessica Schulken, Bob Ross, Christina Monroe, Nathan Robinson, Jordan Stone, Jean Kwon, Shannon Hines, Jonathan Graffeo, David

Adkins, Leif Fonnesebeck, Andrew Newton, Carlisle Clarke, Clare Doherty, Emy Lesofski, Nona McCoy, Chris Tomassi, Lauren Comeau, Brian Daner, Patrick Carroll, Elizabeth Dent, Gus Maples, Rajat Mathur, Jacob Press, Jason Woolwine.

Mr. LEAHY. In conclusion, I thank Senator SHELBY, Senator MCCONNELL, and Senator SCHUMER. We worked together. It is kind of nice when something works out.

I yield the floor.

AMENDMENT NO. 3400 WITHDRAWN

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Murkowski amendment No. 3400 is withdrawn.

AMENDMENT NO. 3399, AS AMENDED

Under the previous order, the Shelby amendment No. 3399, as amended, is agreed to.

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

The bill was read the third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There are now 2 minutes equally divided prior to a vote on passage of H.R. 6147, as amended.

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SHELBY. Madam President, I want to say again that what we have been doing here, working together in a bipartisan way, is something that Senator SCHUMER and Senator MCCONNELL were talking about hadn't been done basically in 30 years. We are on the right track. We want to stay there. I have said many times to both parties: It is in our interests. The American people expect it. Let's keep working together.

Madam President, before we vote, I want to thank my colleagues for their cooperation in moving this package. In particular, I want to thank leaders MCCONNELL and SCHUMER for bringing these bills to the floor and Vice Chairman LEAHY for his continued partnership throughout the appropriations process.

I also want to congratulate the bill managers and their staffs: Senators MURKOWSKI, COLLINS, LANKFORD, and HOEVEN on the Republican side; Senators UDALL, REED, COONS and MERKLEY on the Democratic side. These valuable members of the Appropriations Committee produced strong and balanced bills, and they have guided an open and disciplined process here on the Senate floor.

I thank them for their excellent work.

We are now making real headway in the appropriations process.

The Committee reported all 12 fiscal year 2019 bills to the full Senate before the July 4 recess all with strong bipartisan support.

The first three bill package passed the full Senate last month by a vote of 86 to 5.

The package now before the Senate contains four additional appropriations bills.

Hopefully—we'll see here shortly—this package will achieve the same level of bipartisan support as the last.

If that holds true we will have passed seven—yes, seven—appropriations bills before August. With only five more to go, I think we can honestly say this train has considerable momentum behind it now.

Next up is the Defense-Labor-HHS package—a package I know senators on both sides of the aisle are very eager to debate.

I hope my colleagues are encouraged by what is happening here, by what we are accomplishing together.

Moving these bills in this way is the right thing to do—not only for this institution, but for our country; for the American people.

When we take up the next package I hope we will continue to work using this framework as our guide.

It is, after all, this framework that has allowed us to return to regular order.

This process is working, let's keep it going.

Again, I thank my colleagues for their cooperation. I urge a "yes" vote on this bill and with that I yield the floor.

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, I yield back the remainder of my time, and I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the bill pass?

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE) and 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 92, nays 6, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 180 Leg.]

YEAS—92

Alexander	Gardner	Murray
Baldwin	Gillibrand	Nelson
Barrasso	Graham	Perdue
Bennet	Grassley	Peters
Blumenthal	Harris	Portman
Blunt	Hassan	Reed
Booker	Hatch	Risch
Boozman	Heinrich	Roberts
Brown	Heitkamp	Rounds
Burr	Heller	Rubio
Cantwell	Hirono	Sanders
Capito	Hoeben	Schatz
Cardin	Hyde-Smith	Schumer
Carper	Inhofe	Scott
Casey	Isakson	Shaheen
Cassidy	Jones	Shelby
Collins	Kaine	Smith
Coons	Kennedy	Stabenow
Corker	King	Sullivan
Cornyn	Klobuchar	Tester
Cortez Masto	Lankford	Thune
Cotton	Leahy	Tillis
Crapo	Manchin	Udall
Daines	Markey	Van Hollen
Donnelly	McCaskill	Warner
Duckworth	McConnell	Warren
Durbin	Menendez	Whitehouse
Enzi	Merkley	Wicker
Ernst	Moran	Wyden
Feinstein	Murkowski	Young
Fischer	Murphy	

NAYS—6

Cruz	Lee	Sasse
Johnson	Paul	Toomey
NOT VOTING—2		
Flake	McCain	

The bill (H.R. 6147), as amended, was passed.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2019—CONFERENCE REPORT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to the consideration of the conference report to accompany H.R. 5515, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

Conference report to accompany H.R. 5515, an act 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.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the cloture motion is withdrawn.

Under the previous order, there will now be 1 hour of debate, with 30 minutes controlled by the managers and 30 minutes under the control of the Senator from Florida, Mr. RUBIO.

The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. HOEVEN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to be recognized for 3 minutes for comments relating to the appropriations bill prior to the NDAA bill debate.

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

APPROPRIATIONS LEGISLATION

Mr. HOEVEN. Madam President, I want to thank my colleagues for advancing these appropriations bills, specifically the ag appropriations bill.

I also want to thank Senator MERKLEY, my ranking member on the committee. Throughout the process, we have had open communications and have worked to advance the bill and to address amendments brought forward by our colleagues.

I also want to thank specifically Senator MERKLEY's staff—Jessica Schulken, Dianne Nellor, and Bob Ross—for their work, as well as my crew—Carlisle Clarke, Patrick Carroll, Elizabeth Dent, Dan Auger, and Brita Endrud.

This has been a process that has involved other subcommittees as well. I want to thank all of those who have worked on these appropriations bills, including Senator COLLINS and Senator REED and their staffs on the Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development Subcommittee; Senators MURKOWSKI and UDALL and their staffs on the Interior bill; Senators LANKFORD and COONS on the Financial Services Subcommittee.

This has certainly been a deliberative process—again, the way regular order is supposed to work. More than a dozen amendments that affected, for example, our agriculture bill have been accepted over the course of the bill. We