

cases before the U.S. Supreme Court than any other woman. In *POLITICO*, she wrote recently, with regard to Judge Kavanaugh, “Sometimes a superstar is just a superstar.” She said our Democratic colleagues should “stop pretending that Kavanaugh or his record is the issue.” She went on to say he is well-qualified, brilliant, has integrity, and is within the mainstream of legal thought.

Her last words were the most emphatic. She said: “Democrats should quit attacking Kavanaugh—full stop.” She said their behavior is “unbecoming,” and I don’t disagree with her.

We know many on the other side are not particularly interested in the nominee’s qualifications. As I said, for some, the fact that President Trump nominated Judge Kavanaugh is all they need to know. They are opposed to anybody and everybody this President might nominate. Others have now come out in opposition before they have examined these, perhaps approaching, 1 million pages of documents that will be produced. Again, it is obvious it is not material to their decision because they have already announced their opposition. They don’t even want to wait until the hearing where the judge will be questioned and provide answers to the committee’s questions.

We know there is not much to attack when it comes to the judge’s long judicial record of objectivity and fairness on the DC Circuit. They are trying to dig through other people’s emails and conduct a government-sponsored, taxpayer-funded fishing expedition through the records of the entire Bush White House: If we can’t find anything wrong with the nominee, let’s distract people by raising other issues by digging through the papers of the Bush White House.

As I said, I call this the great paper chase. It may result in a never-ending tower of cardboard boxes. Ultimately, it gets us nowhere, and it costs all of us a great deal of time and effort and accomplishes nothing.

The truth is, Judge Kavanaugh is eminently qualified and well respected by everybody who knows him. Having met the judge in 2000, when I served as attorney general of Texas, where he helped me get ready for my oral arguments before the U.S. Supreme Court, I have known the judge and followed his career since that time.

I agree that he is not only eminently qualified, but he is well respected by all those who know him, including me. I look forward to confirming Justice Kavanaugh before the Supreme Court begins its next term at the beginning of October.

I yield floor.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will stand in recess until 2:15 p.m.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 12:36 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m.

and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. COTTON).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I would like to spend time this afternoon talking about something I continue to hear about in Wyoming. I heard about it a lot over the past week. I heard about it last night in Sundance, WY. It is the Endangered Species Act.

The Endangered Species Act became law in 1973. That was 45 years ago. It was a bipartisan vote. The law has resulted in a lot of great work to save species from extinction. We have seen species such as the bald eagle come back from the brink of being almost completely wiped out. That is a great example of what this law was intended to do—to identify species in danger and to help them recover.

The problem is that there aren’t enough examples like the bald eagle to point to because the goal of the law was to help species get to the point where they no longer needed the protection of the Endangered Species Act. We would put them on the list, they would recover, and then they would come off the list. That was the goal of the bipartisan legislation. That is how it was supposed to work.

Let’s look at what has actually happened. Since the law was put on the books, Washington has put 2,424 different species of plants and animals on the list. Only 54 have ever come off the list because they actually recovered. That is just 54 species in 45 years. That is less than 3 percent. I am a doctor. As a doctor, if I were to admit 100 patients to the hospital and only 3 out of every 100 I admitted recovered enough to be discharged, maybe those patients ought to look for a different doctor. We are now in the same situation the Endangered Species Act.

When it comes to the Endangered Species Act, the status quo is not good enough. We need to do more than just put species on the list and leave them in the intensive care unit without a plan for recovery; we need to see them actually recover. That is the whole point.

The Endangered Species Act has not been substantially amended or updated in 30 years. That is a long time for a law to stay on the books without actually trying to improve it—and improvement is necessary. Americans across the country are telling us it is time. The Endangered Species Act needs to be modernized. As a former Governor of Wyoming, Dave Freudenthal, who came back to testify in front of the Environment and Public Works Committee, said, “It just has too much sand in the gears.”

Well, maybe the problem with the Endangered Species Act doesn’t seem so clear to bureaucrats in Washington, DC, but when you go out West to places like my home State of Wyoming, the problems are obvious. We see how the law is failing to help species. We see it

every day in Wyoming, and it comes up continually in my discussions with folks at home. We see how it is failing the communities—communities that suffer under the law’s ineffective and burdensome redtape. That is why States in the West are tackling this issue when Washington, DC, has done so very little over the last decades.

Three years ago, the Western Governors’ Association—a bipartisan group—began looking at ways to modernize the law to help the Western States. The chairman of the group was Matt Mead, our Governor in Wyoming. He set up a special bipartisan initiative that has been working on this issue all of that time. They talked with people across the political spectrum—liberals, conservatives, Republicans, Democrats—people from all different backgrounds, and they came up with some practical and sensible policy recommendations.

Last month, I released a discussion draft of legislation based on the principles from the Western Governors’ Association and the policies that they are promoting and recommending to help all of the States in the West. It is an effort to recreate what the Western Governors’ Association’s bipartisan process has done and recreate it right here in the Senate. I received a supportive letter from the group that was signed by its Republican chairman and its Democratic vice chairman, Governor Daugaard of South Dakota and Governor Ige of Hawaii—both supporting our initiative. I think it shows we are on the right path.

We also based this discussion draft on input from two hearings that I chaired in the Committee on Environment and Public Works. We heard from a diverse and bipartisan group of witnesses. We heard from Dave Freudenthal, the Democratic former Governor of Wyoming, and from Fish and Wildlife directors from across the country. Most said that the principles set forth by the Western Governors’ Association were a good starting point for modernizing the Endangered Species Act.

One important step that we take in this draft legislation is to elevate the role that States actually play in implementing the law. We make them full partners with Washington, DC. It is necessary and the time is right because when the law was written, States didn’t have the conservation capacity they have today. Over the last 45 years, States have dramatically expanded their expertise and their ability to manage species. They have done a remarkable job over the past 45 years. State and local experts are the ones on the ground. They understand the situation, and they work with the species on a daily basis. They know the needs of these species and the unique challenges they face, the habitats, and the threats to the species.

My draft bill gives States the opportunity to lead wildlife conservation efforts because they are the most prepared and the most able to do it. States

need to be playing a significant role in recovering and in managing these species.

There are about 11,000 people working for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service combined—11,000 individuals. Conservation efforts at the State level have more than 50,000 people—more than 4 to 1—working on these critical issues. There are more than 11,000 wildlife biologists and 10,000 wildlife law enforcement officers at the State level. States are now spending close to \$6 billion a year collectively on conservation efforts. It is clear that America's conservation power is in the States, not in Washington, DC. That is where the action is, where the money is, where the intelligence is, where the training is, and where the knowledge is. That is where people want to be working. These State agencies are in the field every day working to protect wildlife.

Another thing this draft legislation does is to establish recovery teams for the species that are listed on the endangered species list. The goal is to develop and implement specific recovery plans for each species. The idea is to make the law more transparent so specific recovery goals are clear to everyone. It provides more of the regulatory certainty that communities across this country need. We also have to make sure that the species that are most in need get the resources first.

Again, this isn't some idea that someone came up with behind closed doors in Washington, DC—not at all. This whole effort is based on feedback from the 19 States and 3 U.S. territories that are part of the Western Governors' Association. Wyoming Governor Matt Mead testified at a recent hearing that my bill is in line with what the States are looking for. He said that it "represents a reasonable way" to start a national dialogue on the subject, just like the Western Governors did. That is why 130 organizations have already written to express their support for this effort.

There are some groups out there who don't want any change to the law. They want to keep adding to the list and letting the list grow. They don't seem to care whether the species ever recover enough to come off the list, which was the goal of the original legislation. I think that approach for all of us is not good enough.

I want to find a bipartisan path to modernize the Endangered Species Act. Let's follow the lead of these western Governors. Let's have that same bipartisan discussion in the Senate. The Endangered Species Act is an important law. Yes, it can be improved. We need more examples like we have with the bald eagle. Recovering these species must be the goal, not just putting them on life support and leaving them. Let's work together to make the Endangered Species Act work better for species and for people.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Young). The Senator from Florida.

DRILLING IN THE EASTERN GULF OF MEXICO

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, there was a new report published in POLITICO today that read that oil industry lobbyists have been consulting with the Trump administration about drilling off of Florida in the eastern Gulf of Mexico. The Gulf of Mexico, off of Florida, is off limits to drilling, pursuant to a law that Senator Mel Martinez and I passed in 2006 that prohibits any drilling up until the year 2022.

The U.S. Department of Defense—specifically, the Air Force, which runs the Eglin Gulf Test and Training Range—has asked us to extend that moratorium on any oil-related activities until at least the year 2027. The Air Force is requesting this simply because the Eglin Gulf Test and Training Range is the largest test and training range in the world for the U.S. military.

When the eastern training for the U.S. Navy was shut down in the Atlantic because the training range at the island of Vieques had been shut down, most of the Navy training for the Atlantic came to the gulf test and training range, not even to speak of the huge U.S. Air Force bases—Eglin Air Force Base, where all of our American and foreign pilots are trained on the F-35, as well as Tyndall Air Force Base, where similar training is done for our American pilots on the F-22.

In addition, the training range is of such a significant distance and square mileage that it allows some of the most sophisticated weapons to travel hundreds of miles in the testing of those weapons, most of them by air. They can either impact in the sea at a potential target or can impact on land, at the giant Eglin Air Force Base. As a result, this is an extremely valuable national asset. The training and testing not only takes place in the air, over the Gulf of Mexico, but it also takes place on the surface and, in some cases, underwater.

The U.S. military has asked us not to mess with the gulf test and training range. Yet, as we speak—and from this report in POLITICO today—efforts are being made by the oil industry to get the Trump administration to allow up to 75 miles off the coastline of Florida to be drilled. I want to show you what that would do to the heart of the gulf test and training range.

All of this area in yellow is off limits until the year 2022 to any oil-related activities. You see the State of Florida. You see Pensacola, Eglin Air Force Base, here at Fort Walton, and the Tyndall Air Force Base, here at Panama City, and the rest of the peninsula of Florida. These are the Florida Keys and the Naval Air Station Key West, which is where a lot of those Navy squadrons of F/A-18s come down and will train for a week or two. When they lift off from the runway on Boca Chica, within a couple of minutes, they are

over restricted airspace. So they don't have to spend a lot of fuel or time in getting to their training area.

You see the enormity of this area that is shaded in yellow. From here, this area is 125 miles off the coast, but in a line from Tampa Bay, it is 235 miles. From a line off of Naples, it is more like 285 or 290 miles. It is a huge area that is preserved for national security—for the training and testing of some of our most sophisticated weapons.

As has been reported in POLITICO today, if the Trump administration were to allow the oil industry to drill up to 75 miles off the coast, then you will have a line that will be approximately like that, and you will see what you have done. You will have cut the heart out of the gulf test and training range for our U.S. military.

I could tell you that as long as this Senator is here to protect this training range, that is not going to occur. Yet we passed this in 2006, and there have been attempts, time after time, of trying to invade this military space, especially everything east of this longitude line, which is considered the military mission line. For the sake of our national security, I don't think we want to do this.

Just to give you an idea of how large and how valuable an asset this restricted space is, if you were to take the Nevada test site, which is a famous test site, especially with all of its supersecret stuff, and were to superimpose it on the gulf test and training range, it would be a minor part of the land or surface area of the Earth compared to the size of the gulf test and training range.

Here, again, we have an example where, early in the year, the Trump administration comes out and says they are going to drill and offer leases off the entire Outer Continental Shelf of the United States. Then, in a political stunt, the Secretary of the Interior, Mr. Zinke, comes to Florida and says: Oh, we are not going to do that off of Florida when, in fact, time after time, we have information—including this report in POLITICO today—that says they are, and they are up to 75 miles.

We are not going to do that to the U.S. Military, to the Department of Defense. We are not going to take away the heart of their most significant test and training range, and if anybody wants to have a fight about it, this Senator is ready to fight.

Instead of proposing this, what we ought to be doing is what the Air Force asks, and that is to extend out this moratorium and law on any drilling from the year 2022 to at least 2027. That is what this Senator—and I think I can speak for the Florida delegation in a bipartisan way—wants to accomplish.

TARIFFS

Mr. President, today, in Jacksonville, I saw firsthand how the Trump administration's tariffs are starting to cut jobs and threaten the very manufacturing facilities we are trying to encourage.

I had reported to the Senate several months ago that I had also visited the Budweiser brewery in Jacksonville, where they produce 3.3 billion aluminum cans a year, and how a tariff, or tax, of 10 percent added to that imported aluminum would pretty soon add up to real money.

Today I went to a manufacturing plant that had actually brought business from China. This is a manufacturing company that puts together, manufactures garbage cans, the kinds that have the lids that pop up on the top when you step on the foot pedal. They are in various sizes. The ones I saw being manufactured today are about that much in diameter or a larger size, about that much in diameter.

This manufacturer, which is the same company that also manufactures in China, but it is done with human labor in China, imports the preprepared steel, and then, because of American creativity and Yankee ingenuity, it acquired robots and created a process where they are assisted by humans. In one case, I saw a factory worker who could do the very same task faster than the robot can.

They put together these garbage cans for, lo and behold, Walmart. Walmart will not pay any more for the ones manufactured in America than the ones manufactured in China. Of course, the ones manufactured in China are the ones they are getting because they are cheaper. In large part, that is because the cost of labor is cheaper. This company created a new manufacturing process where this can be done as cheaply as it is done in China and therefore has created 60 jobs, in this particular plant I visited today, just since it opened up last year. When you add all of the ancillary jobs and the suppliers, you are talking about 250 jobs being affected.

Here is the problem. The problem is the 25-percent tariff on the imported steel sheets that come from China. If the manufacturer has to add on 25 percent to the cost of his garbage can, obviously, that is not going to be competitive, since they are selling that garbage can and can still just make it at the same price they import that garbage can from China. This is wrong.

Unless that tariff, that tax, is turned off by President Trump, those jobs are going to be lost. That old warehouse facility, which has been modernized with all of this state-of-the-art robotic equipment, \$15 million worth of equipment, all of that is going to go away. That is not what we want. That is not what is good for America. We want to keep the manufacturing jobs here. We want to bring manufacturing jobs here.

This particular company thinks that since this has been a successful financial operation and their big customer is Walmart, they can expand into many other products and do the manufacturing in America instead of in China—but a 25-percent tariff on imported steel is going to kill it. That is why it is important that we try to get Presi-

dent Trump to recognize that this is doing harm to America instead of doing good.

I saw that directly and very vividly. I saw employees who were hard at work. I saw a rundown area that has suddenly sprung back to life. I saw an old, dilapidated, abandoned warehouse that had suddenly become a new, modernized, high-tech facility. I don't want that to go away. I want that and all of the businesses that are getting so hurt all over America and especially in my State of Florida—what about the boat manufacturers?

We have a big boatbuilding industry. The boat manufacturers import a lot of aluminum. Now there is a 10-percent tax on them. That is the tariff, but because of President Trump imposing that tariff, now there is a retaliatory tariff put on by the European Union, Canada, and Mexico for those products—in this case, boats. The company is Correct Craft. They are the ones that build the very nice ski boats under the label "Nautique." Canada responded with a 10-percent retaliatory tariff. The European Union responded with a 25-percent retaliatory tariff on boats exported from the United States to those countries as well as Mexico.

They can't be competitive if they are selling boats in the European Union, and there is a 25-percent hike in the price. That is not going to be competitive with the other boat manufacturers in other parts of the world.

My visit today in Jacksonville to the company that makes these garbage cans for Walmart is another reminder of just how bad these tariffs are that the President has imposed and how counterproductive it is to the creation of American jobs.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

OPIOID EPIDEMIC

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I want to talk today about the opioid epidemic that has gripped my State of Ohio and so many other States represented by Members of the Chamber. This is now the No. 1 killer in Ohio. It has surpassed car accidents. It is the No. 1 cause of death for Americans under the age of 50. Unfortunately, although some are saying we have turned the corner, we haven't turned the corner in a lot of parts of my State. In fact, there are areas of my State where there have been more overdose deaths this year than there were last year. As tragic as last year was—and there was a big increase from the year before—I do believe that in this Chamber, we have made progress in passing legislation, which is beginning to make a difference. I will talk a little bit about that today. I also believe we have much more to do.

In the last couple of years, Congress has gotten busy on this issue. In 2016, we passed legislation called the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act. It was the culmination of 4 years' worth of work—conferences here in

Washington; bringing together some of the best minds from around the country; looking at some of the best practices to say "How do you actually focus on this issue of the opioid epidemic in a comprehensive way?" because we know that is what has to be done. It was about evidence-based prevention, strategies, evidence-based treatment, and longer term recovery. It was actually the first time Congress had ever passed legislation dealing with longer term recovery, and that is because we heard so much testimony—I, back home in Ohio, and Members from around the country but also here in Washington—from experts about the fact that when you go into treatment, particularly for this opioid epidemic, the chances of success are increased dramatically if you have longer term recovery. Think of sober housing opportunities, for instance, after somebody comes out of treatment, to help get them on the right track.

That bipartisan legislation I introduced with Senator SHELDON WHITEHOUSE is now working back home. It is now going out to programs that are evidence-based, proven programs, to try to give them a little boost, working with local government, State government, nonprofits, and others, leveraging some of the Federal money so that it ends up making a bigger difference in trying to turn the tide on this epidemic.

Maybe most important, this legislation, which is called the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, CARA—maybe the most important thing about CARA is that it recognizes addiction as a disease. In some respect, it was the first time we had done that as a Congress as well. Recognizing it as a disease changes the way you view treatment because it is something that is not a moral failing. In fact, it is often caused by an accident or an injury—somebody getting a prescription pill that changes something in their brain, and they become addicted.

The point is, in order to solve it, in order to address it, treatment is the avenue that is going to be more successful. I think treating it like a disease is one of the essential aspects of it. Also, pulling away the stigma, getting some of the stigma out of the way, enables more people to come forward to get treatment for their family members, to seek treatment for a loved one, and enables doctors and others in the medical profession to treat people in a way that helps get them on the right path to recovery.

That legislation passed. In fact, earlier this year, in the bipartisan budget agreement, there was additional funding put aside for CARA and for other opioid programs, including one I will talk about in second, and that was very important. That 2-year funding bill provided \$6 billion over 2 years. That is unprecedented. We have never done anything like that around here.

Are we making progress? Yes. Are we there yet? No. In my view, the CARA

legislation was the right first step, but there is a second step now that is needed, which is called CARA 2.0, the Comprehensive Addiction Recovery Act 2.0. It learns from some of the things that we have found in the field as CARA has been implemented. It picks up some additional provisions. For instance, it talks about the need to deal even more substantially with overprescribing because most people who die in your State or mine from an opioid overdose started with prescription drugs. That was their first opioid.

Earlier, I mentioned that people who might have had an accident or injury are given opioids. We need to stop that overprescribing in order to get at the core of so much of this problem. Probably 8 out of 10 people in Ohio who overdose on heroin or fentanyl started on prescription drugs—sometimes obtained legally and sometimes not.

It breaks my heart to have a young person come to my office and say “I had my wisdom tooth taken out”—this has happened to me fairly frequently because people know I am focused on this issue—“and this doctor gave me opioids, pills, for a wisdom tooth removal.” In the cases recently in my office, it has been a young person saying “I was too smart to take them.” Thank goodness. Be careful. To the parents out there and the kids who are listening, be careful.

Our CARA 2.0 legislation includes, by the way, a 3-day limit on prescription drugs for acute pain. Acute pain would be after a procedure like that, as an example. The dentists I know—including the new head of the American Dental Association, who has a passion for this issue because he is from Cincinnati, my hometown—understand the impact of this. A lot of people I talk to say you should not be using opioids at all in that case. When I had my wisdom teeth taken out, I wasn’t given opioids, nor were many in my generation. Yet that seems to be normal today. This is an example in CARA 2.0 of going even further, but in the meantime, we have the CARA legislation out there. It is being funded. That is a good thing.

The other legislation is called the Cures legislation. That funding goes directly to the State and then is delivered to various groups around the State, usually through the Alcohol, Drug Addiction, and Mental Health Boards, the ADAMHS Boards. Some of you know about those and probably have been involved in those. That was passed at the end of 2016. It was passed as part of the 21st Century Cures legislation, which was broader legislation, but we made sure that opioids were included there.

I thank my colleagues for working with me on that. There were so many, but LAMAR ALEXANDER, the Senator from Tennessee, stands out as an appropriator and authorizer who knew we needed to get some more funding out to these States, particularly States like mine and his that are so hard hit. I thank SHELLY MOORE CAPITO from

West Virginia, a State that probably is, unfortunately, No. 1 now in terms of overdose deaths. Ohio is right behind it. West Virginia is another State that has been hit hard. So many colleagues of mine fought to ensure that there was funding in that legislation. It is making a difference as well.

Last year, my home State of Ohio received \$26 million, for instance, in Cures funding and just recently, another \$26 million, which is being distributed now. These two laws, CARA and Cures, are helping and encouraging innovative programs across Ohio. I have had an opportunity to visit a lot of these programs around the State. I have been to dozens of treatment centers and to roundtable discussions and communities to talk about how this funding can be used most effectively. Let me give a couple of examples.

The week before last, I was in the Columbus area, in a town called Whitehall. I went to the fire station to have a roundtable discussion about this with community leaders and to see how their program, which is called SAFE, is working. It is called the SAFE Station Program, and it was made possible with a \$400,000 grant through the CARA legislation. This funding has been used to train our firefighters, EMS personnel, so they understand how to deal with the opioid issues so that when there is an overdose, they can help somebody go into treatment.

This is important for a couple of reasons. This seems very simple. Unfortunately, there is a big gap right now in most of our communities. I encourage you to plug in to your own community to find out whether it is happening in yours because it probably is; that is, someone who overdoses is now typically saved by this miracle drug called Narcan. Our legislation, CARA, provides more funding for Narcan. We need this. It is necessary, but it is not sufficient. So many people who overdose are saved by this miracle drug that reverses the effect of the overdose, but then what happens? In the vast majority of cases, these people go right back to the old environment—maybe to a dysfunctional family, maybe to a gang, maybe to the old neighborhood.

If you talk to EMS personnel, firefighters, and police officers, who are the ones responsible for finding these people and treating them, they will tell you that they are not happy about giving someone Narcan again and again. They want to see that person get into treatment. It makes no sense for any of us and certainly not for the taxpayer. It also makes no sense for that addict and that addict’s family and friends and employer, if there is one, because that person is not getting the help he or she needs.

How do you close that gap? They are doing it at this firehouse in Whitehall, OH. They are doing it in two ways—one, opening up the doors to the firehouse and saying: Come on in.

When I was there, just by chance, a young man, who described himself to

me as a heroin addict—and he had heroin on his person—had arrived just before me at this firehouse. Just by chance, he had come in off the streets because he felt it was a safe place. He wasn’t going to get arrested. No one was to go to ask him a lot of questions. But they were going to get him into treatment. He said he was ready.

Of course I asked him, as I often do with addicts and recovering addicts, how many times he had been through treatment and what worked or didn’t work. He had been through it three times already, and it hadn’t worked. He said that the difference now is that he believes he is ready. You have to believe him. You have to get someone in treatment when they are ready. That is why having the doors open at the firehouse is very important. He was nervous, but he was transported right after I had a chance to visit with him. I got to see how these EMS personnel compassionately and professionally dealt with him as he was getting ready to be transported to what is called the Addiction Stabilization Center in downtown Columbus, run by Maryhaven.

Interestingly, CARA funded the fire station and their program. Cures is what made possible the Addiction Stabilization Center—\$1.2 million in Cures funding—in downtown Columbus, which is taking people from all over Franklin County and the Columbus area and making a tremendous difference in getting people not just through the Narcan and saving their lives but getting them into treatment and recovery. That is the key, closing that gap. It is tragic to me that the gap is so prevalent and is causing such a problem around our State and our country.

The other thing they do, of course, at this fire station is that when they have someone who has overdosed and has been given Narcan, they bring them through this system and take them to the Maryhaven stabilization center and get them the help they need. It has worked remarkably well. Not everybody agrees to go, but the vast majority do. That is a huge difference from what normally happens in our country. It is an example of the kind of comprehensive program that is going to help close the gaps and catch those who are falling between the cracks.

It is no surprise that the Surgeon General of the United States, Dr. Jerome Adams, said recently, when he visited this program in Columbus, that this is “one of the best programs in the country for lowering stigma and enabling recovery.” I appreciate the Surgeon General’s involvement and his willingness to come to Ohio to help us and see how these programs we have passed in the Congress are working.

I have seen similar successes made possible through Cures funding and CARA funding around the State. Recently, I was in Summit County, which is in Northeast Ohio—going from Columbus, Central Ohio, to Northeast Ohio—at Summa Barberton Hospital.

They just received a grant from Cures. They are using that for a pilot program to employ a full-time addiction care coordinator during the overnight hours and to ensure that there is medication-assisted treatment available at the emergency room itself. It had not been available previously. What they are finding is that somebody comes into the emergency room, and typically that person walks right back out the door after being saved by this miracle drug, Narcan—also known as naloxone—never to be heard from again until there is another overdose. Sometimes, by the way, according to the nurses, that overdose might happen as soon as the next several hours in the parking lot at the hospital.

That is no solution. So what they are doing instead is bringing people in, sending them to a counselor, and I got to meet the three women who are counselors there, incredibly empathetic women who are taking these people in, saying: No stigma here. No questions asked. How can we help you? Wouldn't you like to be back with your kids or back in a job or back in a place where you can respect yourself?

They have had remarkable success by saying: We can provide you, right now, right here—in their case—Suboxone, which is a medication-assisted treatment program where you wean somebody off a drug like Suboxone in order for them to get off their addiction and not go through the horrible pain of withdrawal, at least not as difficult a withdrawal.

So they have had great success with that program as well—again, closing that gap.

I encourage you to look in your community for these kinds of programs and support them.

They are also collaborating with United Way of Summit County and engaging the business community to help with this issue. That makes me really happy. Every time I meet with business groups now, I try to raise this issue. So we talked about the importance of tax reform and tax cuts and regulatory relief, and all of that is great. Our economy is picking up, but do you know what? It is incredible. The No. 1 problem we have in our economy right now is what? Lack of workers. Every employer—small, large, medium size—is telling me: We need workers. There is a skills gap, of course, and there are other issues, but I think the single biggest issue is this opioid epidemic. That is based on a couple of studies—one is from the Department of Labor, one from the Brookings Institution—which show that those who are out of work altogether, who aren't even applying for jobs—and, by the way, among men, that may be at historic levels. About 8½ million men are literally not trying to get a job—8½ million men between 25 and 55, prime working years, and you know what half of them say, 46 percent, based on one survey, 44 percent another survey—and that is not over-reported. In my view, that has to be

underreported because there is a stigma, there is a legal issue connected, but about half of them say they are taking pain medication on a daily basis. Two-thirds acknowledge it is prescription pain medication in one study.

So this is a huge issue in the business community. It should be. If you want to have more workers out there who are ready to go to work, able to go to work, help on this addiction issue.

Yes, provide funding for some of these programs that work but also dig into it in your community. Find out what is working, what is not working. If you have this gap—which I guarantee you do—between those who are overdosing, getting the Narcan, and those getting into treatment, address that. Find innovative ways to do it. If you are finding there is another gap between shorter term treatment, say, 6, 7, 8, 10 weeks and the longer term recovery, help address that. Encourage longer term recovery programs. It can be outpatient programs. It might be residential programs, but we know that works to really get people back on track.

Find out what is going on in your local community in terms of prevention. Is anybody going to the middle schools and talking about what a ruinous mistake this can be for your life to go down this path and to be careful about prescription drugs?

If we don't all get involved—and we all have a reason to get involved, every single one of us—to ensure that people can live out their God-given potential in life, then we will not have done everything we can to try to reverse this trend.

Again, what I am seeing back home is that what we have done here so far is starting to work. I have to tell you, I believe we would already be seeing a reversal and seeing fewer overdoses across the board if not for one thing; that is, the influx, in the last few years particularly, of this new drug. It is a synthetic form of opioids. It is not heroin. It is not prescription drugs. It is usually called fentanyl, sometimes carfentanil, but what it is, is something a person made.

Here is the shocking news. Fentanyl is 50 times more powerful than heroin—sometimes worse. It is very inexpensive. It is readily accessible. It is coming not across the Mexican border, and not, as far as we know, being made in this country. It is coming from overseas, mostly from China, and it is coming through our U.S. mail system.

Now, let's be clear. This is the new crisis. Probably two-thirds of the deaths in my home State of Ohio from overdoses are now linked to fentanyl.

We had a tele-townhall meeting earlier this month. The questions came in. People were making statements and so on. One guy called, and he wanted to talk about the drug issue. He was very professional and very specific about what he wanted to talk about. Then, toward the end of his comments and

questions, I could hear his voice crack, and I just knew something was up.

Sure enough, he said: By the way, my son died of a fentanyl overdose just a couple of weeks ago. He talked about how his son thought he was just taking heroin—not that heroin isn't incredibly dangerous in and of itself—but the tragic story that Sam, from Shelby County, OH, told me was that his son died of an overdose of fentanyl.

Now his father was on the call trying to figure out how to get at this. He wanted to talk about the STOP Act, which is legislation we have introduced in this Chamber to try to at least stop some of the flow of this deadly poison into our community. Again, we know where it is being made, we know where it is coming from. Law enforcement is desperate for some better tools to be able to stop some of this poison from coming in.

We spent about a year in the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations studying this issue. It is a subcommittee I chair. We got some undercover folks involved with us to help us from the Department of Homeland Security. We were able to go online and find out how this tragic criminal network works, and we were able to access a couple hundred websites online that were happy to sell fentanyl freely online.

By the way, we were able to trace the payment systems for people who had bought from these particular websites and, therefore, were able to track who was actually receiving these shipments. We were able to find six different instances where somebody had actually gotten fentanyl from one of these sites, and then, by looking at the local news, determined that person died of an overdose within a few days or a few weeks of receiving that shipment.

We were able to do this just by going online and finding out these people who had bought these drugs from these people, that they themselves had died of overdoses of fentanyl.

Think of all the thousands of others who have died who have received drugs through some of these criminal networks. Frankly, what we found as we looked into this deeper and deeper was exactly what you would expect, which is these traffickers are smart. There is a lot of money in this. They know how to send these drugs into our neighborhoods, and they want to do it through the U.S. Postal Service. Why? Because the other carriers—think FedEx or DHL or UPS and private carriers—are required by law, passed in the U.S. Congress, to tell law enforcement what packages are coming in, from where they are coming, what is in it, where it is going through advanced electronic data before the package comes to this country. We required that after 9/11—frankly, not because of fentanyl but because of the concern about people having other contraband, including explosives in packages—all the private carriers say to law enforcement: Here is

what is coming in. Here is where it is from. Here is what is in it. Here is where it is going.

With that information, law enforcement can then find suspicious packages, and I have seen them do it. I have gone to distribution centers in my State and have been able to see some of these brave personnel from Customs and Border Protection. They are brave because some of this stuff is really dangerous.

By the way, when they take a package in to inspect it, they have to put on a protective suit. They have to be in a room that is well ventilated so they don't overdose and die from some of this fentanyl that is coming in.

By knowing where it is from, where it is going, what is in it, and by having access to Big Data all around the world—not just the country but the world—to know where the hot spots are, where maybe some Chinese company that has some evil chemists who are engaged in this, maybe they are shipping it through another country, they find that out, if they see it coming from another country, they can find those packages as well. They are remarkably successful at finding some of this stuff and getting it offline rather than having it go into our community, but the Postal Service was not required to do this after 9/11. Instead, the Postal Service was told: You ought to study the issue because it is important and get back to us. We are still waiting for that study. That was over 15 years ago.

So when you go online, what we found out is, these websites are happy to send it to you through the Postal Service. In fact, they virtually guarantee delivery if you use the Postal Service. If you use one of these other carriers, they don't. That is sad. A U.S. Government agency is being used as a conduit to ship poison into our communities. It is the No. 1 killer in my home State.

So our legislation is very simple. It simply requires the Postal Service to provide 100 percent advanced electronic data to our law enforcement so they can do the job they want to do. Law enforcement is desperate for these tools. You can imagine. They want to stop this poison.

By the way, the letter carriers I know—you ask your letter carrier—they don't want to carry this stuff, and they certainly don't want to have this poison going into the communities they serve.

We have about one-third of the U.S. Senate now as cosponsors of this legislation. Will it solve the entire problem? No. We talked earlier about the need for more prevention, education, treatment, the longer term recovery, but at least—at least—let's keep some of this poison from coming in. At a minimum, it is going to raise the price, which is one of our huge problems with fentanyl today. It is not only 50 times more powerful than heroin and people chase that high, but it is very inexpensive relative to other forms of opioids.

So my hope is, we will have this legislation on the floor in the next few weeks; that we will, in a bipartisan way, deal with this issue and tell someone like Sam from Shelby County, whom I talked about earlier who called into the tele-townhall that we are doing something, so the next dad is not going to have this kind of tragedy befall his son.

By the way, 2 weeks earlier, at another tele-townhall meeting, a woman called in—same thing. At the end of it, she talked about her brother who had died of an overdose of fentanyl that had been put in another drug. So it is being spread in not just heroin, not just cocaine, not just crystal meth but other drugs as well, and that is one of the great challenges law enforcement has today.

I appreciate the opportunity to talk about some of the positive things this Congress has done, the CURES Act, the CARA Act, how I have seen it back home making a difference in the lives of the people I represent, but also there is a need for us to do more. Certainly fund those programs, continue to provide the funding at these historic levels because it is necessary, because the epidemic absolutely deserves that kind of attention, and it is necessary.

Second, let's take these other steps. Let's stop this overprescribing. Let's pass the STOP Act to ensure that we can deal with this fentanyl crisis. Let's ensure that we can turn the corner, turn the tide, begin to save lives. I think we can if we continue to make progress and continue to focus on these issues that make such a difference to our constituents.

I yield back.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER
THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

NOMINATION OF BRETT KAVANAUGH
Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, as the Senate reconvenes to cross more items off our to-do list, we should take pride in all we have already accomplished this summer.

This month alone, we have already advanced the Senate's farm bill to conference and named conferees to finalize this important legislation. We have also passed another set of appropriations measures. The Senate has now approved 7 of the 12 measures for next year, and we finalized the John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019, which President Trump signed into law on Monday of this week.

The reason we are convening today is that important work remains for the weeks ahead. That includes more progress on appropriations, and it includes confirming more of the President's nominees.

Last week, Chairman GRASSLEY announced that Judiciary Committee hearings for Judge Brett Kavanaugh, whom the President has nominated to serve on the Supreme Court, will begin September 4.

Judge Kavanaugh's testimony will only add to the enormous wealth of in-

formation about his legal qualifications, his professional reputation, and his jurisprudence that is already available. Already the committee has received nearly 200,000 pages of material that relate to this nomination. By all accounts, this is already the most material ever submitted for any Supreme Court nomination—the most material ever.

Of course, the best indicator of how Judge Kavanaugh will approach the role of a Federal judge is the way he has discharged his duties as a Federal judge in the 12-plus years he served on the DC Circuit Court—12-plus years, more than 300 opinions.

I can hardly articulate this point better than my friend the senior Senator from Vermont. Back when the Senate was evaluating the nomination of then-Judge Sonia Sotomayor to the Supreme Court, Senator LEAHY said: We do not have to imagine what kind of a judge she will be because we see the kind of judge she has been.

A number of other prominent Democrats echoed that sentiment, including my friend the Democratic leader. He called Republican requests for additional documents related to the Sotomayor nomination a "fishing expedition" and said Republicans were "grasping at straws." My friend from New York said "everybody knows" that then-Judge Sotomayor's "record on the bench" was "the best way to evaluate" her nomination.

So I hope that our Democratic colleagues who are demanding even more documents have taken the time to read the 12 years of opinions from Judge Kavanaugh that they already have. That, of course, will underscore exemplary service on the second highest court in the Nation.

When it was the Supreme Court nominee of a Democratic President, they themselves insisted that judicial opinions were more important than any other papers for evaluating a Supreme Court nominee. Well, well, we have Judge Kavanaugh's opinions, and we have this record-breaking pile of additional materials—far more materials than were produced for the Sotomayor nomination, by the way—12 years of opinions and the most material in history. Every Senator who is actually willing to give this nominee fair consideration will be more than fully equipped to do just that.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.
THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GARDNER). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, last week I announced that the Senate Judiciary Committee will hold a hearing on Judge Kavanaugh's nomination for the Supreme Court starting on September 4. The hearing will begin 57

days after the President announced Judge Kavanaugh's nomination, more than a week longer than the period between the announcements and hearings for the last three Justices—Sotomayor, Kagan, and Gorsuch.

The Senate has already received more documents from Judge Kavanaugh's time in the executive branch than we did for any previous Supreme Court nominee. We have so far received more than 184,000 pages of documents, of which more than 124,000 are currently publicly available to anybody in this country going to judiciary.senate.gov.

The team of lawyers who work for the majority have already reviewed more than 10,000 pages of the 307 judicial opinions that Judge Kavanaugh wrote, along with hundreds more opinions that he joined, in his 12 years of service on the DC Circuit. The team of lawyers who worked for the majority have reviewed 110 pages of written answers and over 17,000 pages of materials Judge Kavanaugh submitted to the committee in response to its bipartisan questionnaire—the most robust questionnaire ever submitted to a Supreme Court nominee.

The team of lawyers who work for the majority has already reviewed every page of the more than 184,000 pages of emails and other records that the committee has received so far from Judge Kavanaugh's time as a government lawyer in the White House and also serving with Judge Starr when Starr was independent counsel.

I expect that we will receive even more documents this very night or, at the latest, tomorrow and that all remaining documents responsive to our request will be produced next week. We will work to make every unrestricted record publicly available as quickly as possible.

As I predicted, this confirmation process is the most transparent ever, particularly as it relates to the number of documents that we are receiving. We have already received more documents from Judge Kavanaugh's executive branch service than any nominee in history, with many more to come.

Senators have more time to review Judge Kavanaugh's record than they did for at least three Supreme Court nominees. So I am very confident that the committee and the Senate will have ample information and time to carry out our responsibilities under our Constitution to advise and consent.

But some of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle are attempting to manipulate the American people. I just described to you the largest document production in the history of a Supreme Court nomination. But guess what. The minority leader describes it as "unprecedented secrecy." This argument is very ridiculous on its face, and the American people aren't buying it.

I got a lot of questions at my town meetings across Iowa over the last week. In 20 different counties in Iowa, this issue about the Supreme Court al-

ways came up—that shouldn't surprise anybody—but there was hardly any mention of this document issue, which was cooked up by the Washington insiders.

Let's not forget how this document issue started. First, liberal dark money groups and their Senate allies announced immediate opposition to Judge Kavanaugh. Some of them even announced it before the name Kavanaugh was announced by the President. The minority leader said that he would oppose Judge Kavanaugh with everything he has.

So their first tactic was to argue that the Senate shouldn't confirm anyone during a midterm election year. They attempted to invoke the Biden rule, which bars confirmation of Supreme Court Justices during a Presidential election year, to make this argument. Of course, this was a ludicrous position, unsupported by precedent and widely rejected by objective observers and even fact checkers.

The minority leader and his allies abandoned that argument, but they didn't abandon their goal, which is to stall Judge Kavanaugh's confirmation until after the midterm elections and hope that the other party will take control of the Senate. That is why the minority leader refocused his tactics and manufactured a very phony controversy regarding Judge Kavanaugh's White House documents.

How do we know it is phony? On the one hand, the minority leader has publicly stated that he would oppose Judge Kavanaugh's nomination with everything he has. On the other hand, he is insisting that the Senate needs millions more pages of documents on top of what we already have in order to make an informed decision.

Indeed, the Senate Democrats demanded the search of every page of every email and every other record from every one of the hundreds of White House staffers who came and went during every one of the 8 years of the Bush administration just because the name "Kavanaugh" could have been in those emails. In other words, the Senate Democrats demanded the search of every scrap of White House paper for the entire Bush Presidency.

As I stated repeatedly, I am not going to put the American taxpayers on the hook for the Senate Democrats' fishing expedition. How much more information do the minority leader and his outside dark money allies need if they have already made up their decision to vote no on Judge Kavanaugh?

When they are in that position, they don't care about Judge Kavanaugh's record because they know what their vote is going to be. How much more do they need to know to vote no?

They simply want to bury us in a mountain of paper so there is no chance that we can hold a confirmation vote on Judge Kavanaugh's nomination any time this year. There is already a mountain of paper for our committee members to go through and their

staffs. The Democrats want to make it be Mount Everest.

Let's not forget that Judge Kavanaugh has a 12-year judicial track record from his time on the DC Circuit. During that time, he authored more than 300 opinions and joined in hundreds more. These opinions provide the most relevant information for assessing Judge Kavanaugh's legal thinking and whether or not he ought to be approved to be on the Supreme Court.

I go back to something my colleagues on the other side of the aisle said back in 2009. My Democratic colleagues were making this very same argument with respect to Justice Sotomayor. Of course, they are flip-flopping now. The current minority leader said in 2009 that "everybody knows" a judge's record on the bench "is the best way to evaluate a nominee." He said to Justice Sotomayor: "I want to turn to your record on the bench, which I believe is the very best way to get a sense of what your record will be on the bench in the future." Then Chairman LEAHY said:

We have Judge Sotomayor's record from the Federal bench. That is a public record that we had even before she was designated by the President. Judge Sotomayor's mainstream record of judicial restraint and modesty is the best indication of her judicial philosophy. We do not have to imagine what kind of a judge she will be because we see what kind of a judge she has been.

Well, Senator SCHUMER, the same logic applies to Judge Kavanaugh's long judicial track record of 12 years. Despite this record being more than sufficient to assess how Judge Kavanaugh approaches legal issues, I requested hundreds of thousands of additional pages from his time as a government lawyer, in the interest of full transparency.

But even the most transparent confirmation process in history is not enough for those who decided to oppose Judge Kavanaugh before they even saw his record.

The document requests for Justice Kagan's confirmation provide strong support for how the Judiciary Committee is proceeding now. Then, the Senate requested Justice Kagan's White House records, but not internal documents from the Solicitor General's Office. We refrained out of respect for the sensitivity of internal deliberations in the Solicitor General's Office. We did so even though these documents would have been extremely helpful to our assessment of Justice Kagan's views on the law given that she lacked any judicial experience or record. Justice Kagan herself testified that Senators should look at her time as Solicitor General in order to evaluate her, but we didn't ask for those records. This precedent supports my decision not to ask for documents from Judge Kavanaugh's time as White House Staff Secretary. If internal Solicitor General documents were too sensitive to produce, then, of course, documents from Judge Kavanaugh's time as Staff Secretary at the White House are as sensitive as well.

The Staff Secretary serves as the in-box and out-box for the President of the United States. These documents include some of the most sensitive documents in all of our government, implicating our national security and the President's other core duties. These documents are at the heart of what the Constitution recognizes as executive privilege. In addition to being the most sensitive documents, they are the least probative of Judge Kavanaugh's legal thinking. The Staff Secretary's primary role is to make sure that the President sees advice from a range of policy advisers across the entire executive branch and that he not provide his own policy or legal advice as Staff Secretary.

To recap, Judge Kavanaugh wrote more than 300 judicial opinions and joined in hundreds more in his 12 years on the bench. Justice Kagan, by contrast, had written or had joined zero judicial opinions before her nomination. Despite having less of a need for Judge Kavanaugh's executive branch records—in light of his substantial judicial record—the Senate has already received more such documents than it had for Justice Kagan or for any other nominee, and we will still receive many more. In fact, for Judge Kavanaugh, we could receive up to 1 million pages, which is more than for the five prior Supreme Court nominees combined.

Democratic leaders have also tried to argue that Judge Kavanaugh's White House records are being cherry-picked by a lawyer by the name of Bill Burck, whom they label as a partisan lawyer. I guess they have forgotten how the Senate received documents for the last three Supreme Court nominees. Otherwise, they wouldn't have made this silly argument. The Senate received documents for Justice Sotomayor's confirmation after they were reviewed by Leslie Kiernan. She represented Obama campaign manager David Plouffe and former Representative Charlie Rangel, and she eventually became Deputy White House Counsel in the Obama administration.

As the Wall Street Journal pointed out in an editorial yesterday, the Senate received documents for Justice Kagan after they were reviewed by Bruce Lindsey. Mr. Lindsey overlapped with Justice Kagan in the White House, which was a Democratic White House. He also served as President Clinton's national campaign director in 1992, as President Clinton's hyperpartisan senior lawyer and a really big fixer in the White House, and as the CEO of the Clinton Foundation for 10 years, including when Justice Kagan was nominated.

Now, I would think anybody who raises questions about a lawyer by the name of Burck ought to be really embarrassed by bringing up that issue when you look at how it was handled with previous nominees to the Supreme Court by people who were partisan. How much more partisan can you get

than the people I just mentioned who handled issues of Presidential privilege for Democratic nominees Sotomayor and Kagan?

It happens that Bill Burck is President Bush's Presidential Records Act representative, as Mr. Lindsey was for President Clinton. Mr. Burck has held this position not just recently because of this nomination—but since the year 2009. He is a partner, it happens, at one of the most liberal law firms in America. Mr. Burck also served as President Bush's Presidential Records Act representative during the Gorsuch nomination, but I didn't hear any Democrat objecting to Mr. Burck's involvement in that nomination. They also didn't object to Ms. Kiernan's or Mr. Lindsey's involvement during the Sotomayor and Kagan nominations. Their objection to Mr. Burck's role now is another opportunistic attempt to discredit the process and to avoid talking about Judge Kavanaugh's qualifications.

I would like to correct one additional misconception before I yield the floor.

As has been claimed by some people, the National Archives is not being cut out of this process. Under the Presidential Records Act, President Bush has the right to request his own administration's documents. He can choose to make a document public or claim that it is protected under executive privilege. This is precisely what he is doing now. President Bush is providing a very valuable public service to the American people at what is a very considerable cost but happens to be a non-public expense. He is expediting the review process and making sure that the Senate has all of the documents it needs to conduct a timely and efficient confirmation process. President Bush and his legal team should be thanked, not scorned, for providing this tremendous service to the American people.

I want to tell you how much on top of this former President Bush was. On the day after Kavanaugh's nomination, he called me and said: I want to do everything I can to cooperate so you get all of the records you need to make sure that you give a fair and thorough hearing to Kavanaugh.

Thanks to these people, we have Judge Kavanaugh's papers in time to hold a confirmation hearing and to vote this very year just as the American people expect us to do.

Democratic leaders have played up this phony document controversy to deflect attention from Judge Kavanaugh's extraordinary qualifications and sterling reputation as a judge of 12 years on the second most important court in this land. In his 12 years on the bench, the Supreme Court has on 13 occasions adopted legal opinions from Judge Kavanaugh's opinions. This is an exemplary track record in the Supreme Court—to have one's opinions backed up by the Supreme Court not once but 13 times.

Judge Kavanaugh is dedicated to judicial independence. He is not afraid to

tell another branch of government when that branch has exceeded its lawful authority. At the same time, he has great respect for the separation of powers, and he will interpret the law as it is written by the people's representatives in Congress, instead of trying to be a superlegislator. As I am, I hope all of my colleagues are looking forward to hearing from Judge Kavanaugh when he will appear before the Judiciary Committee on September 4.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that following the disposition of the Richardson nomination, the Senate proceed to legislative session and the consideration of H.R. 6157; further, that for the purpose of rule XVI, in relation to substitute amendment No. 3695, the text of H.R. 6157 serve as the basis for defense of germaneness for division A of the amendment and the text of H.R. 6470, as reported by the House Appropriations Committee, serve as the basis for defense of germaneness for division B of the amendment.

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

DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I wish to talk for a few minutes about the principal work that we will be starting this week and, I would hope, be completing next week—certainly completing before we move on to other work. I want to highlight the critical work of the National Defense Appropriations Act and the decision just made by the body that will allow us to go to that bill and to the Labor, Health and Human Services bill this week.

On Monday, the President signed the authorizing bill for fiscal year 2019, the John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act. This bill provides important authorizations for a number of programs. By the way, in its title, it also recognizes the extraordinary courage and service of our friend and colleague JOHN MCCAIN. On more than one occasion, I know Senator MCCAIN has said that chairing that committee has been the most important public service he has ever been allowed to do. So to have this bill named for him is something that I appreciate and that I know the Presiding Officer does too.

I commend my colleagues for the work they have done and for completing that work, the defense authorization bill, in the fastest time in 20 years. This bill has been signed into law by the President. Now we get to take a step further and do the second thing that Congress is responsible for, not just for authorizing and setting out a blueprint for how we defend the country but for providing the funding with which to do that.

Over the years, I have seen that many of our colleagues have forever been prepared to debate with regard to how we need to spend more money on

defense until it comes time to vote on a bill that includes more money for defense. This bill does that. Frankly, I think it is the most important of our responsibilities—the defense of the country. The Federal Government's principal role is only ensured when we provide the money to do that. We need to be sure that we provide for those who serve in uniform—those who serve us—and for what they need to carry out their missions. I believe the bill we will debate in the later part of this week and all of next week—and as long as it takes to get it done—does that. As a member of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense, I was pleased to vote for this bill. I was pleased to vote for it as a member of the full Appropriations Committee, and I look forward to voting for it as the debate ends. I also look forward to the full debate.

One of the things we have done this year that has not been done in recent years is to bring these appropriations bills to the floor in a way that not just the two dozen or so Senators who serve on Appropriations get to amend and debate and argue in public about what should be in the bill but to do this in a way that every Senator can come to the floor and offer an amendment and that every Senator can debate that amendment if it is germane to the bill and if it meets the standards of the bill. Everybody who is willing to find the money somewhere in that bill to pay for what one would rather do rather than what the bill does gets a chance to do that, and that is a good process.

This defense funding bill provides a \$20 billion increase for defense, and it supports the largest pay increase in over a decade for those who serve and defend us. This bill prioritizes resources for equipment and training to ensure that our troops have every possible advantage on the battlefield.

I have said before on this floor and at this podium that we never want our troops to be involved in a fair fight. We want them to be involved in a fight where they have every possible advantage over their adversary, and this bill takes steps to do that.

Missouri has a number of military installations. Those installations and people who work at those installations, civilian and military, really provide a great part of our Nation's defense—Whiteman Air Force Base, Rosecrans Air National Guard facility, Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri National Guard units, the AVCRAD—the repair center in Springfield, MO, my hometown. People who work there have a big stake in our country, and we have a big stake in them, as we do in bases all over the United States.

The chairman, Senator SHELBY, and Senator DURBIN, the ranking member of the Defense Subcommittee, have crafted a bill that really makes crucial investments across the board, from Army end-strength increases to important investments in the B-2, the A-10,

the B-21, the C-130 programs, and others that are essential to the infrastructure of the military and the very infrastructure itself. The defense facilities and the Army ammunition plants that haven't been changed very much since World War II have some update potential in this bill.

This bill is good news for those who serve at Missouri military bases. It is good news for those who work as civilians at those bases. It is also good news for the many Missourians who are part of the defense industry. We have people who work at businesses, large and small, who are contractors and subcontractors to those contractors, facilities I have visited in our State where the initial facility was a converted dairy barn but then added on as they got better and better and got more subcontracts. Those people are all part of this system.

This bill includes multiyear procurement authority for the F/A-18 Super Hornets. These are manufactured in St. Louis. Year after year, the Navy has had the Super Hornets included at the top of the unfunded requirement list, I assume hoping that we in Congress would first look at that list once we decide what else we could do. On the committee, this is something that Senator DURBIN from Illinois, who is right across the river from the Boeing facility, and I have worked on to ensure that this unfunded request was usually met. Because the Navy has asked for it as part of their long-term structure, what this bill does, for the first time in some time, is make multiyear commitments to this plane, which is an important part of many flying packages that we have.

Additionally, the bill provides research funding that is badly needed to counter threats from China and Russia—huge investments on their part, using at least some of the things they have taken from us. They have taken intellectual property we have designed in our aircraft and other things, and then they have taken their money to see how far they can get ahead of us, using our technology, in some cases, as the foundation for what they are trying to do and making major efforts to try to get ahead of us in things like hypersonics, directed energy, artificial intelligence, and cyber infiltration, and cyber warfare. This bill looks at all of those and says that we are not going to let other countries that are adversaries of ours in the fight for freedom around the world have the advantage. We are going to continue to do everything we can to maintain the advantage.

We have to have technological superiority. It has been one of the great things we have been able to do for those willing to serve, but we have to be sure that our servicemembers have the training, the equipment, and the support they need to carry out their mission. That is my top priority. I think it is the top priority of the Federal Government.

Over the next few days, we will have a chance to debate that top priority. There are different ways to do this. There is nothing wrong with people having different opinions, particularly if they can get a majority of the Senate to agree with that opinion. I think this is a bill that is going to stand the test of that debate. We will find a few ways to improve it as we move forward.

This is a bill in which we demonstrate our gratitude to those who serve. We demonstrate our commitment to the defense of freedom and democracy, both in the debate and in the bill. If we don't fund the decisions we have made in the Defense Authorization Act, we really haven't made those decisions; we will have talked about what we might like to do rather than what we are determined to do. This Defense appropriations bill decides what we are determined to do, willing to do and to establish as a priority.

I look forward to the entire Senate being able to debate that bill and hopefully send that bill to a conference with the House and to the President's desk.

With that, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

HONORING JOURNALISTS

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, a free, independent press is vital to our democracy, and it is vital to communities from Kansas to Ohio and across this country.

Reporters are not enemies of the people. They do vital work not just in Washington but around the country. I want to continue my, more or less, weekly honoring of local reporters who are doing their jobs, who understand that a free press is crucial to a free country and a free people.

This past week, I have been all over Ohio, from talking about investing in national security jobs in Dayton to meeting with local leaders tackling the opioid epidemic in Findlay, to promoting auto jobs in Lima, Toledo, and Cleveland. At every one of these stops, I talk with Ohio reporters who are out there doing their jobs, covering the important stories in their communities. Local journalists do that kind of reporting in every community in Ohio, in Kansas, and across this country.

Earlier this month, the Circleville Herald—a town 25, 30 miles south of Columbus, straight down U.S. 23—ran a story on the upcoming Veterans' Benefits Day in Pickaway County on August 25, reported by local reporter Heather Barr. The reporter talked with the executive director of the Pickaway County Veterans' Services Office, who said that veterans don't realize there is someone in their county to help them.

That is why they set up this event, to show veterans all the services available through the local county Veterans' Services Office and the Chillicothe Veterans' Administration Medical Center. I would add, Ohio is one of the lucky States in the country. Not nearly every State does this. Every single county has a Veterans' Service Office whose only function is to serve veterans.

Through its work, the Circleville Herald and local reporters like Ms. Barr are informing their community about ways veterans can get assistance with the benefits they have earned—everything from help applying for benefits to transportation to the Chillicothe VA or the Dayton VA or wherever, to VA appointments in local community-based outpatient clinics. That is the kind of work Ms. Barr does. That is the kind of work local communities' journalists do all over this country. This kind of reporting is what journalists do every day in my State. So when I hear the President of the United States call journalists enemies of the people, I think of Heather Barr; I think of reporters in Cleveland and Akron and smaller cities like Mansfield and smaller towns yet like Van Wert and Wapakoneta. They serve their readers. They serve their viewers. They serve their communities. They deserve our respect, not the venom of the President of the United States.

AUTO INDUSTRY

Mr. President, over the past week, I have traveled my State visiting communities that rely on the American auto industry—Ford in Lima, Jeep in Toledo, the Ford engine plant in Cleveland. This Monday, I will go to Youngstown, which relies on GM, and Lordstown. I can personally attest to how great these cars are.

A number of members of my family, including my wife and me, for years drove a Chevy Cruz made by union workers in Lordstown, near Youngstown, OH. A couple years ago, my wife and I each bought Jeep Cherokees made by union labor in Toledo. I can speak to how great these cars are because in October of 2016, a young man ran a stop sign—I was in the passenger seat—hit the Jeep right where I sat and knocked this Jeep 30, 40 feet off the road. Neither I nor the gentleman driving, Will Young, were injured because of American-made steel, the American-made Jeep itself made in Toledo, and because of the U.S. Government, with airbags and seatbelts and all the kinds of rules they have set for auto safety.

We know American cars, made by American workers with American steel, are the best in the world. Too often, though, American workers and American suppliers aren't competing on a level playing field. Last fall, in the tax giveaway to corporations, Republicans in Congress created—believe it or not, they didn't close loopholes that encouraged companies to move overseas; they created a big, new incentive to send jobs overseas. They allow companies to pay 10.5 percent in taxes

on their overseas profits while in the United States they pay a 23-percent corporate tax rate.

What it says to a company in Mansfield, OH, or Ravenna, OH, or Zanesville, OH, that shuts down and thinks about moving overseas: You have a 21-percent corporate rate if you are in Youngstown, but if you move to Reynosa, Mexico, you have a 10.5-percent rate. So what the Republican leadership said when they passed this tax bill was—it was like handing out a 50-percent-off coupon to companies that send jobs overseas. Why would we do that? We see the consequences of bad trade policy, bad tax policy at plants across Ohio and in communities in my State.

Earlier this summer—pretty unbelievable—on the very same day General Motors laid off the entire second shift, more than 1,000 workers—the same day General Motors laid off more than 1,000 workers in Lordstown, OH, a 50-year-old plant there, and it is a historic plant, we got word the same day that GM plans to build its new Chevy Blazer in Mexico. The company is laying off their Ohio plant. They could have retooled. They got billions of dollars in tax cuts under the Republican tax bill. They could have used some of that money to retool in Lordstown with a trained workforce. Instead, they are bypassing American workers. They are setting up the plant in Mexico. They are sending more jobs to Mexico. Announcements like GM's are proof we need to do more to keep auto jobs in the United States. Stop rewarding companies that send jobs overseas.

A moment ago, I said it is like giving them a 50-percent-off coupon on their tax bills. That is why, this month, I introduced legislation to help us level the playing field with foreign competition by making it more affordable to American-made cars and trucks and revoking—revoking—that special GOP tax cut for auto companies that send jobs overseas.

The American Cars, American Jobs Act, two simple parts. First, customers who buy cars made in the United States get \$3,500 off. If you buy a new car made by American workers with principally American components, you get \$3,500 off. The discount would apply to some 100 cars, trucks, and SUVs, including all passenger vehicles assembled in Ohio.

Second, companies that cut the number of American jobs they had on the day the GOP tax bill passed and add those jobs overseas lose a tax break they get on some of those overseas profits. It says that when an auto company chooses to send jobs overseas, they lose that 50-percent-off coupon. They pay the full 21 percent.

So, again, GM in Lordstown pays a 21-percent corporate tax rate, but thanks to the President and the Republican Congress, if they move to Mexico, they pay a 10.5-percent corporate tax rate. How morally bankrupt is that and how stupid is that economic policy? So

21 percent if they are in the United States, 10.5 percent—half off—if they go to Mexico.

I heard from Ohioans this past week about what our legislation would mean to their plant. Mike Copeland, president of UAW Local 1219 in Lima, said:

We need a level playing field to compete with foreign manufacturers. . . . The U.S. auto industry has made a magnificent recovery on the backs of hard working people across the country.

I would count in that list of hard-working people certainly the auto-workers at the assembly plant, certainly the workers—union and non-union—in the supply chain for that plant but also American taxpayers who helped to bail out the auto industry. We all got our money back as taxpayers from the auto industry, but, nonetheless, they helped in a big way.

He goes on to say:

We are in the fight of our lives for every job, every day; the American Cars, American Jobs Act will help us fight for those jobs.

Jeep worker Mario Duran, in Toledo, said:

It's important to my family, it's important to the whole community here that we keep selling our American-made product. If we don't have people buying our cars, we lose jobs.

It is not just workers. I heard from mayors and chambers of commerce that back this bill. The mayor of Lima, Mayor Berger, came to the union hall in Lima, joining the president of the chamber of commerce, and spoke up for this bill. Jed Metzger, the president of the Lima Chamber of Commerce, told me our bill “would make our American companies more competitive with foreign auto workers and make it more costly for companies to choose to offshore their production overseas.” So we are incentivizing people to produce here, and we are penalizing them if they shut down production and move overseas.

The Toledo Blade editorial board agrees. They called our bill “a solid proposal to support the U.S. auto industry.” It rewards consumers who support American manufacturing in this country and who believe it is patriotic and good public policy.

The world was reminded 8 years ago to never bet against the American auto industry and the workers who are the engine behind it. We invested in saving this industry. Yet we continue to have a trade and tax policy that undermines it. In fact, it is worse. It is worse than it was 2 years ago because of this break. Again, if you are in Youngstown, you pay a 21-percent tax rate; if you move to Mexico, you pay a 10.5-tax rate.

That 50-percent-off tax coupon given to companies that go overseas just makes no sense. Let's come together in this legislation to change that. Let's level the playing field for American cars and for American workers.

I yield the floor.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the

Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of A. Marvin Quattlebaum, Jr., of South Carolina, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Fourth Circuit.

Mitch McConnell, Cindy Hyde-Smith, David Perdue, Mike Crapo, Mike Rounds, John Boozman, Ron Johnson, John Barrasso, Steve Daines, John Cornyn, Johnny Isakson, John Thune, James E. Risch, Richard Burr, Lindsey Graham, Thom Tillis, Roy Blunt.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of A. Marvin Quattlebaum, Jr., of South Carolina, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Fourth Circuit, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

(Mr. LANKFORD assumed the Chair.)

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER), the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE), the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE), the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN), the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS), and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) would have voted "yea" and the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) would have voted "yea."

Mr. SCHUMER. I announce that the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) and the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) are necessarily absent.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 61, nays 28, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 182 Ex.]

YEAS—61

Baldwin, Barrasso, Bennet, Blunt, Boozman, Capito, Carper, Cassidy, Collins, Coons, Corker, Cornyn, Cotton, Crapo, Cruz, Daines, Donnelly, Enzi, Ernst, Fischer, Gardner, Graham, Grassley, Hassan, Hatch, Heitkamp, Heller, Hoeven, Hyde-Smith, Isakson, Johnson, Jones, Kaine, Kennedy, King, Lankford, Leahy, Manchin, McCaskill, McConnell, Moran, Murkowski, Nelson, Paul, Perdue, Portman, Reed, Risch, Roberts, Rounds, Sasse, Scott, Shaheen, Shelby, Sullivan, Tester, Thune, Warner, Whitehouse, Wicker, Young

NAYS—28

Blumenthal, Booker, Brown, Cantwell, Cardin, Casey, Cortez Masto, Duckworth, Feinstein

Gillibrand, Harris, Heinrich, Hirono, Klobuchar, Markey, Menendez, Merkley, Murphy, Peters, Sanders, Schatz, Schumer, Smith, Stabenow, Udall, Van Hollen, Warren, Wyden

NOT VOTING—11

Alexander, Burr, Durbin, Flake, Inhofe, Lee, McCain, Murray, Rubio, Tillis, Toomey

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BARRASSO). On this vote, the yeas are 61 and the nays are 28.

The motion is agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

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

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

(At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

VOTE EXPLANATION

• Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I was necessarily absent for vote No. 182 on the motion to invoke cloture on the nomination of A. Marvin Quattlebaum, Jr., to be a U.S. circuit judge for the Fourth Circuit. Had I been present, I would have voted aye on the motion to invoke cloture.

ARMS SALES NOTIFICATION

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, section 36(b) of the Arms Export Control Act requires that Congress receive prior notification of certain proposed arms sales as defined by that statute. Upon such notification, the Congress has 30 calendar days during which the sale may be reviewed. The provision stipulates that, in the Senate, the notification of proposed sales shall be sent to the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

In keeping with the committee's intention to see that relevant information is available to the full Senate, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the notifications which have been received. If the cover letter references a classified annex, then such annex is available to all Senators in the office of the Foreign Relations Committee, room SD-423.

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

DEFENSE SECURITY COOPERATION AGENCY, Arlington, VA.

Hon. BOB CORKER, Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of

the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 18-33, concerning the Army's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Latvia for defense articles and services estimated to cost \$200 million. After this letter is delivered to your office, we plan to issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale.

Sincerely,

GREGORY M. KAUSNER, (For Charles W. Hooper, Lieutenant General, USA, Director).

Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 18-33

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

(i) Prospective Purchaser: Government of Latvia

(ii) Total Estimated Value: Major Defense Equipment* \$85 million. Other \$115 million. Total \$200 million.

(iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for Purchase:

Major Defense Equipment (MDE): Four (4) UH-60M Black Hawk Helicopters in standard USG configuration with designated unique equipment and Government Furnished Equipment (GFE).

Ten (10) T700-GE-701D Engines (8 installed and 2 spares).

Ten (10) Embedded Global Positioning Systems/Inertial Navigation Systems (8 installed and 2 spares).

Non-MDE: Also included is one (1) Aviation Mission Planning System, five (5) Talon Forward Looking Infrared Radar (FLIR) (4 production and 1 spare), ten (10) AN/ARC-201D/E (8 production and 2 spares), ten (10) AN/ARC-231 radios (8 production and 2 spares), five (5) AN/APX-123A Identification Friend or Foe (IFF) transponder (4 production and 1 spare), five (5) AN/ARC-220 Radio (4 production and 1 spare), twenty (20) AN/AVS-6 Helmet Mounted Night Vision Devices, aircraft warranty, air worthiness support, spare and repair parts, support equipment, communication equipment, publications and technical documentation, personnel training and training equipment, ground support equipment, site surveys, tool and test equipment, U.S. Government and contractor technical and logistics support services, and other related elements of logistics and program support.

(iv) Military Department: Army (LG-B-UDM).

(v) Prior Related Cases, if any: None.

(vi) Sales Commission, Fee, etc.: Paid. Offered, or Agreed to be Paid: None.

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology Contained in the Defense Article or Defense Services Proposed to be Sold: See Attached Annex.

(viii) Date Report Delivered to Congress: August 3, 2018.

*As defined in Section 47(6) of the Arms Export Control Act.

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

Latvia—UH-60M Black Hawk Helicopters

The Government of Latvia has requested to buy four (4) UH-60M Black Hawk helicopters in standard USG configuration with designated unique equipment and Government Furnished Equipment (GFE), ten (10) T700-GE-701D engines (8 installed and 2 spares), ten (10) Embedded Global Positioning Systems/Inertial Navigation Systems (8 installed and 2 spares). Also included is one (1) Aviation Mission Planning System, five (5) Talon Forward Looking Infrared Radar (FLIR) (4 production and 1 spare), ten (10) AN/ARC-201D/E (8 production and 2 spares), ten (10) AN/ARC-231 radios (8 production and 2 spares), five (5) AN/APX-123A