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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable RAND PAUL, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Gracious God, we praise You today for Your love that sustains our earthly journey. When evil flourishes, we keep our eyes on You, trusting always in the unfolding of Your powerful providence.

Today, inspire our lawmakers to discover the fulfillment of resting in the assurance of Your amazing grace. As our Senators remember how You have provided for this Nation in the past, may they develop a stronger faith in the protection You will give us in the future. Guide them into the future surrounded by the shield of Your favor. Lord, keep them close to You and to each other as they fulfill their sacred calling as legislators.

We pray in Your sacred Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, November 28, 2018.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable RAND PAUL, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Kentucky, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ORRIN G. HATCH,
President pro tempore.

Mr. PAUL thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

SENATE BRIEFING

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, for the information of all Senators, key members of the administration will be coming to the Senate at 11 a.m. this morning for an all-Members briefing with respect to Yemen and Saudi Arabia.

Senators on both sides of the aisle have legitimate concerns about the war in Yemen, the terrible humanitarian plight of Yemeni citizens caught in the crossfire, and the multiple U.S. interests wrapped up in this conflict.

The U.S.-Saudi relationship is a longstanding and critical one, but Senators on both sides of the aisle also have legitimate concerns about the recent conduct of the Saudi Government. All of us want to see our critical foreign partners behave responsibly. I have been encouraged to hear both Secretary Mattis and Secretary Pompeo call for an end to the war in Yemen and for accountability following the murder of Jamal Khashoggi. So I look forward to hearing from both Secretaries today and learning more about the administration's strategy to achieve these and other important objectives.

NOMINATIONS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, there is a lot more work to do. That has been our message after returning

from the Thanksgiving holiday. The Senate is staying focused on wrapping up this year's remaining priorities: getting more of the President's team in place, confirming well-qualified nominees to our Federal courts, and attending to the pressing legislative business the American people need and expect us to handle.

Yesterday, the nomination of Stephen Vaden to serve as general counsel at the Department of Agriculture was confirmed with bipartisan support, and the motion to advance the nomination of Karen Kelley for Deputy Secretary of Commerce was cleared by an even wider margin.

But these important steps haven't always come easily. As I mentioned yesterday, between the day the Vaden nomination was favorably reported by our colleagues on the Agriculture Committee and yesterday's confirmation vote, 351 days elapsed—351 days on the Executive Calendar.

These stories are similar for so many of the President's well-qualified nominees: Needless delays, a recordbreaking number of cloture votes, and then many go on to clear this Chamber with bipartisan support. In some cases that support is nearly unanimous, but my Democratic colleagues made this body drag its feet regardless.

We will press on and continue this week to make progress and put to rest the various outstanding items that have to be completed before the end of the 115th Congress.

Today, the Senate will vote to confirm Karen Kelley to serve as Deputy Secretary of Commerce. By any metric, Ms. Kelley has the experience and economic acumen to continue a record of outstanding service in that role—a record she has already begun by serving capably in her acting capacity since last year. I hope each of my colleagues will join me in voting to confirm her.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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Then the Senate will turn to consideration of the judicial nominee, Thomas Farr, to be U.S. District Judge for the Eastern District of North Carolina.

Mr. Farr is a graduate of Hillsdale College, Emory Law School, and Georgetown University. Over a nearly 40-year career in law, he has developed expertise in labor relations and constitutional law. The American Bar Association's Standing Committee on the Federal Judiciary—a body that has frequently been held up by our Democratic colleagues as the gold standard—has awarded Mr. Farr its highest possible rating, unanimously “well qualified.”

Our friend, Senator BURR, has testified that his fellow North Carolinian has “the requisite expertise, character and judgment required for the federal bench” and that “he will serve in this role honorably.”

I urge all of our colleagues to join me in voting to advance his nomination later today.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. 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.

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.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session and resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report:

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Karen Dunn Kelley, of Pennsylvania, to be Deputy Secretary of Commerce.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the time until 11 a.m. will be divided between the two leaders or their designees.

The Senator from Illinois.

GUN VIOLENCE AND REMEMBERING POLICE OFFICER SAMUEL JIMENEZ, DR. TAMARA O'NEAL, AND DAYNA LESS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, if I came to the Senate floor each day and told the story of another victim of gun vio-

lence in the city of Chicago, it would be a full-time job. Trend lines are improving ever so slightly, but the deaths from gun violence in that great city continue to break our hearts. Hardly a day, a week, or month goes by that we don't hear another story of some child, innocent bystander, infant, or elderly person victimized by gun violence. Last week, there was an extraordinary event which captured the hearts of the people of Chicago and Illinois.

This Monday afternoon, hundreds of police officers from Chicago and Northern Illinois—and some from as far away as Boston and New York—stood at solemn attention, lining the roadways around the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe in the Chicago suburb of Des Plaines.

The night before, a powerful blizzard had dumped 7 inches of snow in the Chicago area. It was very cold, but it was not cold air that caused many of the officers gathered outside the chapel to feel numb. It was grief. They had come to pay their respects to a fallen brother and hero.

Chicago police officer Samuel Jimenez was shot and killed a week earlier when he tried to stop a shooting at Mercy Hospital & Medical Center on the city's South Side.

I am going to put this array of photos up because I want to address each and every one of them, the individuals on there. This is Officer Jimenez. He was 28 years old, married to his high school sweetheart, the loving father of three little kids.

Killed in the same shooting were these two women: Dr. Tamara O'Neal, an emergency room physician, and Dayna Less, a first-year pharmacy resident. Both women worked at Mercy Hospital. The man who shot all three of them also died, from a self-inflicted gunshot wound to the head.

Let me speak of this hero and these healers for a moment. Officer Samuel Jimenez was 28 years old, married to his high school sweetheart, Crystal. Together, they had three children—two little girls and a boy. Friends said his eyes lit up whenever anyone asked him about his kids.

Officer Jimenez had been a member of the Chicago Police Department for less than 2 years. He had already earned two honorable mentions for exceptional performance. He and his partner were in their patrol car around 3:30 Monday afternoon, a week ago, November 19. A call came over the police radio about an active shooter at Mercy Hospital. The gunman shot Dr. O'Neal in the parking lot and then ran into the hospital. Officer Jimenez followed. He was shot and killed in the hospital lobby.

The gunman shot Ms. Less as she stepped off an elevator. He then shot and killed himself, after first being shot by a Chicago policeman.

At the funeral, Officer Jimenez was remembered as a loving husband, father, and friend, and as dedicated to protecting others. He grew up in North-

west Chicago, the youngest of nine children. Before joining the police department, he worked at Dunkin' Donuts, bused tables at Moretti's Ristorante & Pizzeria. He even delivered mail in the suburbs. His instructors and classmates at the police training academy remembered him as a stellar recruit, always eager to lend a hand, always there with a warm hello.

He completed his 13-month probationary period with the police department just last August. Officer Jimenez and his partner didn't have to respond at Mercy Hospital. You see, that hospital was outside the district they were assigned to, but they went anyway, not even hesitating for a second because they knew people were in danger.

Dr. Tamara O'Neal was an emergency room doctor. That is one of the hardest, most stressful jobs in the hospital. Dr. O'Neal picked that profession because she thought it was where she could do the most good for people who needed help. She was 38 years old. She joined the staff of Mercy Hospital less than 3 months ago, after a 3-year residency at the University of Illinois at Chicago—the same school where she earned her medical degree.

Her colleagues remember her for her outgoing personality and her willingness to go out of her way to help others. They say she used to stay long after her shift ended to make sure her patients were taken care of. She was also a woman of great faith. She was the choir director of her church in Indiana, and she drove there every Sunday—60 miles each way—to lead the congregation in song. Her brother was the pastor of the church. Dr. O'Neal helped raise money every year to buy school supplies for children in the church whose families were strapped for money. She loved taking her nieces and nephews into the city of Chicago to show them new attractions, new restaurants.

Dayna Less was 24 years old. Had the shooting happened 1 day later, she would still be alive. She was leaving that next day to spend Thanksgiving in Indiana with her family. She graduated from pharmacy school at Purdue last May, after 6 years of study.

She was engaged to be married in June to a young man she met at church camp when they were both just 9 years old. Dayna Less loved the Chicago Cubs, working at Mercy Hospital, and traveling.

Before coming to Mercy, she spent 8 weeks on pharmacy rotation in Kenya. She wrote about her experiences there in a blog. This is part of what she wrote:

Watching patients die from things that would 100 percent be treatable in the US is extremely disheartening.

It's been very important for me to focus on the positive things we are doing here because it can be difficult to see how we are making a difference. But, it's worth it when you fight for something and it actually happens! Even if it's as small as making sure a patient gets their medication, we are doing something that matters.

Officer Jimenez, Dr. O'Neal, and Ms. Less were all doing work that mattered and mattered greatly. All three were dedicated to helping others—Officer Jimenez as a protector, Dr. O'Neal and Ms. Less as healers.

Their deaths have left their friends and families, the Chicago Police Department, and all of the city of Chicago stunned and grieving. There is never—never—a good time to lose a family member to violence but to lose them during the holiday season seems especially cruel. Our hearts go out to Officer Jimenez's family and to the O'Neal and Less families.

Officer Jimenez was the second Chicago police officer killed in the line of duty this year. Last February, the day before Valentine's Day, District Commander Paul Bauer was fatally shot in downtown Chicago. Gun violence against police officers is not just a problem in the city of Chicago; it is a problem across America. It is getting worse.

We all remember the horrific ambush of Dallas police officers in July 2016. Five officers were killed and nine others were injured by a sniper. Since then, 132 police officers have been shot and killed in the line of duty in cities and towns across our country. These are intentional shootings. They are not accidents.

We have seen intentional killings at churches, synagogues, schools, and as we have learned so painfully in the city of Chicago, hospitals. We are seeing an increase in shootings in these locations.

In 2016, U.S. hospitals spent \$1.1 billion to try to make their hospital grounds safer. Think about that: more than \$1 billion—not to cure an illness, not to alleviate suffering but to protect the patients and professionals at hospitals across America from this horrific gun violence that shook the city of Chicago last week. Imagine if that \$1 billion would have been spent on healing and keeping people healthy.

Chicago Cardinal Blase Cupich was the main celebrant at Officer Jimenez's funeral. I want to read part of what he told the mourners who filled Our Lady of Guadalupe. He said of those in law enforcement:

Every day they get up, leave their homes and family to watch out for us.

I think that maybe the best way that we can console each other and also express our gratitude for the sacrifice that has been given in the death of Officer Jimenez is as citizens, remember that law enforcement wants us all to live together, to watch out for each other, care for each other, and then maybe we will make their jobs easier.

He added:

And maybe, there will not be another death of an officer because all of us are taking responsibility for watching out for one another.

It is not unusual for the people of Chicago to rightfully say to me, their U.S. Senator: What are you going to do about this? What are you going to do to reduce gun violence in the United States?

Does the Second Amendment to the Constitution create this burden on us today, where we have to accept wanton gun violence as part of someone's constitutional right? Of course not. Those who misuse guns, those who do not store them or use them properly and legally should be held accountable. Why then can't we pass basic legislation in this Congress? Why can't we pass a bill to keep guns out of the hands of people who are unqualified to own them or people who are unstable and should never be given a gun? Why can't we make certain that weapons that are military weapons, that have little or no application when it comes to sport or hunting, are not sold to everyone, right and left, in the United States?

I heard recently, there were 11 million AR-15s—a military-style weapon—that are circulating in the United States of America. Does anyone, in their wildest imagination, think that is what the Founding Fathers had in mind when they talked about the right to bear arms; that people would have these deadly military weapons and they would be used so often?

I will be very candid with you, having served in the House and served in the Senate for a number of years, the prospects of passing meaningful gun safety legislation are minimal. There are two things that can make a difference. For one, if the police and law enforcement officers across the United States stood as one and demanded of Congress there be gun safety measures to make their lives safer, it would be happen. Law enforcement could be the inspiration and the political motivation for Congress to act.

Secondly, I know thousands of law-abiding gun owners in the State of Illinois. I grew up in a family—my family and others—where owning a firearm was considered part of life. It was what people did so they could go hunting in a proper way, a legal way. If those legitimate gun owners—sportsmen, hunters, and those who keep them for self-defense—would step up and say we need to draw clear lines for those who abuse firearms and those who are using them to kill innocent people, that, too, could make a difference. Think of that. If the law enforcement community and gun owners who accept responsibility for that firearm came together and demanded Congress pass measures to keep guns out of the hands of those who kill our policemen, threaten our law enforcement officers, and hurt innocent people like the doctor and this pharmacy resident, it would make a significant difference.

Until that happens, we will come and make speeches on the floor of the Senate. We will issue press releases. We will attend funerals. We will offer our thoughts and our prayers, but I think it is time for more. I think it is time for this Nation to step up and do something significant, to not just stop and demand that we bring an end to gun violence in Chicago and other cities but

make this a safer world for our children.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COTTON). Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

G20 SUMMIT

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, this weekend President Trump will head to Argentina for the G20 summit, where he is expected to meet with President Xi of China to discuss our trading relationship.

Now, I have opposed the President on most things. That is hardly a secret. But we agree—we actually agree—on the issue of China. In fact, I agree more with President Trump's views on China than I did with either President Bush or Obama, and I have been supportive of the administration's aggressive course of action on China.

China must be made to understand that we are dead serious about changing its behavior on trade: to allow foreign companies to compete in its markets, to end illegal dumping of cheap goods into our markets, and, most importantly, to end the abusive practice of technology transfers and trade espionage that threatens our intellectual property and know-how. These things don't just threaten our intellectual property, an abstract concept. They threaten good-paying jobs—millions of them—and wealth, billions and trillions of dollars that China has stolen, literally and figuratively, through its unfair practices.

When we have a good product, you can't sell it in China unless you transfer the technology, but they sell tons of things here.

My father-in-law—my late father-in-law—a New York City cabdriver, sometimes said: We are not Uncle Sam; we are Uncle Sap.

Well, in the case of China, that has been the case for too long, and President Trump, to his credit, is beginning to reverse that. Yet despite an initial wave of tariffs, China has not offered meaningful concessions on any of the items I have mentioned.

Ambassador Lighthizer recently put out a report concluding that China is still rapaciously stealing American intellectual property. In fact, the number of Chinese state-sponsored cyber attacks has been rising. So we need to stay the course until China feels the heat.

That is why I was deeply disturbed—very disturbed—to read this morning in the New York Times that President Trump and his advisers—at least some of them—are already considering backing down on further action against

China in order to reach an agreement at the G20.

Let me be clear to the President. Backing off on China for some quick handshake agreement without substantive—real, deep, substantive—commitments, will be seen as a victory by no one. It will be seen as capitulation. It will be seen as weak to cave on tariffs this early before China starts to feel the real pressure and come to a real, deep, and long-lasting agreement that is worth having.

So, Mr. President, don't back down on China. American jobs and American wealth are at stake. You have headed out on a correct course, but you have to follow through. All too often this administration starts out doing something and then backs off. It cannot happen.

I am worried—deeply worried—because I love America and I want us to be No. 1 economically, as well as in every other way. I fear that Trump's eagerness to make a deal—any deal, just like he did with North Korea in Singapore—will be devastating to the long-term interests of the United States. Now that we are finally putting the screws to China, we cannot relent for the sake of a photo-op at the G20.

Yes, our actions will cause some pain, but in the long term, there is much more gain than pain. If we ever needed to do something, it is now. I don't agree with treating Canada or Europe the same as China. That is for sure. But China is a different, different breed of economic cat, and they are robbing us, stealing from us, doing everything they can to become No. 1 economically at our expense, not in a fair competitive way but in a way that is one-sided.

So today, I will be sending a letter to President Trump with some colleagues laying out this position, saying to the President: Please, don't back off on China. American jobs and American wealth depend on it.

YEMEN

Mr. President, later this morning, the Senate will receive a classified all-Senators briefing from Secretaries Pompeo and Mattis on the conflict in Yemen, Saudi Arabia's role in that conflict, and the recent murder of U.S. resident and Washington Post contributor Jamal Khashoggi. This is an important and timely briefing, but there is a gaping hole.

I am concerned and disappointed that President Trump has reportedly forbidden CIA Director Haspel from attending today's briefing. Without her presence at the briefing, there will be no one from our intelligence community.

Director Haspel has heard the Turkish audiotape of the murder, and her Agency has also reportedly made conclusions about the role of various Saudi leaders. Members of this body have a right to hear from Director Haspel. No offense to Secretary Mattis and Secretary Pompeo, but it was the CIA that had jurisdiction to find out what exactly happened, and, according

to press reports, they did. Now Congress is not going to get the briefing.

What is the White House trying to hide?

Well, we all know that President Trump seems to favor the Crown Prince to an extent that he will look the other way at the greatest of transgressions, but it is even a further step down the road of darkness, lack of sunlight to prevent the CIA from giving us their conclusions.

Members of this body have a right to hear from Director Haspel, and her absence today speaks volumes—volumes—about the White House's intention for congressional oversight in Saudi Arabia.

President Trump has gone to extraordinary lengths to avoid criticizing the Crown Prince and the Saudis for the Khashoggi murder, drawing grotesque moral equivalencies and controverting well-known facts to avoid placing blame. It seems so similar to what he has been doing with Putin and Russia, looking the other way for reasons that don't serve America's interests or security.

It has been a shameful abdication of moral leadership from the President. It must give comfort to autocrats everywhere: Go ahead. Behave despicably, and the United States, at minimum, will look the other way and may even pat you on the back.

We have strength for a lot of reasons. We have a strong military. We have a great economy. We have a wonderful people. But one of the reasons we have strength is that we have been the shining city on the hill. We have been the country that has guided doing the right thing in morality and has tried to spread that around the world.

Donald Trump is taking a giant step backwards, and that is not just an abstract concept or something that would be a nice thing to do. It hurts economically, militarily, and security-wise when we don't maintain being that shining city on the hill.

So Leader McCONNELL has rightly called the Saudi murder operation "abhorrent." I hope he agrees with me that Director Haspel should be made available to Congress on this issue. I would ask him to join with me in asking her to come in the same kind of closed, SCIF, intelligence-protecting session.

Relatedly, possibly as early as this afternoon, we expect to have a vote in relation to the Lee-Sanders Yemen War Powers Resolution. Even though they are not here at the moment, I want to applaud the sponsors for their steadfast commitment to this important issue. I will support their resolution once again.

The conflict in Yemen, exacerbated by Saudi Arabia's intervention and its reckless tactics, must be brought to an end. The Yemeni people have endured unending suffering. The United States should once again be the moral leader and lead the diplomatic efforts to resolve the conflict.

NOMINATION OF THOMAS FARR

Mr. President, late this afternoon, the Senate will likely vote on whether to consider the nomination of Thomas Farr for the Eastern District of North Carolina. I have spoken repeatedly—last week, this week—on the floor about what an absolute disgrace it is to have his nomination before us. What a further disgrace it would be if our Republican colleagues march in lockstep approving this awful nomination.

Mr. Farr has been chief cook and bottle washer with North Carolina's invidious and despicable efforts to prevent people, particularly minorities, from voting.

Generations of Americans have agitated, protested, marched, and even died trying to expand the right to vote, regardless of race or gender. Our soldiers, when they are fighting overseas, some of them making the ultimate sacrifice, are defending democracy and the right to vote, among other things. For the Senate in 2018 to elevate a man to the Federal bench who has worked to limit the franchise and gain the electoral system would be a black mark on this body—a black mark on this body.

Adding insult to jury, this is a judicial district that is 27 percent African American. Two African Americans, both women, were nominated in the past. The Republican Senators from North Carolina blocked them with the blue slip, a practice that the leader has abolished with Chairman GRASSLEY, which is a shame in itself. But now to elevate this man to the bench is an insult to African Americans and all Americans—all Americans.

It is amazing to me, utterly amazing—and you see a lot of things around here that you don't believe these days—that the Republican majority is moving forward with this nomination. I hope my colleagues on the Republican side, even at this late hour, take time to study his career. I believe they will find that he is unworthy of the Federal bench, and I hope at least a brave few will join with Democrats this afternoon to reject this awful, awful nomination.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

RUSSIA AND UKRAINE

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I have two topics. I want to talk in a moment or two about National Adoption Month, but before I do that, I want to talk just a minute about Russia's continued outrageous behavior in Ukraine and the most recent incident where Russia has manufactured another crisis in order to take advantage of whatever situation they think the moment is ripe for. Clearly this has been allowed to go on for too long.

While Ukraine is not a member of NATO, I think NATO countries—including ours—have a great interest in what is happening in Ukraine with Putin's continued aggressive behavior. We had a joint session—the only joint session where the President of Ukraine has spoken—a few years ago. He made the point that they appreciated the humanitarian help, but I thought the most telling moment in that speech was when he said: We appreciate the humanitarian help, we appreciate the blankets, but you can't fight the Russians with blankets.

That was the time under the Obama administration when we were not giving Ukraine either the defensive or offensive capacity they needed. President Trump has made a different decision, which I support, in helping the Ukrainians defend themselves.

I also support whatever we can do at this moment to let it be known to Putin that we are supportive of Ukraine's efforts to have an independent, democratic government, that we will continue to be supportive of that and we will continue to be helpful in that effort, and President Putin had better be careful that he doesn't take one step too far. In fact, he has already taken steps further than should have been allowed. Those steps—the seizure of Crimea, the invasion of eastern Ukraine by people who were clearly Russian soldiers in plain green uniforms—should not have been allowed. The President has to deal with that, but we need to deal with that in a way that gives Ukraine all the help they need in dealing with that themselves.

Whether the President should make that point by not meeting with Putin or whether he should make that point by meeting with Putin and clearly expressing not only our concern but our absolute rejection of the efforts the Russian Government has made toward Ukraine in an aggressive way, I don't know. I do know that it is time for us to be very clear about how we feel about that and emphasize our continued commitment to the NATO countries along the Russian border, that we absolutely will respond if there is any aggression toward those NATO countries. Frankly, we should be aggressive in our efforts to help Ukraine defend itself.

OBSERVING NATIONAL ADOPTION MONTH

Mr. President, I want to move now to the reason I scheduled this time today and talk a few moments about November as National Adoption Month. As November draws to a close, I also would point out that every month should be adoption month.

I am pleased to work with my colleague and cochair of the Congressional Coalition on Adoption, Senator KLOBUCHAR. We looked forward to passing this resolution supporting National Adoption Month. This is the fourth year we have worked together on this resolution. I thank all of my colleagues for their unanimous support for this resolution as it passed earlier this week.

The Congressional Coalition on Adoption is the largest bipartisan, bicameral coalition in the Congress. We have our friends leading on the House side, and we have this opportunity for many of us to join together on the Senate side. The idea is that every child deserves to grow up in a safe, stable home with a loving family. That is something on which I think everyone can agree. In fact, year after year, we have that agreement in the Senate and the House.

Unfortunately, right now there are more than 400,000 children in the U.S. foster care system and more than 100,000 children waiting in that system to be adopted. They don't have the benefit of a permanent family they can call their own. There are many more children all over the world who need families and who are in settings no one would believe to be ideal.

For those charitable institutions that reach out to have a place for children to go when their mother or their family can no longer keep them, we are grateful. For those families who create a home in the foster system in my State and around the country, we are grateful as well.

There are over 13,000 children in foster care in Missouri. I would like to share a couple stories of people in foster care who would like to have a family become their permanent family, a family they would always know they were secure in and a part of.

Brooklyn is a creative girl in the fourth grade who loves arts and crafts. She is an active girl. She likes to play outdoors. She makes friends easily. She is inquisitive by nature. She loves to ask questions and discover how things work. Brooklyn needs a home.

Levelle is a sixth grader who is an adventure seeker, animal lover, and Lego enthusiast. He has a knack for math and science, and he wants to work at the Children's Hospital when he grows up. Levelle would like a permanent home.

Kiara and Devin are siblings who hope to be placed together. Kiara loves music and singing her favorite songs. When she isn't singing, Kiara loves reading a good book or playing outdoors. She wants to be a surgeon or a lawyer and a full-time foster parent when she grows up. She knows how important her foster family has been for her. She would like to have a family who she knows she would always be able to relate to in a more permanent way. Her brother Devin is also a sixth grader and enjoys learning and playing sports. He especially loves puzzles and figuring out how to put things together. He would like to figure out how to put a family together and be part of that along with his sister. He likes singing, playing, and reading. The two siblings have a lot of fun together and would like to have a forever family.

There are a lot more stories to share. That is why, during National Adoption Month, it is important to think about how year in and year out we are look-

ing for ways to make it easier for families to come together in a permanent way.

Nearly a quarter of the people living in our country have considered adoption. Many of those have misperceptions and concerns about adoption. A lot of people believe that foster care adoption is expensive if they adopt out of the foster care system. In reality, there is almost no cost to adopting from foster care. Financial support is available. In many cases, adoptive parents can get that support to make their adoption of a new family final.

Ensuring that adoption remains a viable option for families is central to our efforts in the adoption caucus. This week, Senator KLOBUCHAR and I will be introducing the Supporting Adoptive Families Act to provide adoptive families additional tools and supportive services to help them achieve a successful adoption and to prevent adopted children from reentering the foster care system.

Since National Adoption Day started in 2000, more than 70,000 children have been adopted into permanent homes. I myself am an adoptive parent, and I look forward to seeing more people have the experience of what happens when you change somebody's life and they change your life.

I hope more families will take this time not only during National Adoption Month but also during the holidays to consider adoption. I can say without exception that one of the most rewarding things you could possibly do is create that environment. My wife and I have benefitted from it and our son has benefitted from it, as have his brothers and sisters and others in our family.

It is an important time to think about ways to reach out and make a permanent difference in people's lives. It is frankly hard to imagine a greater way to make a more permanent difference than considering adoption. Senator KLOBUCHAR and I and others in the adoption caucus would certainly encourage people who are thinking about adoption, as kids need a safe and permanent family.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 15 minutes.

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

YEMEN

Mr. SANDERS. Thank you.

Mr. President, later this afternoon, I believe, we will be voting on one of the more important foreign policy issues that we have voted on in a very long time. This, of course, deals with the U.S. involvement in the war in Yemen.

In March of 2015, under the leadership of Muhammad bin Salman, who was then the Saudi Defense Minister and is now, of course, the Crown Prince, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab

Emirates intervened in Yemen's ongoing civil war. As a result of that Saudi intervention, Yemen is now experiencing the worst humanitarian disaster in the world.

It is absolutely imperative that we call attention to the inhumane and horrific situation that is now impacting the people of Yemen, a small nation of 28 million people, one of the poorest countries on Earth.

According to the United Nations, Yemen is at risk of the most severe famine in more than 100 years, with some 14 million people—about half of that country's population—facing starvation. Already, as a result of this terrible war, according to the Save the Children organization, some 85,000 children in Yemen have starved to death over the last several years. Let me repeat that. According to the Save the Children organization, some 85,000 children in Yemen have already starved to death over the last several years, and millions more face starvation if the war continues. That is what we are looking at today.

In addition, Yemen is currently experiencing the worst cholera outbreak in the world, with as many as 10,000 new cases erupting every week, according to the World Health Organization. As you know, cholera is a disease spread by infected water that causes severe diarrhea and dehydration and will only accelerate the death rate as it weakens the ability of people to resist disease. The cholera outbreak in Yemen has occurred because Saudi bombs have destroyed Yemen's water infrastructure, and people there are no longer able to access clean water.

The fact is that the United States, with relatively little media attention, has been Saudi Arabia's partner in this horrific war. We have been providing the bombs that the Saudi-led coalition is using. We have been refueling their planes before they drop those bombs. We have been assisting with intelligence. In too many cases, our weapons are being used to kill civilians.

In August, as many will remember, it was an American-made bomb that obliterated a school bus full of young boys, killing dozens and wounding many more. A CNN report found evidence that American weapons have been used in a string of such deadly attacks on civilians since the war began. According to the independent monitoring group, Yemen Data Project, between March of 2015 and March of 2018, more than 30 percent of the Saudi-led coalition's targets have been non-military.

A few weeks ago, I met with several very brave human rights activists from Yemen, urging Congress to put a stop to this war. They told me clearly that when Yemenis see "Made in USA" on the bombs that are killing them, it tells them that it is the United States of America that is actively involved in this war. That is the sad truth. That is a truth we have to finally deal with, and I hope deal with effectively later this afternoon.

The message that the Senate should be sending to the Saudi Government and to the whole world is that we will not continue to support a catastrophic war led by a despotic regime that has a dangerous, destructive, and irresponsible military policy. No more—enough death, enough killing, enough destruction.

Above and beyond the humanitarian crisis—the worst in the world right now, destroying a small, poor country—that war has been a disaster for our national security and the national security of our allies. The administration defends our engagement in Yemen by overstating Iranian support for the Houthi rebels. While Iran's support for Houthi is of serious concern for all of us—and I do not minimize that—the fact is that the relationship has only been strengthened with the intensification of the war. The war is creating the very problem this administration claims to want to solve.

The war in Yemen is also undermining the broader effort against violent extremists. A 2016 State Department report found that the conflict had helped al-Qaida and the Islamic State's Yemen branch "deepen their inroads across much of the country." As the head of the International Rescue Committee, former British Foreign Minister David Miliband said in a recent interview: "The winners are the extremist groups like Al Qaeda and ISIS." Just last week, the Wall Street Journal reported: "Nearly two years after being driven from its stronghold in Yemen, one of al Qaeda's most dangerous franchises has entrenched itself in the country's hinterlands as a devastating war creates the conditions for its comeback."

So this war is, without dispute, a horrific humanitarian crisis, but it is also a strategic disaster, benefiting terrorist groups like al-Qaida and ISIS.

Further, importantly, let us not forget that Saudi Arabia is an undemocratic monarchy controlled by one family. Sometimes we kind of pass that over. It is controlled by one family—the Saudi family. In a 2017 report by the conservative Cato Institute, Saudi Arabia, our ally in this terrible war in Yemen, was ranked 149 out of 159 countries in terms of freedom and human rights. That is our ally. That is the country with which we are putting our credibility on the line. For decades, as I think most Members of the Senate know, the Saudis have funded schools, mosques, and preachers who promote an extreme form of Islam known as Wahhabism.

In Saudi Arabia today, women are not second-class citizens; they are third-class citizens. Women still need the permission of a male guardian to go to school or to get a job. They have to follow a strict dress code and can be stoned to death for adultery or flogged for spending time in the company of a man who is not their relative.

Earlier this year, Saudi activist Loujain al-Hathloul, a leader in the

fight for women's rights, was kidnapped from Abu Dhabi and forced to return to her country. She is currently being held without charges. The same is true of many Saudi political activists.

Sadly, President Trump continues to proclaim his love and affection for the Saudi regime. The brutality and lawlessness of the Saudi regime, as everybody in this country now knows, was made clear to the entire world with the murder of the dissident Saudi journalist, Jamal Khashoggi, in the Saudi consulate in Turkey—right in their own consulate. Pathetically, as part of his continuing respect for authoritarian regimes—whether it is Putin or Russia or other regimes around the world—President Trump rejected the findings of the CIA's assessment that the Saudi Crown Prince was responsible for that murder. When given a choice between believing a despotic ruler in Saudi Arabia or our own Central Intelligence Agency, sadly, the President of the United States sided with the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia.

Lastly, let me raise an issue that many of my conservative friends—MIKE LEE, RAND PAUL, and others—have been raising, which is an important issue that I hope progressives pay attention to, which is that this war in Saudi Arabia was not authorized by the U.S. Congress. It was not voted on by the U.S. Congress and, therefore, is unconstitutional. Let us not forget that the Founding Fathers of this country put the awesome responsibility of war and peace into the hands of the Congress, not the President of the United States—not a Democratic President or a Republican President. Article I of the Constitution clearly states that it is Congress, not the President, that has the power to declare war.

The time is long overdue for Congress to take back that responsibility, which it has abdicated under Democratic and Republican leaderships.

If the Members of the House and the Senate want to go to war in Yemen, vote to go to war in Yemen. Don't let the President of the United States do it on his own.

Later this afternoon, as I understand it, there will be a resolution coming before this body as to whether we proceed to vote on ending U.S. involvement in the Saudi-led war. That amendment is cosponsored by my friends Senator LEE of Utah, Senator MURPHY of Connecticut, and many, many others. This is an enormously important vote. This is a vote that says to the world: We are going to end the horrific humanitarian disaster that is killing tens of thousands of defenseless children in Yemen. It is a vote which says that we are going to stand for American values. It is a vote which says that the time is now to tell Saudi Arabia that we are not continuing to partner with them in this horrific crisis.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

RECESS

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand in recess as under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 10:58 a.m., recessed until 12 noon and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mrs. ERNST).

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will come to order.

The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, I rise today to voice my strong support for the nomination of Karen Dunn Kelley to be confirmed as the Deputy Secretary of Commerce.

Ms. Dunn Kelley is well qualified to serve in this critical leadership role at the Department of Commerce, which she has ably filled on an acting basis for the past year.

Ms. Dunn Kelley was already confirmed once this Congress, without opposition. She has served at the Department since August 3, 2017, as the Under Secretary for Economic Affairs, a position to which the Senate confirmed her by voice vote.

Ms. Dunn Kelley has considerable economic and managerial expertise, cultivated through her more than 30 years of experience in the financial investment sector.

In her current capacity as Under Secretary for Economic Affairs, she leads the Economics and Statistics Administration, which provides economic analysis and distributes national economic indicators.

She also serves as the Department's administrator of statistical programs, including the U.S. Census Bureau and the Bureau of Economic Analysis.

Since being named as Acting Deputy Secretary of Commerce, she has been responsible for the management, coordination, and implementation of the Department's Strategic Plan, focusing on job creation and economic growth across the Department's 12 bureaus and agencies.

The Commerce Department's mission, as stated in its 2018–2022 Strategic Plan, is to “create the conditions for economic growth and opportunity.”

The breadth of activities the Department undertakes to accomplish its mission range from promoting commercial space activities to enhancing weather forecasting, and from fishery management and trade promotion to standards setting for emerging technologies, cybersecurity, and privacy, to name just a few.

The Department of Commerce deserves a well-qualified and experienced

leader to continue to foster the unprecedented economic growth we see today and preserve American leadership.

Throughout her career, Ms. Dunn Kelley has exhibited the kind of leadership that will ensure the Department of Commerce will continue its critical missions to promote economic growth, job creation, and innovation.

I urge my colleagues to support Ms. Dunn Kelley's nomination.

I yield the floor.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST— S. 2644

Mr. COONS. Madam President, I am proud to join the Senator from Arizona and the Senator from New Jersey on the floor today in calling for action on a bipartisan bill—a bill that has been crafted to protect our institutions and safeguard the rule of law in this country not just right now but for future Congresses and administrations as well.

Today, we will be asking our colleagues to give the Special Counsel Independence and Integrity Act the consideration here on the floor of the Senate that it deserves. This bill would do something simple but powerful: It would codify Department of Justice regulations that prevent the removal of a special counsel without good cause. That might seem like a small detail, but it is important. Independence is required to ensure that a special counsel can do his or her job and find the facts.

Our bipartisan bill would put this restriction in statute and give the special counsel a clear legal remedy. If removed without cause, the special counsel would have a 10-day period to take the case to a three-judge panel for expedited consideration. If the special counsel doesn't wish to contest his removal, it would proceed without interference.

Both Republicans and Democrats recognize that removal of the current special counsel without a valid basis would be a significant, even a catastrophic event. It would be a constitutional crisis that would threaten the Presidency and the rule of law. We can work together to prevent a crisis.

President Trump should be the first person to support this bill. He has raised concerns about oversight of the special counsel. He has accused the prosecutors of making partisan, politically motivated decisions. This act would ensure that regulations providing for supervision and oversight of the investigation are not just codified but strengthened. It would ensure that Congress gets a complete picture at the end of the investigation.

My colleagues Senators GRAHAM, TILLIS, BOOKER, GRASSLEY, and FEINSTEIN were instrumental in crafting this balanced legislation, and it passed the Judiciary Committee by a strong bipartisan margin of 14 to 7, 7 months ago. The time to take up and pass this bill in the Senate is now.

Some have questioned the need for this legislation. They have said the President would never fire Special Counsel Mueller, and I hope and pray they are right. I don't think it would be in President Trump's interest to remove the special counsel and certainly not in the interest of our country.

The President has repeatedly, publicly, and directly attacked the special counsel and his investigation. Just yesterday, he called his investigation a “phony witch hunt” that is “doing tremendous damage to our criminal justice system.” The President has already fired the FBI Director and forced the resignation of the Attorney General, citing grievances related to this investigation in both cases.

We have an Acting Attorney General not confirmed by the Senate, with no nominee in sight to conduct oversight of this investigation, which is unprecedented and not acceptable.

This bill addresses threats not just to this special counsel but future special counsels. I would ask my colleagues who are holding back this bill to consider whether they may wish it were the law in a Democratic administration as well. We should all appreciate the ways in which this protects the rule of law.

Let me close by quoting what my colleague Chairman GRASSLEY said when he expressed his view back in April that this should be considered by the full Senate during our Judiciary Committee markup on the bill:

In some ways, today's vote will say a lot about how each of us views our responsibilities as Senators. We took an oath to protect and defend the Constitution of the United States, but we're not judges or Presidents. We are stewards of the legislative branch. The Founders anticipated that we would wield the powers the Constitution affords us with great ambition so that we could effectively check the powers of the other branches. This bill certainly does that.

I am confident that, if allowed to go to a vote, this bill would pass with more than 60 votes.

History will judge us for how we work together to confront the challenges that face our Nation. The rest of the world is watching. It is important to take up and pass this bill.

I now recognize my colleague, a cosponsor of this legislation, the Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. BOOKER. Madam President, thank you very much.

I want to thank my colleagues from Arizona and Delaware for being here today and for their leadership. I join them in asking the Senate to pass the Special Counsel Independence and Integrity Act by unanimous consent.

The Special Counsel Independence and Integrity Act is a bipartisan bill. Again, I repeat, this is about the legislative branch asserting a commonsense check and balance on Presidential overreach. It is not divided along party lines; it is a bipartisan bill.

This bill is about ideals that we all are aligned with—independence, integrity, and the ability of the special counsel and future special counsels to do their job effectively, without interference from a President. This is a proactive bill aimed at ensuring that now and in the future, we have appropriate checks and balances in place to prevent a constitutional crisis.

The bill is becoming more urgent. We know that there was an attack on our democracy. We know that there were and are foreign agents who attempted and are attempting to manipulate and undermine our democratic institutions. We need to understand what happened and how to prevent it from happening again and to hold those people accountable for their actions.

The preservation of the special counsel investigation is indeed a matter of national security, but we know that the special counsel is in danger. We know he is in danger because even just yesterday, the President was again maligning and mischaracterizing the special counsel investigation. We know there is danger because just a few weeks ago, the President fired Attorney General Sessions and named Matthew Whitaker as the Acting Attorney General to oversee the Mueller investigation. We know that Acting Attorney General Whitaker has a history of criticizing and debasing the very investigation he is now responsible for overseeing. In 2017, he wrote an op-ed calling this investigation into our national security a “witch hunt.”

This investigation must be allowed to continue without interference. This investigation must continue for our national security. We are all stewards of our democracy. It has been sustained by this ideal: that no one, not even the President of the United States, is above the law. We must act quickly to protect and secure this fundamental democratic ideal. This is a sobered, measured, bipartisan bill that will achieve those ends.

I now yield to my colleague from Arizona.

Mr. FLAKE. Madam President, I thank my colleague from New Jersey and my colleague from Delaware for working together on this issue.

I rise today once again to speak in defense of Special Counsel Robert Mueller and to speak of the importance of the investigation he is leading and the attacks on our electoral system during the lead-up to the 2016 election. One wouldn't expect that such an investigation would be controversial, but somehow it warranted a tweet from the President earlier this week—one of several tweets—calling Special Counsel Mueller a “conflicted prosecutor gone rogue” and claiming that the “\$30 million witch hunt” is doing nothing but ruining lives. To be clear, this is the same investigation that brought indictments for more than a dozen Russian nationalists for attempting to influence the 2016 election. Why shouldn't we be up in arms about that?

Why does that warrant a tweet from the President—many tweets—trying to go after the special counsel?

The findings of this investigation are too important to our national security and the well-being of our democratic institutions to be halted or watered down. Mr. Mueller must be able to preserve the work he has done by completing this very thorough investigation, and his findings must be made public. This legislation has been proposed to ensure this outcome.

S. 2644, the Special Counsel Independence and Integrity Act, serves one purpose: to protect the integrity of the special counsel's investigation and to prevent the executive branch from inappropriately interfering in an independent investigation in the future.

This legislation passed out of the Judiciary Committee in a bipartisan manner nearly 8 months ago. It has been awaiting action on the Senate floor ever since. It passed on May 26. Since that time, the Judiciary Committee has been busy. We have been busy here on the Senate floor. We have processed more than 50 judges and passed them here on the Senate floor. That is a good thing, but the priority now needs to be to protect the special counsel.

Some of my colleagues have said that this legislation is not necessary because there hasn't been any indication that Mr. Mueller will be removed from office. But with the President tweeting on a regular basis, a daily basis, that the special counsel is conflicted, that he is leading the so-called 12 angry Democrats, and demeaning and ridiculing him in every way, I believe to be so sanguine about the chances of him being fired is folly for us. We have already seen the forced resignation of the Attorney General the day after the election. It is clear, therefore, that something has to be done to protect Mr. Mueller's investigation.

Let me just say it wasn't just that the Attorney General was fired; it is that the investigation—or oversight for the investigation—was taken from the Deputy Attorney General, where it properly belonged and where it was before. It was taken from him and given to somebody who is in an acting capacity—somebody who has not been confirmed by the Senate. Should we in the Senate be OK with that? I would argue no, we can't be.

That is why a few weeks ago my colleague from New Jersey and my colleague from Delaware came to the Senate floor to ask unanimous consent to bring this bill to the floor. After our efforts were blocked by an objection, we promised to come to the floor again and again, and that is why we are here today. We will continue to do so until this vital investigation is completed.

So I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 393, S. 2644; I further ask that the committee-reported substitute amendment be agreed to, the bill, as amended, be considered

read a third time and passed, and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Utah.

Mr. LEE. Madam President, reserving the right to object, I ask unanimous consent for 2 minutes to articulate the basis of my concern.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LEE. Madam President, for reasons articulated by Justice Scalia in his classic opinion in *Morrison v. Olson*, the prosecutorial authority of the United States belongs in the Department of Justice.

The Department of Justice answers to the President of the United States. Its principal officers consist of people appointed by the President, serving at the pleasure of the President, after being confirmed by the U.S. Senate.

This is a fundamental component of our liberty. The separation of powers protect us. That doesn't mean we are always going to agree with what every President in every administration does. But as Justice Scalia explains, we cannot convert an office like this one—an office like the previously existing Office of Independent Counsel—without creating a de facto fourth branch of government, fundamentally undermining the principle of separation of powers that is so core to our liberty.

On that basis, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. COONS. Will my colleague from Utah consider a question?

Mr. LEE. I am very late for another meeting, but, yes, I will, because I like my friend from Delaware.

Mr. COONS. Was Justice Scalia's dissent in *Morrison v. Olson* a majority opinion?

Mr. LEE. No, it was not. At the time it was written, it was somewhat novel; it was somewhat new. Since then, it has become a widely adopted view—a view adopted by people across the political spectrum, regardless of their political ideology.

I challenge every one of you to read it. It is right.

Mr. COONS. Madam President, will the Senator yield for another question?

Mr. LEE. I am very late.

Mr. COONS. Let me just conclude by saying that the DC Circuit reconsidered this issue just this year and in their decision said that *Morrison* remains valid and binding precedent.

I know we have other urgent business to move to, but I will simply say that I am grateful for the work of my colleague from Arizona. Despite the objection of my colleague from Utah, I am convinced this is an important bill that we should continue to bring forward on the floor of the Senate.

Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Kelley nomination?

Mr. WICKER. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 62, nays 38, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 248 Ex.]

YEAS—62

Alexander	Graham	Nelson
Barrasso	Grassley	Paul
Blunt	Hatch	Perdue
Boozman	Heitkamp	Portman
Burr	Heller	Risch
Capito	Hoeven	Roberts
Casey	Hyde-Smith	Rounds
Cassidy	Inhofe	Rubio
Collins	Isakson	Sasse
Corker	Johnson	Schatz
Cornyn	Jones	Scott
Cotton	Kennedy	Shaheen
Crapo	King	Shelby
Cruz	Kyl	Sullivan
Daines	Lankford	Tester
Donnelly	Lee	Thune
Enzi	Manchin	Tillis
Ernst	McCaskill	Toomey
Fischer	McConnell	Wicker
Flake	Moran	Young
Gardner	Murkowski	

NAYS—38

Baldwin	Gillibrand	Peters
Bennet	Harris	Reed
Blumenthal	Hassan	Sanders
Booker	Heinrich	Schumer
Brown	Hirono	Smith
Cantwell	Kaine	Stabenow
Cardin	Klobuchar	Udall
Carper	Leahy	Van Hollen
Coons	Markey	Warner
Cortez Masto	Menendez	Warren
Duckworth	Merkley	Whitehouse
Durbin	Murphy	Wyden
Feinstein	Murray	

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TILLIS). Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

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 senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Thomas Alvin Farr, of North Carolina, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of North Carolina.

Mitch McConnell, Chuck Grassley, Lamar Alexander, John Cornyn, James M. Inhofe, John Kennedy, Mike Crapo, Roger F. Wicker, Mike Rounds, Michael B. Enzi, David Perdue, John Boozman, Tim Scott, Lindsey Graham, James E. Risch, Steve Daines, Thom Tillis.

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 Thomas Alvin Farr, of North Carolina, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of North Carolina, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 50, nays 50, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 249 Ex.]

YEAS—50

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

NAYS—50

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

(Mr. PORTMAN assumed the Chair.)

The VICE PRESIDENT. On this vote, the yeas are 50, the nays are 50. The Senate being equally divided, the Vice President votes in the affirmative, and the motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The VICE PRESIDENT. The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Thomas Alvin Farr, of North Carolina, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of North Carolina.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MORAN). The Senator from Ohio.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—S.J. RES. 54

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, as if in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding rule XXII, the Senate proceed to legislative session, and Senator SANDERS, or his designee, be recognized to make a motion to discharge S.J. Res. 54; further, that there be time for debate of the motion until 4 p.m. and of that time, 10 minutes be under control of the chairman and 10 minutes for the ranking

member, and the remaining time be equally divided between the two leaders or their designees; that at 4 p.m., the Senate vote in relation to the motion to discharge; that following disposition of the motion, the Senate resume executive session and the time spent in legislative session count postcloture on the Farr nomination.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

MOTION TO DISCHARGE—S.J. RES.

54

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, pursuant to section 1013 of the Department of State Authorization Act, fiscal years 1984 and 1985, and in accordance with the provisions of Section 601(b) of the International Security Assistance and Arms Export Control Act of 1976, I move to discharge S.J. Res. 54 from the Committee on Foreign Relations.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The motion is pending.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, I want to speak very briefly on behalf of the resolution being offered today by Senator SANDERS, Senator LEE, me, and several others. I encourage my colleagues to support it. I want to use my brief time to respond to some of the arguments that the administration has made over the course of the last few days as to why we should not stand together as a body and say that without a congressional declaration of war, the United States cannot and should not be involved in a disastrous civil war in Yemen.

This is as important a vote as we will take in the Senate. Lives are at stake; lives are in the balance. I don't need to repeat everything Senator SANDERS and others have said about the humanitarian catastrophe that exists inside that country. Yet this is different than other famines. This is different than other cholera outbreaks. This is different than other humanitarian nightmares in which tens of thousands of children lose their lives because we are not just a spectator in Yemen; we are participant. The bombing campaign that is causing the worst humanitarian nightmare in the world today is caused by a military campaign of which the United States is a major player and participant. So we have something to say today about whether this civil war ends. We have something to say about whether this Congress is going to allow the administration to continue to perpetuate a war that has had no debate in the U.S. Congress.

Let me take the four arguments the administration uses to try to argue against our resolution and talk to you a little bit about them.

The first argument that has been made—it is probably the most clear in

Secretary Pompeo's op-ed in the Wall Street Journal this morning—is that the real issue is not Saudi Arabia, it is Iran, and if we do not continue to support the Saudis' bombing campaign inside Yemen, the result will be that Iran will win in the region.

First, that exhibits a third-grade understanding of the Middle East. The Middle East is not a zero-sum game between the Saudis and the Iranians. Every time you do something that is potentially disadvantageous to the Saudis doesn't mean it results in an equal-sized benefit for the Iranians. In fact, it may be that both countries are doing things that are deleterious to American national security. It may be that we want to pick and choose when we engage with the Saudis and when we don't engage with the Saudis. Just because we choose not to engage in one particular aspect of Saudi foreign policy does not mean that it equals a gift to the Iranians. Yet that is what Secretary Pompeo would have you believe; that if we don't blindly support the Saudis' civil war inside Yemen, then that will be a win for the Iranians.

The reality is, while this civil war has been occurring, al-Qaida and ISIS have gotten stronger and more numerous. In fact, the greatest threat to the American homeland today comes from the wing of al-Qaida that is inside Yemen. This civil war that we have been helping to perpetuate is actually making our most sacred enemy even stronger inside that country.

Second, there has to be a line that is crossed in which our ally has gone too far, that we are not willing to follow. Clearly, that has happened in Saudi Arabia as they intentionally bomb schools and hospitals and schoolbuses. Just because we stand up and say: We are not willing to support you, Saudi Arabia, in your targeted bombing of civilians, that does not equally gift to Iran. We are still able to decide when we engage or not engage even with our allies.

Third, a lot of folks seem to believe there is some command-and-control relationship between the Iranians and the Houthis. They are, certainly, tied together. There are, certainly, weapons capabilities that have been gifted, granted, to the Houthis by the Iranians, but the Houthis are not Hezbollah. This is not a group of fighters that Iran controls. In fact, as the civil war goes on and on and gets deeper and deeper, the Houthis and the Iranians get closer and closer together. So as we continue to just feed enough support to the Saudis to keep the civil war going, we are actually perpetuating the very end we seek to avoid, which is the merger of the Iranian regime and the Houthi rebels. They are becoming closer and closer the longer and longer the United States becomes engaged in this conflict.

The Middle East is not a zero-sum game. You do not have to unconditionally back the Saudis in everything they ask of us simply because you

don't like the Iranians. That is not how the Middle East works. You can pick and choose the places in which you back up your ally—at no cost to your campaign—so as to try to delegitimize and reduce the influence of Iran.

Second, the claim is that this resolution, if it were to be agreed to, would hurt the negotiations that are scheduled for next month. False. It is exactly the opposite for two reasons.

One, the Saudis need to understand that our support is not unconditional, that they actually have to bend at the negotiating table. Right now, they don't believe they have to do that. In fact, over the course of this civil war, they have been, more often than not, the reluctant party in these negotiations because they believe that if negotiations fall apart and they return to a state of military hostilities, the United States will give them whatever they need. It is really important right now for the Saudis to understand, as they head into these negotiations, that if these negotiations don't succeed, there will be consequences.

Second, the idea that the Houthis are ready to give up the fight, that they are tired, is also false. There is no evidence of that. The Houthis don't believe the negotiation is real, so they are prepared to just fight it out. If the Houthis believe the United States is an honest broker here, that there is some point at which we are unwilling to follow the Saudis into battle as they continue to deliberately attack civilians inside Yemen, then the Houthis will be actually more willing to sit and talk at the negotiating table. Showing that there is some conditionality to our support for the Saudis, that there is some line on war crimes that they cross that is too far, is actually helpful in getting both of these parties closer together at the negotiating table.

Third, the claims that if this resolution were to be agreed to, it would hurt our work against al-Qaida and ISIS are absolutely false. Inside this resolution is an exclusion. What we say is, if there is an existing authorization for war inside Yemen, this resolution does not erase it. There is an existing authorization for any campaign anywhere in the world that the United States launches against al-Qaida. The administration and the prior administration, the Obama administration, have expanded the 9/11 AUMF to cover ISIS as well, so nothing in this resolution hurts our ability to go after al-Qaida and ISIS inside Yemen. All of those operations can continue, even if this is to be agreed to and becomes law.

Second, al-Qaida has been growing in strength. ISIS had no foothold in Yemen before this civil war. It is stronger today than it was 3 years ago because, once again, like we did in Iraq for 10 years and like we are doing in Syria, we are giving just enough help to the Saudis to keep the civil war going without actually ever being willing to give enough force so as to be dispositive on the ground. All we are

doing is lengthening the civil war. Nature abhors a vacuum, and in the vacuum that is created by that civil war, especially in the vast, ungovernable portions of Yemen, al-Qaida takes advantage, and ISIS continues to grow. Every day we continue to just keep this thing going, our sworn Sunni extremist enemies are getting stronger.

Lastly, the argument is made that if the United States is not involved with the Saudis, the humanitarian nightmare would be worse. How could it be worse? How is that a justification? There are 85,000 children under the age of 5 who have died of starvation and disease. There are 22 million people in the country, and three-quarters of the population cannot live without humanitarian assistance. The world's worst cholera epidemic in the history of the world is happening right now inside that country. Why? Because the Saudis have been deliberately hitting the water treatment facilities. I am not making this up. They have been targeting the water treatment facilities so you can't get clean water, so people get cholera.

Today, humanitarian supplies have been reduced by 50 percent to the Port of Hodeidah because, as we speak, the Saudis, with U.S. support, are bombing all around Hodeidah, and humanitarian agencies have cut off many of the supplies they would traditionally send into that capital. The humanitarian nightmare is getting worse right now, as we speak today, because this civil war continues to go on and on.

It can't get much worse than it is today, and there is no evidence that the U.S.' participation in this campaign has made it better. In fact, since we have been sitting inside these targeting centers, with U.S. personnel helping the Saudis pick targets, more civilians have been killed, not fewer. We actually pulled out of the targeting centers at the end of the Obama administration. The Obama administration made a determination in 2016 that we were potentially committing war crimes by being with the Saudis as they were choosing to hit the water treatment facilities, so they pulled our people out.

There is no evidence that during the time we were not in the targeting centers, the Saudis were hitting more civilian targets. In fact, the evidence tells us that the deeper we get involved in the targeting decisions, the more they hit civilian targets. There is a perfectly reasonable explanation for that. So long as they have the United States inside the tent, they have moral cover for hitting civilian targets. They can use us to say: Well, the United States was there. It was inside the room when these decisions were made, so it can't be that we are doing the kind of damage you say we are.

The evidence doesn't suggest the contrary. The evidence says, the contrary is true—of a 160-percent increase in civilians being killed just this year versus last year. So the Middle East

isn't a zero-sum game. The adoption of this resolution does not empower Iran. We are not obligated to follow the Saudis into every mistake they make.

Second, this resolution will not hurt negotiations. It will absolutely help negotiations by showing that the United States is going to be an honest broker. The Houthis are bad players. They have killed a lot of people. They have done a lot of damage inside that country. This is not just a question of what the Saudis have done. Seventy percent of the civilians have been killed by Saudi bombs, but the Houthis need to be held to account for what they have done as well. We need to be a broker of peace. This resolution will help us be a broker of peace.

Third, al-Qaida and ISIS can still be confronted, even if this resolution is agreed to, and the quicker this civil war ends, the less power they have.

Fourth, theoretically, maybe things could be worse. Maybe we could have 185,000 children under the age of 5 die from starvation and disease, but this is not a justification to just stay the course. We need to shake up the stalemate that exists today. We need to send a signal that the United States is not OK with the way the Saudis have perpetuated this war—frankly, the way they have lied to us over the course of the last several months about other things they are doing to quell dissent in and around the Kingdom. We need to send a message, but we also need to get the United States out of a conflict right now that is of no benefit to American national security and that has become a nightmare for people who are stuck in Yemen today.

I urge the adoption of the resolution. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TILLIS). The Senator from Vermont.

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

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

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that my remarks begin at this point and not a minute or so ago.

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

NOMINATION OF THOMAS FARR

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, as we all know, we have a constitutional obligation as U.S. Senators to provide advice and consent to a President's nominee. That is not advice and rubberstamp; it is advice and informed consent.

I do my best to scrutinize each nominee on the merits, regardless of party, and decide whether they deserve a lifetime appointment to our Federal bench. During my 44 years in the Senate, I have actually voted for more Republican nominated judges than almost

all but one or two Republican Senators in this body today.

The simple fact is, given Mr. Farr's track record of working to systematically dismantle the franchise for thousands of African-American voters, Thomas Farr becomes one of the most controversial nominees of either party I have ever encountered. Someone who has made a career out of attacking a sacred constitutional right, indeed the very right that gives democracy its name, simply does not belong on the Federal bench.

Let's begin with his role on Jesse Helms' Senate campaign in 1990—a campaign I remember very, very well. The Department of Justice alleged that Senator Helms' campaign sent thousands of postcards to every African-American precinct, falsely telling voters that they were ineligible to vote and threatening prosecution against those who did. Mr. Farr served as a top lawyer to Senator Helms at the time. He appears to have misled Congress about his role in that brazen voter suppression scheme. When Senate Judiciary Committee members asked Mr. Farr whether he knew about or had provided any counsel on the decision to send these postcards, Mr. Farr said he hadn't learned about their existence until after they were mailed out, but a former DOJ official has stated that Mr. Farr definitely knew about the postcards before they were sent out and that Mr. Farr's responses to Congress were just plain contrary to the facts.

Setting aside this outrageous attempt at voter suppression, each Senator in this Chamber should care whether the President's nominees tell the truth. If a nominee will not tell us the truth, especially when they are under oath, then they are unfit to take another oath—the oath of judicial office.

Mr. Farr's embrace of voter suppression appears only to have grown after his work on the Helms campaign. In 2013, he chose to defend North Carolina's racially restrictive voting law—a voting law that the Fourth Circuit struck down because it “target[ed] African Americans with almost surgical precision.” Undeterred, between 2014 and 2017, Mr. Farr again defended North Carolina legislature in numerous lawsuits alleging that it had racially gerrymandered its State house and senate map. In each of these cases, higher courts found North Carolina's gerrymandering to be unconstitutional.

There is a pattern here. It is deeply troubling. Mr. Farr has dedicated his skills as a lawyer to suppressing the right to vote for minorities. His refusal to acknowledge, under oath, his involvement in disenfranchisement operations makes him doubly unqualified for the Federal bench.

I urge all Senators who care about the right to vote and who care about the right of this body to hear the whole truth from a President's nominees, especially when they are under oath, to vote no on Mr. Farr's nomination.

As a child, I remember going into voting booths with my parents in Montpelier, Vermont, and watching them vote. They emphasized to me, my brother, and my sister how important it was to be able to vote, that democracy required it.

When our children were growing up, we said the same to them: Always vote. No matter who you vote for, vote. It is a sacred right.

I have been in countries where people fought revolutions, had family members die for their right to vote, but they all show up; everybody who is left shows up when they can vote. I want to think that my grandchildren will have the right to vote when they grow up, that all of my grandchildren—no matter what color their skin is—have the right to vote. That should be the same for everybody's child, everybody's grandchildren in this country.

Mr. Farr doesn't think that should be the case. He does not think people of color should be able to vote. That is wrong, and such a person does not deserve my vote or any other Senator's vote to sit on the Federal court.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COTTON).

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the time of further quorum calls be equally divided between the two leaders.

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

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

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

SAUDI ARABIA BRIEFING

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, there was a classified briefing this morning that Members of the Senate were invited to on a bipartisan basis, Democrats and Republicans. It is rare. We don't do it very often. We do it when there is an important issue of national security and something else of great moment.

What we came to discuss today was Saudi Arabia, and that discussion really focused on our guests—the Secretary of State, Mr. Pompeo, and the Secretary of Defense, Mr. Mattis. They talked to us about our relationship with Saudi Arabia, for obvious reasons. Hardly anyone in the world could have missed what happened over the last several weeks when a man named

Khashoggi went into the consulate for Saudi Arabia in Istanbul and never came out.

We have a videotape that shows the Saudi citizen and American resident entering that building. For the longest time, there was a debate as to what actually happened to him. All sorts of stories were manufactured and fabricated. It turned out that the Turks had access to audio recordings of what actually happened inside that consulate. They eventually made them public, released them to the Government of Saudi Arabia as well as to the United States, and we came to learn that Mr. Khashoggi, a frequent critic of the Saudi royal family, was murdered. He walked into that consulate and never walked out alive. Some group flew in from Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, ambushed him, killed him, and, as hard it may be to believe, brought with them a bone saw so they could dismember him and take parts of his body out to be destroyed and buried somewhere in Turkey.

That story eventually emerged, and President Trump was confronted repeatedly: What are we going to do about this?

Saudi Arabia is supposed to be one of our allies. We have arms agreements with them. We are involved in a lot of things relative to energy and national security. For the longest time, the President was dismissive, saying: I have spoken to the royal family, and they have denied they had anything to do with it.

Well, that excuse worked for a while but not very long. Once the recordings were released by the Turks, once the world came to grips with what actually happened to Mr. Khashoggi, serious questions were raised about this outrageous abuse of human rights at the hands of the Saudi regime.

There is a lot of speculation back and forth about who ordered it and who knew about it. Those questions may never be answered. But we do know that some 15 to 17 people close to the Crown Prince in Saudi Arabia have been implicated to the point where the Trump administration finally acknowledged that we have to do something. We have to take a stand even when it involves a country that has been our ally in many circumstances.

If you read the history of Saudi Arabia's relationship with the United States, it has a lot to do with oil. For the longest time, we counted on the Middle East for oil. We looked the other way. We helped them, and they made a fortune in the process. The opulence of the royalty in Saudi Arabia rivals any royalty in the modern world, and the lavish lifestyles of the Saudi princes as they travel around the world has been well documented.

The United States has looked the other way many times because we needed the oil or we needed them as a strategic ally or a strategic partner. Those times have changed in some respects. We are becoming more energy

independent. We are not as dependent on Saudi Arabia as we once were for energy supplies to fuel our economy.

In the meantime, something else has happened within the Kingdom. There has been a transition of power to the Crown Prince, who is known as MBS. He is a young man in his thirties, and he announced when he came to power that he was going to make some real changes in Saudi Arabia. One big breakthrough he announced was that women would be allowed to drive cars. In the West, it is almost comical to think of that as a concession, but in Saudi Arabia, that is progress in a country that has been slow to give women recognition in roles they deserve.

Then he got engaged in foreign policy and started doing things that were hard to explain, one after the other. One of them was the decision to take the Prime Minister of Lebanon, Mr. Hariri, and, basically, to put him under house arrest when he visited from Lebanon in the Royal Kingdom and, then, to have a confrontational relationship with Qatar, a country that we rely on for our military basing and support in the region. Then, of course, there is what brings us to the floor later this afternoon for an important—maybe historic—vote. He decided that the Saudis would invade Yemen because they believed the Iranians were establishing a power base there and because there was aggression from Yemen against Saudi Arabia.

That decision to begin this war in Yemen sometime in the recent past resulted in outcomes that no one could have predicted. There are about 28 million people who live in Yemen. We estimate that 14 million of them, half of the people living in that country, are subjected now to a famine that threatens their very lives. We know that over 80,000 children have been killed so far in the war in Yemen.

What is the role of the United States? Well, it is hard to define it in specific terms. At one point—I think it has been discontinued now—we were fueling the bombers the Saudis sent into Yemen, releasing the bombs that killed civilian populations and other innocent people. At one point—I think it is still the case—we were assisting them in targeting the areas in Yemen where they were going to drop their bombs.

So the United States has not been on the sidelines. We have been involved. Our military, the best in the world, has been involved in helping the Saudis with this invasion of Yemen. They have discontinued, I understand, the fueling mission, but other things continue.

The question we have to ask ourselves now is this: Why are we there? By what constitutional authority? It is this little book here that is supposed to guide our conduct. By what constitutional authority is this administration and the Department of Defense waging a war in Yemen? It isn't because of any

vote on the floor of the U.S. Senate or the House of Representatives, though the Constitution is explicit that the declaration of war is in the hands of Congress—really, in the hands of the American people through Congress. In this case, whatever is going on in Yemen has never been expressly approved.

What they hearkened back to was a measure that was passed on the floor of the Senate 17 years ago, and I remember because I was here. It was after 9/11. Who will ever forget that? Three thousand innocent Americans were killed by terrorists who crashed planes into the World Trade Center in New York and into a field in Pennsylvania. Do you know the nationality of the terrorists who were on those planes, the ones who commandeered them and killed those innocent Americans? Saudis. They were all Saudis.

Yet we passed this resolution saying the United States can use force to retaliate against them, and I voted for it. We found them in Afghanistan. We went after them. But could anyone have possibly imagined that that vote 17 years ago gave authority to our government today to engage in a war in Yemen?

True, there are terrorists on the ground in almost every country in the Middle East, and you could justify our military involvement by saying we are fighting terrorism. But let's be honest. This Constitution did not want a generic declaration of war. It wanted us to be careful when we chose those battlegrounds.

So today we had a briefing by the Secretary of State, Mr. Pompeo, which I cannot recount in detail because it was in a classified setting, but we do know this. This morning, that same Secretary of State authored an article in the Wall Street Journal about this issue. It is entitled "The U.S.-Saudi Partnership is Vital," by Secretary of State Mike Pompeo. I would like to read the opening paragraph of Secretary of State Pompeo's statement. When it comes to our relationship with Saudi Arabia and the war in Yemen, here is what he wrote:

The Trump administration's effort to rebuild the U.S.-Saudi Arabia partnership isn't popular in the salons of Washington, where politicians of both parties have long used the kingdom's human-rights record to call for the alliance's downgrading. The October murder of Saudi national Jamal Khashoggi in Turkey has heightened the Capitol Hill caterwauling and media pile-on. But degrading U.S.-Saudi ties would be a grave mistake for the national security of the U.S. and its allies.

It is a long article. Read it in its entirety and draw your own conclusions, but the first paragraph sets the tone. We are not discussing our role with Saudi Arabia in the salons of Washington. We are discussing them on the floor of the U.S. Senate. Why? Because we were elected to do just that.

The American people entrust us with the foreign policy of the United States and decisions that need to be made

about whether we commit American tax dollars or American lives in a military conflict. It isn't some group of academics in a salon. It is Members of the U.S. Senate, duly elected, who are facing their responsibility to debate it today.

Listen to these terms that the Secretary of State uses: "The October murder of Saudi national Jamal Khashoggi has heightened the Capitol Hill caterwauling and media pile-on."

"Caterwauling"—you don't run into that word much, do you? I went to look it up to make sure I understood it. It is the shrieking of cats when they are in a fight.

So the national reaction—the international reaction—to the cold-blooded murder of an American resident, a Saudi citizen and the dismemberment of his body and its disposal in ways we couldn't even explain is "caterwauling"? To me, it is a reflection of your values, and, rightfully, people around the world are protesting that this sort of activity could happen.

That is why we are bringing this measure before the Senate this afternoon. I see my colleague from Indiana is here. I thank him for his leadership.

I will close with this. I am reluctant to display this picture, though it was on the front page of a major newspaper in the United States. But I want those who wonder why we are in this debate and why we are caterwauling about this assassination of Mr. Khashoggi to understand what is really the issue that we are debating and voting on.

Amal Hussain died at the age of 7 in Yemen. "My heart is broken," her mother said. She died just a few days after the picture was taken. She is a victim of famine in Yemen. This is what the decision is all about on the floor of the U.S. Senate. Will we continue to expend American taxpayer dollars—even American lives—in support of the Saudi regime and their invasion in the war in Yemen?

I understand the threat of Iran, and I understand we have to stand up to their aggression when and where it takes place. But did we enlist in this war? Did the American people have a national debate about this war? Did we vote in the Senate to engage in this war? The answer is, clearly, no.

I will be supporting this resolution that will be coming before us this afternoon. I thank my friend from Indiana for waiting an additional moment while I completed my remarks.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

NOMINATION OF KATHLEEN KRANINGER

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, I rise today in opposition to the nomination of Kathleen Kraninger to be Director of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, or CFPB.

This is one of the most important positions in our entire government—a job that is dedicated to protecting consumers from fraudsters, from predatory lending, and from dangerous financial

products that can drive families to bankruptcy.

Ms. Kraninger does not have the experience or the values to hold such an important job. In fact, she has fully endorsed this administration's ongoing efforts to systematically dismantle protections for consumers.

This time last year, I led over 40 of my colleagues in writing to the President urging him to nominate a professional, bipartisan expert with a proven record of being tough on financial institutions that rip off consumers. Instead, this administration has spent the past year working to gut the CFPB under Interim Director Mulvaney. They have frozen data collection of consumer complaints and undermined enforcement tools. They have slow-walked enforcement actions and weakened protections for our servicemembers and seniors. They have stripped the Fair Lending Office of enforcement powers and closed the Office of Students and Young Consumers. Ms. Kraninger supports all of these actions, and all of these actions run contrary to the mission and to the purpose of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.

This nominee is not a bipartisan professional with a proven record of financial enforcement. She is a politically driven choice who will dismantle protections for the men and women currently serving in our military, and for our veterans, our students, our seniors, and all American consumers.

I had the honor of serving on the Dodd-Frank conference committee, where we finalized the strongest Wall Street reform bill in a generation and created the CFPB. I have spent the past decade defending the CFPB from one attack after another—efforts to cut off its funding, efforts to make it harder for them to hire qualified staff, and efforts to make it harder for them to put in place important new protections for the American people.

It is unconscionable that this administration will now spend the coming years attacking the CFPB from within by putting in place leadership that fundamentally does not believe in protecting consumers. We need to hold financial bad actors and special interests accountable, not let them set the CFPB's agenda.

My Democratic colleagues and I told the President this a year ago, and I will say it again. The Nation needs a professional, bipartisan expert with a proven record of being tough on financial bad actors to run the CFPB. We must have a Director who is focused on the prosperity of all American families and not payday lenders and fraudsters.

Ms. Kraninger does not meet the standard. So I will oppose her nomination, and I urge my colleagues to join me.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. YOUNG. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss my vote on the motion

to discharge S.J. Res. 54. This resolution is a joint resolution to direct the removal of the U.S. Armed Forces from hostilities in the Republic of Yemen that have not been authorized by this Congress.

As my colleagues well know, since March of 2017, I have focused on the humanitarian crisis in Yemen and ending the civil war that has made it so much worse. During that time period, I have spent as much time as anyone I can conceive of here on Capitol Hill focusing on this humanitarian tragedy in Yemen—this national security disaster. I have studied all sides of this issue and have tried to approach it with the seriousness it deserves.

Before saying where I am going to come down on today's vote, I wish to discuss why I opposed S.J. Res. 54 in March, what has happened since then, and why I plan to vote the way I do today.

In March, I voted to table S.J. Res. 54. In a speech here on the Senate floor on March 20, I explained my three reasons for doing so at that time.

First, I expressed concern that the bill hadn't been considered and marked up by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, of which I am a member.

Second, I said that it would never become law because the administration has threatened to veto it, and even if Congress were able to override a veto, I said it would fail to achieve its stated objective, because the administration rejects the premise that the legislation is related to hostilities in Yemen.

Third, I said I wanted to introduce legislation that could actually pass and provide the administration with the leverage it needs to pressure the Government of Saudi Arabia to do two things: No. 1, end the civil war in Yemen, and, No. 2, improve the humanitarian situation.

What has transpired since then? Well, I, along with Senators SHAHEEN, COLLINS, and COONS, introduced S.J. Res. 58 on April 11.

Our bill required the Secretary of State to repeatedly certify the Government of Saudi Arabia is taking urgent steps to end the civil war in Yemen, alleviate the humanitarian crisis, and reduce the risk to civilians. If he cannot make these written, detailed, and unclassified certifications, the legislation would prohibit U.S. air refueling for Saudi-led coalition aircraft, conducting missions exclusively focused on the civil war in Yemen.

We, in a bipartisan way, worked successfully to ensure the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the Senate Armed Services Committee passed versions of our legislation. We then worked, in a bipartisan way, to ensure it was included in the National Defense Authorization Act as section 1290, which the President of the United States signed into law.

In September, pursuant to section 1290, Secretary of State Pompeo sent to

Congress the required submission regarding Saudi actions in Yemen. Secretary Pompeo chose not to use the national security waiver and instead certified that Saudi Arabia was indeed taking urgent steps to end the civil war in Yemen, to alleviate the humanitarian crisis, and to reduce risk to civilians.

There were numerous problems with the Secretary of State's certifications. No. 1, the Secretary certified that Saudi Arabia was undertaking demonstrable actions to reduce the risk of harm to civilians and civilian infrastructure resulting from military operations in Yemen. That was not a credible certification because we saw in the preceding months a dramatic increase in civilian casualties and deaths.

No. 2, the Secretary certified that the Saudis were complying with applicable agreements and laws regulating defense articles purchased or transferred from the United States. That also was not a credible certification because the Secretary's own memorandum of justification for the section 1290 submission explicitly said the Saudis were not doing so. The document was directly and explicitly self-contradictory.

In summary, as a group of us wrote in a letter I led on October 10 to our Secretary of State, it was "difficult to reconcile known facts with at least two of [the] certifications." In other words, the Secretary's September section 1290 certification—the law of the land, a statute signed into law by the President of the United States—was not credible.

Despite repeated requests for answers to our questions regarding Saudi Arabia and Yemen, we couldn't get responsive or timely answers from the administration. After repeatedly calling for the administration to do so, I appreciated the decision to no longer provide air refueling to the Saudis in Yemen. Again, I appreciated that decision. However, I was disappointed the administration didn't use section 1290 to end the air refueling.

Why is this important? Such an approach would have demonstrated respect for the law and this article I branch of government. It would have also provided the administration additional leverage to persuade the Saudis to support our objectives—not the Saudi's objectives, our objectives—in Yemen.

I also thought the claim the Saudis requested to end the refueling was, shall I say, lamentable. In our October 10 letter, seven of us—again, a bipartisan group—asked for answers on a number of questions related to Saudi Arabia and Yemen and the section 1290 certification. We asked for a response by October 31.

Failing to receive those answers from the administration on November 15, more than 2 weeks after that deadline, I worked with Ranking Member MENENDEZ to introduce the Saudi Arabia Accountability and Yemen Act of

2018, S. 3652. Among other things, this bill seeks to ensure effective congressional oversight of U.S. policy on Yemen, provide leverage to push the stakeholders in Yemen's civil war toward a political process, and address the world's worst humanitarian crisis. I am told this is the worst crisis since the 1940s.

Yesterday, the day before a potential vote on this legislation, we finally received a response to the October 10 letter. It was late, and it was unresponsive. For me, the briefing today with Secretaries Pompeo and Mattis, though appreciated, raised more questions than it answered.

Let me now turn to today's vote. Recall my reasons for voting to table this bill in March. I wanted legislation to go through the Foreign Relations Committee, and I wanted something that could actually become law. With the support of the chairman and the ranking member, that is exactly what we did with my legislation, which ultimately became section 1290 of the Defense bill and was signed into law.

Unfortunately, as I have laid out, the administration did not take that law seriously, and it submitted a certification with highly troubling and problematic elements. That puts me in a very different place than last March. Plus, with 14 million people on the verge of starvation in Yemen and things getting worse by the day, there is no time to lose. I believe the Senate must speak clearly that we expect all parties—all parties—to the civil war to come urgently to the negotiating table to end the civil war.

Let me lay out my thoughts on Iran in the big picture. There is, of course, Iranian influence in Yemen. Iran is the world's worst state sponsor of terrorism, and Iran has played an immoral and illegal role in Yemen. I will take a backseat to no one as an Iran hawk.

I have studied the situation in Yemen as closely as anyone, and I believe the best way to oppose Iran and Yemen and stop ballistic missile attacks on our partners is to bring all parties to the negotiating table, to end this civil war, and to address the humanitarian crisis.

Famine and the indiscriminate targeting of civilians will only push more Yemenis toward Iran and its proxies, giving Tehran increased opportunities to threaten Americans, our allies, and our interests.

If you are not sure about this, ask yourself the following questions: Does Iran have more or less influence in Yemen now than it did a year ago or than it did when the civil war started? Will Iran have more or less influence in Yemen if the civil war continues indefinitely?

Solely from an anti-Iran perspective, I think an objective assessment of those questions demonstrates the need to end the civil war and the need to pursue an inclusive political solution that seeks to drive a wedge between the Houthis and Tehran.

In addition, there is no way we are going to make any real or sustainable progress in the world's worst humanitarian crisis unless we end the civil war. Ending the civil war would also allow us to focus more effectively on isolating and killing members of ISIS and al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula in Yemen.

To counter Iran, to help 14 million people on the verge of starvation, and to more effectively go after ISIS and AQAP, we need the civil war over now. The United States has leverage with the Saudis to help bring this about, and we need to use all of that leverage immediately. We have not done so thus far.

Since March of 2017, I have tried to give the administration all the leverage it needs to accomplish the outcomes I have laid out. The administration has failed to fully utilize the leverage I provided, and so I have no choice. Based on that history, based on those facts, based on our national security interests, based on our humanitarian principles, I plan to support S.J. Res. 54 today.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I rise to express my concern about the continued violence and humanitarian crisis in Yemen and to share my views on the resolution that is currently before us. The conflict in Yemen has persisted for far too long. I strongly support the efforts of the U.N. Special Envoy for Yemen, Martin Griffiths, to bring the internationally recognized Government of Yemen and the Houthis to the negotiating table in the near future, with the goal of reaching a sustainable political solution. I also welcome the call by Secretary Mattis and others for a cease-fire that would provide space for such negotiations to occur while also providing a measure of relief to the Yemeni population that has suffered so horrifically during this conflict.

According to the United Nations, half of Yemen's population—approximately 14 million people—are on the brink of famine and entirely reliant on external aid for their own survival. These challenges have been exacerbated by mass displacement in much of the country and recent fighting in the vicinity of Hudaydah—one of Yemen's only functioning ports through which approximately 70 percent of Yemen's food and other supplies enter the country. Even when food is available for purchase, reports indicate that currency inflation has made it too expensive for most Yemenis to afford. More must be done by both the coalition and the Houthis to facilitate the flow of humanitarian aid into and throughout Yemen.

I also have significant concerns about persistent reports of civilian casualties and damage to civilian infrastructure in Yemen caused by both the Houthis and the coalition of Armed Forces led primarily by Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, UAE.

According to the United Nations, there have been nearly 17,000 documented civilian casualties since the beginning of the conflict, although that number is likely much higher given the difficulty of investigating such incidents in a conflict zone. Most of these casualties have been the result of airstrikes led by the Saudi-led coalition.

Unfortunately, well-intentioned efforts by the United States to help the coalition avoid civilian casualties have not produced sufficient results. Far too many of the strikes by the coalition have killed or injured civilians and resulted in the destruction of infrastructure needed to provide basic services to the population, thereby exacerbating the humanitarian crisis.

Secretary Pompeo's September certification that the coalition is taking demonstrable action—in his words—to reduce the risk to civilians does not seem to be borne out by the facts on the ground. According to reports, civilian casualty incidents increased dramatically over the summer. Indeed, Secretary Pompeo's own certification acknowledged that "recent civilian casualty incidents indicate insufficient implementation reforms and targeting processes" and "investigations have not yielded accountability measures" into the behavior of coalition pilots flying missions into Yemen.

Any U.S. support to the Saudi-led coalition needs to be considered in a thoughtful and deliberate manner. From a policy perspective, we should distinguish between assistance that is provided for defensive or noncombat purposes and that which could be used to enable offensive military operations in the Yemeni civil war. I strongly support the recent announcement by Secretary of Defense Mattis that the U.S. would no longer provide aerial refueling support to the Saudi-led coalition—an outcome I have long advocated for.

Earlier this year, I led an effort with Senator BLUMENTHAL and a number of other colleagues to raise concern about the apparent inability of the Department of Defense to account for the required reimbursements from members of the Saudi-led coalition for aerial refueling support provided by the United States. We were informed yesterday afternoon that, as a result of our inquiry, the Department has found errors in accounting and will now be seeking full reimbursement from Saudi Arabia and UAE for aerial refueling support provided from March 2015 through September of this year—an action that is expected to recover millions of dollars in U.S. taxpayer funds.

Going forward, I believe that any U.S. assistance to members of the Saudi-led coalition should be explicitly limited to the following objectives: first, enabling counterterrorism operations against al-Qaida and ISIS; second, defending the territorial integrity of Saudi Arabia and the UAE, including against ballistic missile and UAV threats; third, preserving freedom of navigation in the maritime environ-

ment around Yemen; and fourth, enhancing the training and professionalism of their armed forces, with a primary focus on the adherence to the law of armed conflict and the prevention of civilian casualties.

With particular regard to defense against ballistic missile and UAV threats, the United States cannot be in the position of providing targeting information in Yemen that would be misused by Saudi or UAE forces either deliberately or through carelessness.

I recently joined a bipartisan group of colleagues in introducing a bill that would advance these principles. Among other things, the bill would suspend offensive weapon sales to Saudi Arabia, prohibit a resumption of U.S. refueling of Saudi-led coalition aircraft, and require sanctions for persons blocking humanitarian access and those who are supporting the Houthis in Yemen. I believe these actions would contribute to a resolution of the conflict in Yemen by making the best use of the tools and leverage available to the United States.

The United States can and should engage with the Saudi-led coalition if there is a possibility that we can help minimize collateral damage by providing them with training and advice on best practices. To date, such engagement by U.S. military personnel has resulted in the incorporation of a no-strike list into target development procedures, a cessation of the use of cluster munitions, and the formation of a joint assessment team to investigate strikes that result in collateral damage. These are positive steps, but it is clear that the coalition has not sufficiently minimized the impact of the war on Yemeni civilians, and more must be done.

Both Saudi Arabia and the UAE face a significant threat from Houthi rebels armed with ballistic missiles—apparently with the technical assistance of Iran. There have reportedly been dozens of such attacks against Saudi Arabia since the spring of 2015, including against numerous civilian targets. I support the right of our partners to defend themselves from these threats and believe that continued sharing of U.S. intelligence for strictly defensive purposes—not to be used as an excuse for offensive operations in Yemen—is appropriate.

I continue to support U.S. engagement for the purposes and in accordance with the principles outlined above—activities that I do not believe conflict with the War Powers Resolution. The resolution before us would make clear that Congress does not support the introduction of U.S. forces into hostilities in Yemen absent an affirmative authorization for the use of military force. I commend my colleagues—Senators Sanders, Murphy, and Lee—for their continued efforts to keep focus on the need to bring an end to the violence in Yemen.

When we last considered this resolution 8 months ago, I was hopeful that a

negotiated settlement to the conflict was attainable and expressed concern about the possibility of escalation. I also hoped that the principles I articulated above could be rigorously adhered to. Unfortunately, since that time, fighting in Yemen has continued to intensify, civilian casualty incidents have risen, and the humanitarian crisis has only worsened. The status quo cannot persist, and the Senate should take every opportunity to make its views clear. For that reason, I intend to support this resolution.

Moreover, the administration must make it clear to both the Saudi-led coalition and the Houthis that there is no military solution to this conflict and that the time has come to reach a negotiated settlement. The conflict in Yemen has negatively impacted the strategic security interests of the Saudis, the Emiratis, and the United States. It has emboldened Iran and relieved pressure on al-Qaida and ISIS. Most importantly, the conflict has resulted in the largest humanitarian disaster facing the world in recent memory. It is time for this war to stop.

It is also appropriate to reassess our relationship with Saudi Arabia in response to the brazen murder of Jamal Khashoggi and other violations of human rights. We must ensure that all individuals who played a role in directing, planning, and carrying out the murder are held accountable. Despite denials by the President, it is inconceivable to me that such an operation would be conducted without at least the awareness of Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman—if not in its planning, then certainty in its immediate aftermath. The Crown Prince effectively controls all levers of power in Saudi Arabia, and it is no coincidence that those who have been publicly identified as most directly responsible for the murder included his closest adviser and numerous members of the Saudi Royal Guard. If the Saudis are now being honest—despite repeated denials and shifting explanations for the disappearance of Khashoggi—then they should voluntarily submit to an independent international investigation.

President Trump should also publicly release a declassified assessment of our intelligence community with respect to what role Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and other Saudi leaders had in the murder.

Finally, the Senate should immediately take up and pass the bipartisan Saudi Arabia Accountability and Yemen Act of 2018, which is comprehensive legislation to ensure effective congressional oversight of U.S. policy toward Saudi Arabia and Yemen, and demand meaningful accountability for the murder of Jamal Khashoggi.

I yield the floor.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TOOMEY). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, I stood before this body in March of this year to protest our country's unconstitutional intervention in Saudi Arabia's bloody war in Yemen. I was proud to stand with my colleagues, Senators SANDERS and MURPHY, to file a discharge motion of our resolution, S.J. Res. 54, which would remove U.S. Armed Forces from Yemen.

At that time, members of the Foreign Relations Committee requested additional time to study the issue and to debate the resolution in the Foreign Relations Committee. The chairman of that committee, my friend and colleague from Tennessee, Senator CORKER, requested this with the commitment to "bring forth legislation to actually appropriately deal with many of the issues relative to Yemen, Saudi Arabia, and ourselves." So with that, the Senate voted to table the motion.

Since then, the committee has held a hearing on this issue and introduced a separate bipartisan bill to address it, but no further action has been taken.

So today, 8 months later, the bloodshed continues, still abetted by the United States, even amidst further revelations of Saudi depravity. It is long past overdue that Congress remove U.S. forces from Yemen, as recent circumstances only confirm. Today, we have a chance to remedy our course of action and to do what the Constitution and justice demand.

The situation in Yemen is dire. The war has killed tens of thousands of innocent civilians—human beings, lest we forget—each one of them possessing immeasurable dignity and inherent worth. It has created refugees, orphans, widows, and has also displaced countless families.

The numbers and the inhumanity are staggering—nothing short of it. Since 2015, more than 10,000 civilians have died, and 40,000 have been wounded. In an attack just a few months ago, a bomb was dropped on a school bus that killed 40 young boys who were on a school trip and wounded another 56 children.

What few Americans knew until recently is that the U.S. military has actually been making the crisis worse by helping one side bomb these innocent civilians. So how did we get entangled in this crisis to begin with?

In March of 2015, Saudi Arabia launched a war against the Houthi rebels shortly after the Houthis ousted the Saudi-backed government in the capital city of Sanaa. The Obama administration, without consulting Congress, quickly authorized U.S. military forces to provide "logistical and intelligence support" to the Saudi-led coalition. U.S. military support has continued since then, including midair refueling, surveillance, reconnaissance information, and target selection assist-

ance. In other words, we have been supporting and actively participating in the activities of war in Yemen.

But article I, section 8 of the Constitution states that Congress shall have the power to declare war—Congress, not the President, not the Pentagon, not someone else in the executive branch, not any other part of government but Congress. The Founders could not have been any clearer about this.

They did so with very good reason. The Founders set up our system of government in such a way as to protect the people from the dangers associated with the excessive accumulation of power in the hands of the few. We know from experience and we knew then from our young Nation's experience under British rule that bad things happen, especially on a national level, when too few people exercise too much power and that power goes unchecked. Nowhere is this more evident than in the case of the power to declare war.

So the Founders placed that war power squarely in the legislative branch, the branch where honest, open, and public debate is supposed to happen and the branch that is held most accountable to the people through elections at the most regular intervals.

As Alexander Hamilton pointed out in Federalist Paper 69, this power would not be exercised by the executive branch so that it would be less likely to be abused, just as it was when the King of England acted in and of himself, by himself, to send his country—and ours, for that matter—into war.

Now, some opponents of our resolution claim that our involvement in Yemen is somehow constitutionally justified under the War Powers Act of 1973. This isn't true. It is true that the War Powers Act makes it possible for the executive branch of government acting alone to use Armed Forces in cases of emergencies and subject to certain limited, defined time constraints. But the conflict in Yemen by no means—in no way, shape, or form—constitutes a threat to the safety of American citizens. Our involvement has far surpassed the allotted emergency time constraint.

The Houthis, while no friends of ours, are a regional rebel group that does not itself threaten American national security. In fact, the longer we fight against them, the more reason we give them to hate America and embrace the opportunists who are our true enemy in the region—Iran. The more we prolong the activities that destabilize the region, the longer we harm our own interests in terms of trade and broader regional security.

The War Powers Act also states that the assignment of U.S. Armed Forces to coordinate or participate in hostilities of a foreign country constitutes a conflict of war. Some have argued that we have not been engaging in hostilities and therefore have not violated the War Powers Act, but this claim, too, falls flat on its face. We have spe-

cifically aided the Saudi coalition with midair refueling and target selection assistance. As Defense Secretary Jim Mattis himself said in December of 2017, our military is helping the Saudis "make certain [they] hit the right thing." In other words, we are helping a foreign power bomb its adversaries. If that doesn't constitute hostilities, I don't know what does.

Finally, some critics say that this resolution would somehow hurt our efforts to combat terrorism in the region, specifically, al-Qaida and ISIS. However, the resolution explicitly states that it would not impede the military's ability to fight these terror groups.

In fact, the U.S. effort in Yemen has arguably undermined the effort against al-Qaida's affiliates. The State Department's country reports on terrorism for 2016 found that the conflict between the Saudi-led forces and the Houthi insurgents has helped al-Qaida in the Arabia peninsula—AQAP—and ISIS's Yemen branch to "deepen their inroads across much of the country."

It appears that our involvement in Yemen accomplishes no good at all—only harm, and serious consequential harm at that.

The situation in Yemen now poses a true humanitarian crisis. The country is on the brink of rampant disease and mass starvation. An estimated 15 million people don't have access to clean water and sanitation, and 17 million don't have access to food. More innocent lives are being lost every single day.

My position on this has not changed for the past 8 months, but with the taking of another innocent life—that of Jamal Khashoggi—the circumstances have only further deteriorated.

Intelligence suggests, despite his repeated denials, that the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia himself ordered the murder. Saudi Arabia's moral depravity has only been made plainer.

This is not an ally that deserves our support or military intervention on its behalf, especially when our own security is not itself on the line. On the contrary, to continue supporting them in this war would be bad diplomacy and undermine our very credibility.

U.S. intervention in Yemen is unauthorized, unconstitutional, and immoral. We must not—we cannot—delay voting to end our involvement and our support of Saudi Arabia any further. If we do, we have ourselves to blame for our country's lost credibility on the world stage, and, more importantly, our own consciences will bear the blame for the thousands of lives that will surely continue to be lost.

The Founding Fathers had incredible wisdom in requiring these issues—issues of American blood and American treasure—to be debated and discussed between two equal branches of government. They understood that matters of war and alliances must constantly be reconsidered and reevaluated—and in an open, honest, and public manner.

That is one of our most solemn duties in this body, and it is the opportunity that lies squarely before us today.

We owe it to the sons and daughters of the American people who put their sons and daughters in harm's way to defend us. We owe it to their parents and their families, and we owe it to ourselves, who have taken an oath to uphold, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States.

I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of the motion to discharge the resolution.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 10 minutes.

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

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, let me thank Senator LEE for his leadership on this resolution. At a time when many bemoan the lack of bipartisanship, we are seeing it here—people coming together around an issue of enormous concern. I want to thank Senator LEE and Senator CHRIS MURPHY of Connecticut, also one of the leaders in this effort, and the other 17 cosponsors of this resolution.

In one-half hour or so, we are going to be casting one of the most important foreign policy votes that we have cast in recent years. It is a vote to demand that the humanitarian crisis in Yemen be addressed. It is a vote that will tell the despotic dictatorship in Saudi Arabia that we will no longer be part of their destructive military adventurism. It is a vote, as Senator LEE just mentioned, that says that the Senate respects the Constitution of the United States and understands that the issue of war-making—of going to war, putting our young men and women's lives at stake—is something determined by the Congress, not the President of the United States. It is a congressional decision, not a Presidential decision, whether that President is a Democrat or a Republican.

In March of 2015, under the leadership of Muhammed bin Salman—then Saudi Defense Minister and now the Crown Prince—Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates intervened in Yemen's ongoing civil war.

Let's be clear. Yemen has been a poor and struggling country for many years, but as a result of the Saudi-led intervention, Yemen is now experiencing the worst humanitarian disaster in the entire world.

In one of the poorest countries on Earth, as a result of this war—according to the Save the Children organization—some 85,000 children have already starved to death and millions more face death, face starvation, if this war continues.

According to the United Nations, Yemen is at risk of the most severe famine in more than 100 years, with some 14 million people facing starvation.

Further, Yemen is currently experiencing the worst cholera outbreak in the world, with as many as 10,000 new cases developing every week, according to the World Health Organization. Cholera is a disease spread by infected water that causes severe diarrhea and dehydration and will only accelerate the death rate and the misery in that country. The cholera outbreak, as it happens, has occurred because Saudi bombs have destroyed Yemen's water infrastructure, and people are no longer able to access clean water.

The fact is that the United States, with limited media attention, has been Saudi Arabia's partner in this horrific war. We have been providing the bombs that the Saudi-led coalition is using. We have been refueling their planes before they drop those bombs. We have been assisting with intelligence.

In too many cases, our weapons are used to kill civilians. As is now well known, in August there was an American-made bomb that obliterated a schoolbus full of young boys, killing dozens and wounding many more. A CNN report found evidence that American weapons have been used in a string of such deadly attacks on civilians since the war began. According to the independent monitoring group Yemen Data Project, between March 2015 and March 2018, more than 30 percent of the Saudi-led coalition's targets have been nonmilitary.

A few weeks ago, I met with some brave human rights activists from Yemen, and they are urging Congress to put a stop to this war. They told me that when Yemenis see "Made in U.S.A." on the bombs that are killing them, it tells them that the U.S.A. is responsible for this war, and that is the sad truth. This is not the message the United States of America should be sending to the world.

The bottom line is that the United States should not be supporting a catastrophic war led by a despotic regime with a dangerous and irresponsible military policy. Above and beyond the humanitarian crisis, this war has been a disaster for our national security and the security of our allies.

The administration defends our engagement in Yemen by overstating Iranian support for the Houthi rebels. While Iran's support for Houthis is of serious concern to all of us, the fact is that the relationship between Iran and the Houthis has only been strengthened with the intensification of this war. The war is creating the very problem the administration claims to want to solve. The war is also undermining the broader effort against violent extremists. A 2016 State Department report found that the conflict had helped al-Qaida and the Islamic State's Yemen branch "deepen their inroads across much of the country."

This war is both a humanitarian disaster and a strategic disaster in our fight against international terrorism. Further, let's never forget that Saudi Arabia is an undemocratic monarchy

controlled by one family—the Saud family.

In a 2017 report by the conservative Cato Institute, Saudi Arabia was ranked 149th out of 159 countries in terms of freedom and human rights. For decades, the Saudis have funded schools, mosques, and preachers who promote an extreme form of Islam called Wahabbism. In Saudi Arabia today, women are treated as third-class citizens. Women still need the permission of a male guardian to go to school or to get a job, have to follow a strict dress code, and can be stoned to death for adultery or flogged for spending time in the company of a man who is not their relative. Earlier this year, Saudi activist Loujain al-Hathloul—a leader in the fight for women's rights—was kidnapped from Abu Dhabi and forced to return to Saudi Arabia. She is currently being held without charges. The same is true of many other Saudi political activists.

Sadly, President Trump continues to proclaim his love and affection for the Saudi regime. The brutality and lawlessness of that regime was made clear to the whole world with the murder of dissident Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi in the Saudi consulate in Turkey. Pathetically, as part of his continuing respect for authoritarian regimes around the world, President Trump rejected the findings of the CIA's assessment that the Saudi Crown Prince was responsible for that murder.

Finally, an issue that has long been the concern of many of us—and Senator LEE touched on that very thoughtfully—it is the Congress, not the President of the United States, who, under our Constitution, has war-making responsibility. For too long, under Democratic and Republican Presidents, we have abdicated that responsibility.

Today, I say to my conservative friends: Respect the Constitution. Reclaim Congress's rightful role on the issues of war and peace. Congress has not authorized the war in Yemen; therefore, that war is unconstitutional, and that must change and must change now.

In a few minutes, we are going to undertake a very important vote, and I hope that all of my colleagues—Democrats, Republicans, Independents—will vote to discharge this resolution.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I know Senator INHOFE is trying to get to fly home. Do we know the order here?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is no consent request setting up an order.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I am happy to yield to the chairman.

I understand Senator INHOFE wants to speak to this issue.

Mr. CORKER. No.

Mr. MENENDEZ. No, he doesn't want to speak to this issue.

I am happy to yield to the chairman, or I am ready to go—whichever way you want.

Mr. CORKER. We will both speak very briefly. Why don't you go ahead, and then I will go.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I rise today to speak to S.J. Res. 54, legislation brought forward by Senators Lee, Sanders, and Murphy more than 8 months ago. The past 2 years have reminded us time and again of the urgent responsibility of Congress to perform real checks and balances and to steadfastly defend our American values both at home and abroad. I thank them for their continued efforts throughout these intervening months to shed light on the devastating humanitarian crisis in Yemen and to make sure this body fulfills its oversight duties.

Over the last 3½ years, the tragic humanitarian crisis in Yemen has continued to deteriorate. More than 10,000 people are dead and 14 million people are on the brink of starvation. We have seen the heartbreaking photos of malnourished starving children on the brink of death. We have learned from U.N. reports of the cholera outbreaks that jeopardize more than 10,000 people every week. We have come to the conclusion that the status quo cannot stand.

Back in March, I joined a majority of my colleagues in voting to table this resolution with the understanding that the Senate Foreign Relations Committee would hold hearings to fully weigh our options in Yemen and the hope that the administration would strategically leverage our limited military support for the Saudi coalition to lessen civilian casualties, to influence a potential political settlement, or at the very least prevent the situation from getting worse.

At the time, I also made clear to this body, to the President, and to the Saudi Government that our relationship and our limited military support was not and is not a blank check. I had hoped the administration would provide convincing evidence that our military support was, in fact, reducing civilian casualties—a goal we heard repeatedly emphasized by U.S. officials. I had hoped the administration would use this foreign policy tool to advocate for a meaningful political process.

Unfortunately, this administration has failed to adequately address either problem. The Saudi coalition has not provided any more confidence in its operations. Despite being reassured that our engaging with the Saudis was decreasing civilian casualties, the facts on the ground speak far more powerfully against those assertions.

On a broader scale, we are seriously evaluating our bilateral relationship with Saudi Arabia. The bombing of a schoolbus full of children and other civilian targets is not something I want America's fingerprints on.

Make no mistake—the United States and Saudi Arabia do share common security interests. Saudi Arabia faces real and imminent threats from Yem-

eni-originated attacks inside its territory—from ballistic and SCUD missile attacks aimed at major Saudi population centers, to cross-border attacks by Iranian-backed Houthis.

Meanwhile, Iran continues its destabilizing behavior across the Middle East, and the terrorists with al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula take advantage of the security breakdown.

I continue to believe the United States must live up to our commitments and support our partners in the face of real and imminent threats, but over the past year, I have failed to see how continued U.S. military support for the Saudi-led coalition operations in Yemen have, in fact, promoted our interests or, indeed, the long-term interests of the Saudi population.

As I said in March, this particular resolution raises the question of how we leverage all of the foreign policy tools at our disposal to advance peace and prevent the tragic loss of more human life.

Today, it is clear to me that the status quo is not advancing these critical interests. The limited military support we are providing the Saudi coalition is not our best tool, and today I offer my support for discharging something I normally oppose—discharging a resolution from the committee.

I call on the administration again to develop a cogent strategy, in concert with the international community, to compel all the parties to the negotiating table and to ensure that the millions of Yemenis at risk of starvation receive the humanitarian support that is ready to be delivered.

I have also worked with Senators YOUNG, REED, GRAHAM, SHAHEEN, and COLLINS, as well as with my colleague Senator MURPHY, to introduce legislation with reference to the Saudi Arabia Accountability and Yemen Act of 2018. I had hoped the committee would have considered this legislation and that we would have had a vote on it in this Congress.

In the aftermath of the Saudi Government's murder of U.S. resident and journalist Jamal Khashoggi and of the whitewashing the Trump administration has performed to avoid real consequences for those who ordered his death, this legislation is needed now more than ever. Without a real diplomatic and political strategy, there is no end to this conflict. There is no end to the violence. There is no end to the human suffering. It is time we bring this resolution to the floor for the full consideration of the Senate.

Over the last several months, I have seen nothing to convince me that our limited military support for the Saudi coalition's efforts in Yemen continues to serve our national security interests or to reflect America's enduring values and commitment to freedom and human rights. I continue to believe that an absence of American leadership undermines our interests, our security, and the security of our allies. An American presence does not necessarily

equal American leadership. America's leadership on the global stage must always be driven by a sense of purpose and moral clarity. I feel that when we lose that sense of moral clarity, that sense of purpose, then we lose who we are as a nation, and we lose sight of the very values that make America a leader of nations. That is, in fact, what we have lost sight of here.

I yield the floor.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise today in support of the Sanders-Murphy resolution. It is time to end our involvement in the war in Yemen.

In 2015, I was notified by a senior Saudi official of the Kingdom's intention to take military action in Yemen. I was assured the conflict would not last long. I was told it would be precise and focus on ousting the Houthis and restoring the Hadi government.

Nearly 4 years later, the war in Yemen has dragged on. All we have seen is widespread death and destruction with no end in sight.

For nearly 4 years, the coalition has bombed Yemen once every 100 minutes, and one-third of those strikes targeted nonmilitary sites.

So far, the war has directly killed more than 16,000 civilians, with tens of thousands more injured. Without a resolution to this conflict, many thousands more will undoubtedly die.

But those deaths don't paint the whole picture. The ongoing war, with our support, has created the world's worst humanitarian disaster.

Nearly 85,000 children have died of severe malnutrition, and another 400,000 are at risk of the same fate.

Fourteen million people require emergency food aid just to see another day.

A majority of Yemen's population does not have access to clean water, sanitation or adequate public healthcare.

Cholera and other diseases are rampant throughout Yemen as public services have collapsed.

There have been 1.2 million suspected cases of cholera, resulting in 2,500 fatalities from this entirely preventable disease.

Today, nearly three-quarters of the population—almost 22 million people—need some form of humanitarian assistance.

That is because more than half of Yemen's healthcare facilities have been purposefully destroyed by the Saudi coalitions' relentless bombing. The few medical facilities that remain lack sufficient staff, equipment, and medicine to serve the millions of Yemenis who require their help.

The conflict is getting worse. Since the coalition's assault on the port city of Hodeidah, civilian deaths have increased by 164 percent.

The United States can no longer turn a blind eye to this conflict because we are a party to it. The United States provides targeting assistance, military advice, and until recently, aerial refueling for the Saudi-led coalition. We

do all that despite the lack of a military solution to end the war. The longer we enable the conflict to continue, the more innocent men, women, and children will die.

Instead of facilitating endless fighting, we must push for reconciliation. I have personally urged Saudi and Iranian officials to meet to discuss their differences. To my great disappointment, they refuse to do so. I welcomed Secretary Mattis's announcement that the United States will no longer refuel the coalition's aircraft, but more must be done.

Until there is a congressional authorization, all U.S. forces supporting the coalition's war should be withdrawn. That is why I support the Sanders-Lee resolution. Voting to remove our forces will send a clear message that we will no longer be complicit in this conflict. Secretaries Mattis and Pompeo have publicly called for a ceasefire, which has been ignored.

By ending our participation in this brutal war, we will send an unambiguous message that we will not accept continued bloodshed.

I am voting for the Sanders-Lee resolution, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I rise to speak on the issue before us.

On every occasion, I too have done what is necessary to keep us from alienating our ally Saudi Arabia. I think I was the last man standing, during the Obama administration, in my trying to make sure that the JASTA bill, at the time, ended up being corrected in such a manner that it wouldn't have had unintended consequences. I did so unsuccessfully. Yet, on multiple occasions, I have stood with others to make sure that we have not blocked arms sales and that we have not done those things that might have undermined our relationship.

For those who are tuning in, let me walk through what the process is.

We have a vote, today, on discharging this piece of legislation out of the Foreign Relations Committee. That is all that is happening today. There is an Executive Calendar in which we have cloture votes pending on nominees. That will burn off. Then, sometime next week, after this is discharged today—if it is so successfully—there will be another vote to actually proceed to this bill. If we proceed to the bill, what will happen will be a series of amendments that will be voted upon. Then there will be another vote at the end of that as to whether people will actually support the product that will have been created.

I just want to make it clear that what I am not doing today is voting for the substance before us; yet I reserve the right to do so. I am voting on our ability to have a debate as it relates to our relationship with Saudi Arabia.

We had a briefing today, which was very unsatisfactory, by two people

whom I highly respect. Secretary Mattis and Secretary Pompeo are two people with whom I work closely and admire greatly. I found their briefing today to be lacking. I found, in substance, that we are not doing those things that we should be doing to appropriately balance our relationship with Saudi Arabia between our American interests and our American values.

There has been a lot of rhetoric that has come from the White House and from the State Department on this issue. The rhetoric that I have heard and the broadcast that we have made around the world as to who we are has been way out of balance as it relates to American interests and American values. As I said this morning in the SCIF, where we were having this briefing, I hope that in the ensuing few days—maybe this afternoon—the administration itself will take steps to rectify this balance in an appropriate way.

As to whether the Crown Prince was involved in this killing, it is my belief that he was. It is my belief that he ordered it, but I don't have a smoking gun. What I do know is that he is responsible for this agency that carried out the killing. He has done nothing to take ownership of what has happened, and that is an affront not just to the American people but to the world.

The administration, in its broadcast, in its referring to this issue, has been way out of balance as it relates to what is important to us—their buying arms from us but neglecting this other piece and not demarching the leadership of Saudi Arabia in an important way. So what I am doing today is voting to discharge this bill out of our committee. There will be another opportunity next week to decide whether we will proceed to it.

As I said to the administration again this morning, it is my hope that it will figure out a way to bring American interests and American values into balance so that it can cause the Saudi Arabian Government to take appropriate ownership over what has happened in the killing of this journalist. That, to me, would be the best solution. If not, we will have another decision to make, and that will occur next week when we will decide whether we want to proceed to that and then, after that, proceed to deal with the issue of Saudi Arabia. There will be another point in time at which we can decide whether we like the substance that may be created in an amendment process in our going through this.

I support discharging this piece of legislation so that this body can have a fulsome debate about our relationship with Saudi Arabia as to what has happened with the journalist, the important issue of the war in Yemen, and as to all of the things that we need to be doing as a country to counter what Iran is doing in the region.

I yield the floor.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I yield back all time.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, out of respect for Senator INHOFE and a personal issue he has to deal with, we would hope to be able to vote early.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time is yielded back.

The question is on agreeing to the motion to discharge.

Mr. MENENDEZ. 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.

The result was announced—yeas 63, nays 37, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 250 Leg.]

YEAS—63

Alexander	Gillibrand	Murray
Baldwin	Graham	Nelson
Bennet	Harris	Paul
Blumenthal	Hassan	Peters
Booker	Heinrich	Portman
Brown	Heitkamp	Reed
Cantwell	Hirono	Sanders
Cardin	Jones	Schatz
Carper	Kaine	Schumer
Casey	King	Shaheen
Cassidy	Klobuchar	Smith
Collins	Leahy	Stabenow
Coons	Lee	Tester
Corker	Manchin	Toomey
Cortez Masto	Markey	Udall
Daines	McCaskill	Van Hollen
Donnelly	Menendez	Warner
Duckworth	Merkley	Warren
Durbin	Moran	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Murkowski	Wyden
Flake	Murphy	Young

NAYS—37

Barrasso	Grassley	Risch
Blunt	Hatch	Roberts
Boozman	Heller	Rounds
Burr	Hoeven	Rubio
Capito	Hyde-Smith	Sasse
Cornyn	Inhofe	Scott
Cotton	Isakson	Shelby
Crapo	Johnson	Sullivan
Cruz	Kennedy	Thune
Enzi	Kyl	Tillis
Ernst	Lankford	Wicker
Fischer	McConnell	
Gardner	Perdue	

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. (Mr. GARDNER). On this vote, the yeas are 63, the nays are 37.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume executive session in consideration of the Farr nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I was happy to welcome back our colleagues this week from Thanksgiving and come back to work. A lot of stuff needs to be done and have some fresh energy and maybe some fresh ideas, but I hope my colleagues were able to get home for Thanksgiving and spend time with their families. I like to say the thing I like about Thanksgiving—it is my favorite holiday, and people ask why. It

has my six favorite F words: family, faith, friends, food, fun, football, among others. What is not to like about that—especially football that was played in Columbus, OH, on Saturday afternoon. I hope all Americans were able to enjoy some combination of those things over the holiday weekend.

You may be like me and many others across the country who took the long weekend to unplug a bit by turning off our phone, maybe turning off cable news, too, so we could reconnect with loved ones, but while many Americans were recharging—enjoying a good meal with family and friends, maybe watching a football game or doing some early Christmas shopping—some major news broke over the weekend.

Last Friday, on the day after Thanksgiving, 13 Federal agencies released a nearly 1,700-page report highlighting the devastating impacts climate change will have over the next 80 years if we do not change course now. The report was a dire warning to our Nation and to our planet but one we might have easily missed while celebrating the holiday with family and friends, and I am sure a lot of people did miss it.

I suspect the fact that this major report was released on Friday of a holiday weekend was not an accident. After all, the report, which was put together by experts from over a dozen agencies within the Trump administration, spells out the very real and very serious consequences of climate change—a global crisis that our President has repeatedly called a hoax. In fact, just yesterday the President said he is not among the so-called believers who see climate change as a pressing problem.

Luckily, we don't have to just blindly believe in climate change. We can look at the facts. Despite the Trump administration's best efforts to bury this report on a Friday afternoon, Friday evening, of a holiday weekend, those of us based in reality are going to make sure the clear facts in it are broadcast far and wide.

This particular report took not a year, not 2 years but 3 years to write. It was written by more than 300 Federal experts, non-Federal experts as well, who volunteered their time. It was only finalized after an extensive public outreach and interagency review process. This report wasn't thrown together to push any agenda. It is a scientific report, and its conclusions should be important to every person, not just living in my State or the 49 or 50 States but everybody who lives on this planet because it has implications for every single one of us.

I would like to take a few minutes this afternoon to go over some of the highlights of the report. Why don't we start with extreme weather. People ask: What do you mean by extreme weather? I mean, measuring rainfall by feet, not by inches. I am talking about fires in States on the west coast, espe-

cially where the amount of land being consumed by the fires is almost the size of my State of Delaware. I am talking about the number of 500-year floods that are occurring every other year or every year. I am talking about the number of category 5 hurricanes that we have now compared to what it was 10, 20, 30, 40, 50 years ago.

According to the latest report—which was, again, released by the Trump administration—climate change will continue to increase and intensify extreme weather events in the years to come. Over the last 3 years alone, extreme weather events have cost the United States nearly \$400 billion in damages due to storm surges, due to flooding, due to wildfires, and due to crop freezes and crop droughts. So it has cost the U.S. Treasury \$400 billion, and it comes at a time when our budget deficits are going up. The budget deficit picked up between the last administration and this administration, I think, somewhere—maybe \$500 billion—a huge amount of money. Last year's deficit on this administration was, as I recall, maybe \$750 billion. I am told the expectation for the budget deficit in this year is maybe as much as \$950 billion. It wasn't that long ago that the budget for our whole country was less than that.

Why is \$400 billion in damages from extreme weather important? We don't have the money. We are borrowing this money, and these young pages and their children will get to pay for that someday. That is not fair.

More powerful and more frequent extreme weather events will increase that figure exponentially and also have far-reaching impacts on people in every corner of this country and well beyond the borders of our country.

Say someone happens to live in the Southwest. In 2017, Phoenix, AZ, set a new record of nearly 200 days with temperatures of at least 90 degrees Fahrenheit. Think about that, Phoenix, AZ, 200 days with temperatures of at least 90 degrees Fahrenheit in 2017. By 2090, Phoenix could be dealing with an additional 45 days—another month and a half—every year, which would be about 245 days, which would be about 8 months out of the year where the temperature in Phoenix is 80 or well above 90. That is another 6 weeks of extreme heat in addition to the city's already recordbreaking temperatures.

Let's say somebody lives in the Southeast. Let's take Charleston, SC, for example. Charleston, SC, experiences 38 days of tidal flooding every year. By 2045, the city could experience 180 days of tidal flooding every year—nearly five times the flooding that occurs today.

Let's say maybe somebody lives out West. By 2050, wildfire seasons could burn up to six times more forest area every year. I will say that again. That is hard to believe. By 2050, wildfire seasons could burn up to six times more forest area every year. We have all seen the historic and horrific devastation

that fires in California have caused just this year alone—in fact, in the last several weeks alone, tragic fires.

California is a big State. I used to live there when I was in the Navy. Sometimes it is difficult to put into context just how big and destructive these wildfires are. We have a poster here that I want to refer to as a wildfire poster: This is Washington, DC, and the counties adjacent to Washington, DC. It gives a little bit of context. Here is the area that the recent Camp Fire in California burned in relation to a city that all of us who serve here are pretty familiar with, Washington, DC, and the suburbs of this city. The Camp Fire burned an area over three times greater than Washington, DC. That is how big it was. That is just one fire, in just one State, in 1 year. Imagine what we are going to be facing with up to six times more forest areas burning every single year.

Now, if the extreme weather conclusions don't make some of our colleagues jump to action, maybe the information about the health impacts of climate change will cause them to take some notice. This report makes clear that increases in ozone and particle pollution will result in an additional \$26 billion every year in healthcare costs across the country.

Here is a particularly startling statistic: Extreme hot and cold temperatures in 49 U.S. cities are projected to result in more than 9,000 additional premature deaths per year. That is not in a far-off developing nation. That is 9,000 more people dying right here at home in the USA, but if our colleagues are still not swayed by this year's impacts to American health, maybe they will be moved by the impact that climate change will have on our country's already aging infrastructure.

I think this is probably highway transportation infrastructure, if I am not mistaken. If we do not act, we can expect up to \$26 billion in damages to our roadways and our railways every year due to climate change—\$26 billion in damages to our roadways and our railways every year due to climate change.

We have a poster here. There is a bridge. I am not sure where, but it is one of many bridges. We have thousands of bridges around this Nation. Increases in rainfall in inland areas—not on the coast but in the middle of our country, the heartland—will threaten up to 6,000 bridges by the year 2090.

Here is a statistic we will not be able to avoid. It deals with sea level rise. Since 1993, sea levels have risen by 3 inches. What we are looking at by 2100, according to folks who worked for the last 3 years on this Federal report from 13 Federal Agencies, we could be looking at as much as 6 feet in sea level rise. If we do nothing, by 2100, we could see sea levels rise by up to 6 feet. Those of us who lived through Superstorm Sandy saw the absolute destruction that can be caused by 3 inches of sea level rise. It is almost unimaginable to think about nearly 70 inches.

Maybe that is still not alarming enough to get some people's attention. Perhaps the impacts on our farmers and ranchers might sway my colleagues. Let me mention something in that regard. According to this report—the same Federal report—more frequent and intense rains, combined with rising temperatures, are likely to reduce agriculture production in the Midwest to 1980 levels. Roll back the clock to the levels of production in 1980 in the Midwest—that is where we were.

I have a corn and soybean poster here. When it comes to crops that agricultural communities depend on, such as corn and soybeans, which are big in my State, farmers could see reduced yields of up to 25 percent.

Maybe some of our colleagues don't come from States with a large agricultural sector, where it is important. Perhaps an economic impact might move them to action.

Climate change could mean up to \$500 billion in economic losses every year by 2090. Let me say that again. Climate change could mean up to \$500 billion in economic losses every year by 2090. Additionally, almost 2 billion labor hours are projected to be lost by 2090 due to the impacts of extreme temperatures. That alone would cost an additional \$160 billion in lost wages.

Here is a stark statistic: Climate change could slash up to 10 percent of our gross domestic product by 2100. Let's put that into context. Ten years ago, when we fell into the great recession—worst recession since the Great Depression—we had half of the losses in gross domestic product that we are looking at from climate change that goes unchecked. According to this report, climate change could slash up to 10 percent of our gross domestic product by 2100. That is more than double the losses of the great recession.

Many of our colleagues were here during the great recession. We saw what happened. Unemployment was over 10 percent. Banks basically stopped lending. Access to capital was greatly impeded. Trade slowed down dramatically. It was a miserable time. We fought very hard to get out of it. We are now in the ninth longest running economic expansion in the history of the country, and stuff like this is not going to help extend that recovery. To refuse to act would be to willingly usher in an economic calamity twice as painful as the great recession.

The numbers and facts don't lie. The reality of climate change is scary, especially for coastal States like mine—the lowest lying State in our country. Our State is sinking instead of rising.

The facts that this report so clearly lays out affect all of us. It doesn't matter whether you are from a coastal State, like some of us, or from a landlocked State, like our Presiding Officer—if you care about public health or the environment or if you care about our economy or national security, this report says that every sector of our economy and every person living in

this country will be affected by climate change if we do nothing.

As I see it, we have a couple of options. We can take up this fight and get serious about addressing and adapting to climate change, or we can stick our heads in the sand, as some would do, ignore the facts, and do nothing, dooming our children and our grandchildren to live in a world that is less healthy, less safe, less stable, and less economically vibrant. I say, let's fight. My hope is that our colleagues will join us and not fight against one another but fight against this threat we all face.

We have one planet. President Macron from France was down the hall about 2 years ago and spoke to a joint session of Congress. There is no plan B. We have the only planet. It is the one we have been given to take care of by our Heavenly Father, and we need to take that responsibility seriously.

All right. That is the bad news. That is a lot of bad news in 10 minutes. Before I yield to my friend from Florida, I will say this: There is some good news too. The good news is, there are ways to address these challenges—the economic challenges, the agricultural challenges, the flooding challenges, the temperature challenges. There is a way to do it. Among the smart ways to do it is to reduce the emission of carbon in this country.

The good news is, we can do that by adding and creating jobs. Two hundred million people went to work in this country today—roughly 200 million. Three million people went to work in jobs where they are involved in renewable energy, energy conservation—things that help save our planet and preserve the quality of life on our planet. There are a lot more jobs we can add in that kind of work, including building vehicles that run on batteries—and we are making great progress—and vehicles that run on hydrogen and fuel cells. The only waste product from those vehicles is water. You can drink it.

There are ways to address all these threats in a way that is economically viable. We don't have to choose between all this doom and gloom and a strong economy; we can address the doom and gloom and add a lot of jobs, and we ought to do this. It is going to be a win-win. We ought to seize the day.

I thank my colleague from Florida for his patience with me here today. I don't know if I will have a chance to stand here this close with him again before he prepares to head off into the sunset. He and I were privileged to serve together in the House. He was at one time treasurer and insurance commissioner of his State, and I was treasurer of Delaware. We walked the path together for a long time, and he has been a great servant of the people of Florida for many years. I have always been proud to stand next to him, and I am especially proud today.

I am happy to yield to my friend from Florida.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, the subject the Senator from Delaware speaks of—climate change especially—affects my State of Florida, as we are ground zero with so many of the consequences of climate change—the sea level rise. I will be addressing that topic within the next couple of days. I have addressed that problem over and over, but I want to give a concluding speech on that topic.

HEALTHCARE

Mr. President, this afternoon, I want to give a concluding speech on the topic of healthcare. I want to talk about the importance of ensuring that all Americans—and especially my State, all Floridians—have access to critical health services through the Affordable Care Act.

When the ACA passed, it stated that an insurance company cannot deny health insurance coverage because a person had a preexisting condition. In other words, that means you cannot be denied health coverage because you have something like asthma, cancer, heart trouble, diabetes, ALS, or, in some cases, even a rash. Before the Affordable Care Act, even being a woman was considered a preexisting condition.

Nearly everyone has a preexisting condition. In Florida alone, almost 8 million people have a preexisting condition. We think of our neighbors, our friends and family members, and we thought of them when we passed the ACA. We worked very hard to give them the healthcare protections they needed.

In these past few years, I have talked to folks all over our country. In Florida, I have talked to the very folks we fought so hard to ensure they have health insurance and healthcare. Last year, for example, I spoke with a well-known community leader from Hollywood, FL—Elaine Geller. Her daughter, Megan, was diagnosed with leukemia at the age of 26. At the time she was admitted to the hospital, Megan's blood count was 4. She had water on the heart. She had pneumonia. She went through one round of chemo, and it put the cancer in remission. She was initially hospitalized in New York, where she had been working as a special-ed teacher, but she returned to Florida to receive care at the University of Miami's Comprehensive Cancer Center—one of the finest cancer centers around the country.

As the story goes, Megan's doctor told Megan and her mom, Elaine, that she needed a transplant, which required a payment of \$150,000 upfront. From January until about the end of April, Megan lived at that Comprehensive Cancer Center at the university and received multiple rounds of chemo, biopsies, and various other treatments. Do you know what her mom said to me? She said that thanks to the Affordable Care Act, as a mom, she could focus all of her energy on her daughter. She didn't have to worry about all the

bills that were piling up, and ultimately she didn't have to write a check for the transplant. That is because Megan had health insurance despite a preexisting condition, and the Affordable Care Act created a transitional program to cover eligible individuals with preexisting conditions, like Megan.

After Megan left the Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center, her cancer went into remission, but then the cancer came back. The remission only lasted 63 days. They flew to Texas, to the MD Anderson Cancer Center. Why travel across the country to get cancer treatments? Because when you are dying—when a mom is watching her daughter die, there is nothing she as a parent would not do. You can't put a price on your child's life. It would do us a lot of good if we would remember that.

Sadly, Megan had a fall and hit her head. She died at the age of 28. Her total care during that battle with cancer could have cost Elaine, her mom, \$5 million. Thanks to the ACA, because she had health insurance, Megan's part of that treatment was \$70,000. That not only saved her from going bankrupt, it also gave her more time to spend with her daughter. Anyone who has lost someone knows that every second counts. We shouldn't take things for granted.

Elaine said that her daughter would be proud to know that her story of the Affordable Care Act matters. It matters to me as their Senator, and that is why I am telling it on the floor of the Senate.

And it should matter to every one of these Senators here.

Let me give you another person that I met along the trail. I met with one of the most courageous 14-year-olds whom I have ever seen, JJ Holmes, and his family, who are from Longwood, FL.

JJ has cerebral palsy and requires a wheelchair and constant attention to get around and to be taken care of. He can only communicate with his computer vocalization device. It is just amazing, since JJ can't directly communicate except by the sparkle in his eyes. He uses his left knee on a device on the wheelchair to hit it and it goes to a computer screen, and he can type out the words and the sounds in order to give him an ability to communicate with another ordinary person.

JJ has a preexisting condition—he has cerebral palsy—and all of the efforts to repeal and undermine the ACA are undermining his access to care and his ability to live. Each attempt to repeal the ACA was another threat to his very life.

His mom told me that there is so much of a daily struggle, worry, and heartache when you have a child who is severely disabled, and the ACA finally gave that family the much needed security, and it lifted a huge burden of how in the world were they going to cope with this medical condition of their child.

I will give you another example in Florida. Earlier this year, I was joined at a local roundtable on healthcare by Elizabeth Isom from St. Petersburg. Elizabeth told me that the ACA had saved her life and allowed her to purchase insurance for the very first time. She doesn't know how she is going to be able to afford coverage if the lifetime caps of the law are reinstated and if essential health benefits are not provided as the ACA provides.

Elizabeth was a productive member of society. She was a social worker, and then she developed a sinus tumor. She went without insurance for 3 years, during which her health was constantly deteriorating and it was to the point that she thought she was dying. She had vital organ damage and reached complete disability. The mass in her sinus had extended into her skull.

After the ACA became the law of the land, she purchased insurance through healthcare.gov. She said it is the best insurance she has ever had because it covered essential health benefits like the preventative services.

So let's think about this just in these three cases that I have given. The ACA protects people like Megan with preexisting conditions from being charged more simply because of their diagnosis. It protects people like JJ from being unable to afford care because they have hit annual or lifetime limits on coverage. It protects people like Elizabeth from being denied treatment because insurers are now required to cover essential health services—services and benefits like hospitalizations and prescription drugs.

These folks are not the only ones that I have talked to about how the ACA has changed their life. The American people—not just Floridians—have been writing to us, have been calling to us, have been showing up in our town-halls, have been showing up at our roundtables, have been approaching me on the street corner, at the airport, at events all over Florida to share how important the ACA is to them. The Affordable Care Act has given people healthcare they otherwise would never have had. Over and over, they have come to me and said: We want to see a bipartisan fix—a fix to the ACA, not a repeal. Why can't you just get together and fix the ACA?

How many times have I made that plea on the floor of the Senate? And they are right. There is a lot of work to be done to bring down the cost of healthcare, to make insurance more affordable, and to increase coverage for people who still don't have it. But in the meantime, the Trump administration is doing everything in its power to undermine and undo the existing law that has helped so many so much.

We have seen an Executive order of President Trump's stating that the policy of his administration was to "seek the prompt repeal" of the ACA. We have seen rules coming out of the Trump administration cutting in half

the length of time that people had to enroll in plans on healthcare.gov, eliminating low-income subsidies, and cutting outreach and advertising for enrollment by 90 percent.

Why would you make it harder for people to sign up for health insurance if your intention wasn't to undermine the Affordable Care Act, which is exactly what the Trump administration's intention is?

We have seen the implementation of expanding short-term health plans. These are plans that are less than a year or, as they really are designed, junk plans, and that is just what they are. They don't offer essential health benefits. They offer extremely limited coverage so that people don't have the coverage and they don't have the coverage of preexisting conditions. They remove protections for people with those preexisting conditions. They do not cover that list of 10 or 12 things called essential health benefits, like maternity care and prescription drug costs.

We have seen multiple Republican repeal-and-replace bills that have come before the House and before this Senate. We have seen this Trump administration claim that they do care about those with preexisting conditions. Just last month President Trump tweeted that "Republicans will protect people with preexisting conditions far better than the Dems!" But that is not what they are doing, nor is that what they have done.

Well, Mr. President, if that is the case, then why is your administration supporting the lawsuit *Texas vs. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services*—that very lawsuit that was brought forward by Republican attorneys general, including Florida's attorney general, urging a Federal court to strike down preexisting conditions and patient protections as unconstitutional, and it would cause a chaos in our healthcare system.

You are not protecting 133 million Americans with preexisting conditions. No, what you are doing is eliminating their healthcare, and that includes 17 million children.

The administration should better look at their situation and do the opposite of what they have been doing. I ask the American people to demand that the Trump administration stop undermining the ACA, get to work as an administration, do its job, and implement all parts of the existing law, the Affordable Care Act. We should be looking for ways to help people like Elaine, JJ, Megan, and Elizabeth. We should be looking for ways to help them get through the tough times. We should be working together in a bipartisan way to make the ACA work better, not try to kill it.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CRUZ). The Senator from Hawaii.

NOMINATION OF THOMAS FARR

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, I thank my friend, the Senator from Florida,

for speaking out on the critical importance of the Affordable Care Act for millions of people in our country and for calling upon this administration to support healthcare for all instead of what they are doing to the healthcare of millions of people in our country.

Turning to another matter, nearly 12 years ago, on December 7, 2006, President George W. Bush nominated Thomas Farr to be a U.S. District Court Judge for the Eastern District of North Carolina. Today, 12 years and three nominations later, his name is again before us for confirmation to the very same vacancy, which has remained unfilled all this time.

When Mr. Farr was nominated for this vacancy in 2006 and 2007, his nomination did not receive a vote in the Judiciary Committee. It was known at that time that Mr. Farr had spent his professional life engaged in restricting minority voting rights and defending companies alleged to have discriminated against African Americans, women, and others.

In the 1980s and in 1990, Mr. Farr represented Senator Jesse Helms, notorious for his opposition to civil rights, voting rights, women's rights, workers' rights, and LGBTQ rights—in other words, individual rights.

Mr. Farr also helped corporations fight off their employees' discrimination claims. In 2003, Mr. Farr defended Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Carolina against claims by a female employee who alleged that the company had compelled her to resign because of her sex and age. To win this case, Mr. Farr convinced the North Carolina Supreme Court to strike down the county's antidiscrimination law.

Given this history of restricting minority voting rights and defending companies in discrimination claims, Mr. Farr's nomination did not proceed at that time, and rightly so.

In the 12 years since his first nomination, Mr. Farr has become notorious for his defense of the North Carolina legislature's attempts to disenfranchise African-American voters.

His current nomination is opposed by nearly every civil rights group in North Carolina and nationally, and the Congressional Black Caucus, or the CBC, has fought Mr. Farr's nomination.

In a 2017 letter to the Judiciary Committee, the CBC wrote: "It is no exaggeration to say that had the White House deliberately sought to identify an attorney in North Carolina with a more hostile record on African-American voting rights and workers' rights than Thomas Farr, it could hardly have done so."

This district court vacancy was not filled by President Obama in his two terms, but not for lack of trying. President Obama nominated two different African-American women for this vacancy, one an assistant U.S. Attorney and another a State court judge. Neither nomination moved forward because the Republican home State Senators withheld their blue slips. Judiciary Committee Chairman LEAHY and,

later, Chairman GRASSLEY both, at that time, abided by the blue-slip process during that period, as I said, and no hearings were ever held for these two Obama nominees.

At the same time, both of my colleagues from North Carolina persisted in their desire to confirm Mr. Farr to the Federal bench. Of course, now, the return of a blue slip is no longer a barrier to pushing nominees through the Judiciary Committee.

So, on the recommendation of my Senate colleagues from North Carolina, Donald Trump nominated Mr. Farr yet again to the seat that had been kept open in the Eastern District of North Carolina. In fact, when Mr. Farr's nomination was returned at the end of a session of Congress last year, the White House decided to renominate him this year.

The history regarding this judicial vacancy and Mr. Farr is key to understanding why I and so many of my colleagues will vote no. We will be accused of obstruction and wanting to deprive the people of North Carolina of a judge in the Eastern District. We will hear how this is the longest open vacancy on the entire Federal bench, but, in fact, this vacancy has remained open so long because of Republicans' refusal to confirm qualified minority women and their insistence on filling this vacancy with a man whose career is filled with examples of his using the law to advance a racist, obstructionist, plainly un-American agenda.

Had the Republicans not blocked the nominations of qualified minority women in 2013 and 2016, this district, which is about 27 percent African American, would have had its first African-American judge.

By contrast Mr. Farr has spent decades opposing the rights of African Americans, women, and workers. Let me highlight a few examples.

When Mr. Farr was working as legal counsel for the 1990 campaign for Senator Jesse Helms of North Carolina, the Justice Department filed a Federal lawsuit against the campaign for trying to intimidate thousands of African Americans from voting. How did they do this? The Helms campaign staff sent postcards suggesting that the voters were ineligible to vote and warning that they could be prosecuted if they voted. Although Mr. Farr denied any involvement in these racist voter intimidation efforts, the Justice Department attorney who investigated the matter confirmed that Mr. Farr "was certainly involved in the scheme as it was being developed."

That is not the only time Mr. Farr has opposed the rights of African-American voters. When the North Carolina legislature decided to restrict or dilute the votes of African Americans over the past 10 years, Mr. Farr fiercely defended these efforts as a private attorney.

In 2013, for example, he defended the North Carolina legislature's voter suppression efforts that a court found were enacted with racially discriminatory intent—racially discriminatory intent.

In other words, the North Carolina legislature was totally upfront about what they were up to.

After the Supreme Court effectively struck down the part of the Voting Rights Act that required North Carolina to preclear any changes to their voting laws, the North Carolina State legislature passed a law that eliminated or cut back on voter mechanisms that African Americans disproportionately used. This is the law that Mr. Farr defended. The Fourth Circuit in that case determined that these voting changes "target[ed] African Americans with almost surgical precision." In other words, blatantly discriminatory intent was found by the Fourth Circuit.

Between his efforts to support suppression of voters, Mr. Farr has helped companies avoid accountability for discrimination against African Americans, women, and minority groups. In 2003, Mr. Farr argued that female employees at Pfizer were not protected under Federal civil rights law from condescending, sexist, and sexual comments from their manager because they were not "severe" or "pervasive" enough.

He even tried to undermine the plaintiff's claim by arguing that she failed to point out that her manager "harassed her because of her gender on a daily or weekly basis." That was the standard he applied: You have to have been harassed on a daily or weekly basis. Mr. Farr ultimately convinced the court to dismiss the employee's claim as untimely.

A person who has devoted decades of his legal career to furthering oppression and injustices against minorities and women has no business being confirmed to a lifetime position as a judge, where his ideological agenda will certainly be reflected in his decision.

I will not vote for Mr. Farr's nomination, and I urge my colleagues to do likewise.

NOMINATION OF JONATHAN KOBES

Mr. President, I would also like to explain my opposition to another nominee being considered this week: Jonathan Kobes for the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals from South Dakota.

Mr. Kobes received a "not qualified" vote from a substantial majority of the ABA's Standing Committee on the Federal Judiciary. They reported that Kobes has "neither the requisite experience nor evidence of his ability to fulfill the scholarly writing required of a United States Circuit Court Judge."

They continued, saying: "The Standing Committee had difficulty analyzing Mr. Kobes' professional competence because he was unable to provide sufficient writing samples of the caliber required to satisfy Committee members that he was capable of doing the work of a United States Circuit Court judge"; hence, their "not qualified" vote for him.

In normal times, this sort of negative evaluation from the ABA would be given to the White House before the White House decided to nominate someone, and the person would never be nominated. But these are not normal times.

Instead of following normal procedure, the White House has nominated someone not fit to serve for a lifetime on the circuit court, but nevertheless will be confirmed on a party-line vote.

Mr. Kobes has demonstrated a hostility toward women's reproductive rights. His anti-choice activism is on par with so many other Trump nominees who are relatively young, as he is, and profoundly inexperienced.

In 2005, Mr. Kobes represented, as a volunteer, so-called crisis pregnancy centers, which were seeking to uphold the South Dakota law requiring doctors to inform women seeking abortions that "the pregnant woman has an existing relationship with that unborn human being and that the relationship enjoys protection under the United States Constitution and under the laws of South Dakota." That is not the state of the law, by the way.

Mr. Farr and Mr. Kobes are two of the worst of President Trump's judicial nominees, and that is saying a lot. They are two more examples of President Trump's relentless pursuit to pack the Federal courts with ideologues who will rule in favor of conservative causes. Clearly, Donald Trump does not believe in the independent judiciary envisioned by the Framers of our Constitution and respected by every President until now.

We see in his single-minded efforts to pack the courts that he is nominating judges who he believes will be his political allies. He tells us as much. He believes the judges he appoints are "Trump judges" and that they will be loyal to him, protect him and his policies when the time comes.

Chief Justice John Roberts could not have been clearer in his response last week to Donald Trump's criticism of judges who don't rule his way. The Chief Justice told the AP:

We do not have Obama judges or Trump judges, Bush judges or Clinton judges. What we have is an extraordinary group of dedicated judges doing their very best to do equal right to those appearing before them. That independent judiciary is something we should all be thankful for.

The independence of the judiciary is not something Donald Trump acknowledges, values, or even believes in. What he wants are Trump judges who will rule in favor of his policies and decisions and who will satisfy his ideologically conservative base. It is no wonder that Chief Justice Roberts felt it necessary to take the extraordinary step of reminding the President and the country that the judiciary must be independent.

I urge my colleagues to vote against the nomination of Mr. Farr and Mr. Kobes.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 20 minutes as in morning business; further, that at the conclusion of my remarks, the Senator from Massachu-

setts, Mr. MARKEY, be recognized; that we have permission to engage in a colloquy; and that at the conclusion of Senator MARKEY's remarks, Senator SHAHEEN of New Hampshire be recognized.

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

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, a persistent argument of my climate talks is how corrupt climate denial is. The premise of that argument is that the fossil fuel industry denial apparatus is wrong about climate change and knows it is wrong. That is my case. The fossil fuel industry denial apparatus knows it is wrong about climate change.

Well, it is a beautiful world, and every once in a while, along comes something that proves my case. Last week, on the afternoon of Black Friday, the Trump administration released its National Climate Assessment by 13 Federal agencies describing the monumental damage the United States is facing from climate change. In more than 1,000 pages, the report contradicted nearly every fake assertion Trump and his fossil fuel flunky Cabinet have made about climate change.

Trump's pro-polluter policies are predicated on the lies and nonsense of this fossil fuel industry denial apparatus, and this report is devastating to those policies and to those lies.

So how did the fossil fuel apparatus respond? What did they do to rebut the National Climate Assessment? They did nothing. They did nothing. There was all that big talk from Scott Pruitt about how they were going to "red team" climate science. Well here comes the climate science. Where is your red team? Nothing. Instead of engaging with this devastating report by the U.S. Government's leading scientists, they tried to bury it, timing its release for a day of the year when it would be least likely to get public attention.

Consider for a moment the environment in which they backed down from this challenge—no red team, no nothing. They just whimpered and ran away and tried to bury the report on Black Friday. At a time when their industry populates the Trump administration, at a time when the President is in their pocket, at a time when both Houses of Congress are under fossil fuel industry control, their phony climate denial front groups wield more influence than ever. This should have been their moment.

The tell here is that even in this environment, the fossil fuel industry and its bevy of stooges in the Trump administration got this report and did nothing. Why? Why nothing? There is only one answer. Because they know they are wrong. They know the real science is right. They know their science denial campaign is phony, so they backed down. They folded like a cardboard suitcase in a rainstorm.

That, my friends, is an admission. It is an admission by inaction. It is an ad-

mission that even the fossil fuel industry knows the climate science is irrefutable.

Interestingly, "irrefutable" is just what President Trump and his family said about climate science in this full-page advertisement they signed in the New York Times in 2009, saying that science of climate was "irrefutable" and that there will be "catastrophic and irreversible" consequences of climate change.

The new National Climate Assessment plus the recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report are both very clear. The irrefutable science that these two reports disclose couldn't be more clear: Damage from climate change is already occurring; there is no credible natural explanation for it; human activity is the dominant cause; future damage from further warming will be worse than we previously thought; economies will suffer; and we are almost out of time to prevent the worst consequences of climate change.

The Bank of England report on this—they are the biggest financial regulator in the UK, and they said: The financial risks are far-reaching in their breadth and magnitude, have uncertain and extended time horizons, are foreseeable, but these risk factors will be minimized if there is an orderly transition to a carbon economy, but the window for an orderly transition is finite and closing. We are almost out of time.

These two reports are tough stuff. As the Trump administration summary states, the "Earth's climate is now changing faster than at any point in the history of modern civilization, primarily as a result of human activities. The impacts of global climate change are already being felt in the United States and are projected to intensify in the future," which makes sense, since in the history of human civilization, the Earth has never seen atmospheric CO₂ concentrations like we have today.

Many scientists have said warming of around 3 degrees centigrade is now likely. What does that mean? Heating the planet well beyond 2 degrees centigrade would create a "totally different world," says Michael Oppenheimer, a climate scientist at Princeton University. He says:

It would be indescribable, it would turn the world upside down in terms of its climate. There would be nothing like it in the history of civilization.

Here is what the Trump climate assessment chronicles: From our Ocean State, we are concerned about sea levels, ocean acidification, and warming. We note sea levels are rising, as oceans warm and upland ice melts. If fossil fuels are not constrained, the reports says, "many coastal communities will be transformed by the latter part of this century." For my coastal State, that is a pretty ominous warning. Along coasts, fisheries, tourism, human health, even public safety are being "transformed, degraded or lost due in part to climate change impacts,

particularly sea level rise and higher numbers of extreme weather events.”

You get the sea level coming up, and that extreme weather event—which is stronger to begin with now—has a lot more ocean to throw at our shores.

Out West, “more frequent and larger wildfires, combined with increasing development at the wildland-urban interface portend increasing risks to property and human life,” the report says. By the way, from 2000 to 2016, wildfires have burned at least 3.7 million acres of the United States in every single year except for 3. From 2000 to 2016, more than 3.7 million acres burned in all years but 3. California still smolders as I speak.

More than 100 million people in the United States live with poor air quality, and climate change will “worsen existing air pollution levels.” Increased wildfire smoke heightens respiratory and cardiovascular problems. With higher temperatures from global warming, asthma and hay fever rise.

Groundwater supplies have declined over the last century, and the decrease is accelerating. “Significant changes in water quantity and quality are evident across the country,” the report finds.

Midwest farmers take a big hit: warmer, wetter, and more humid conditions from climate change; greater incidence of crop disease and more pests; worsened conditions for stored grain. During the growing season, the Midwest will see temperatures climb more than any other region of the United States, the report says. Crop yields will suffer—a warning that is echoed by grain giants like Cargill.

To sum it all up, the report says climate change will “disrupt many areas of life,” hurting the U.S. economy, affecting trade, exacerbating overseas conflicts for our military. Costs will be high: “With continued growth in emissions at historic rates, annual losses in some economic sectors are projected to reach hundreds of billions of dollars by the end of the century—more than the current gross domestic product of many U.S. States.”

Danger warnings already flash in some economic sectors. Freddie Mac has warned of a coastal property value crash, saying: “The economic losses and social disruption may happen gradually, but they are likely to be greater in total than those experienced in the housing crisis and Great Recession.” From a coastal State, that is an ominous warning.

The insurance industry agrees. Trade publication Risk and Insurance has warned: “Continually rising seas will damage coastal residential and commercial property values to the point that property owners will flee those markets in droves, thus precipitating a mortgage value collapse that could equal or exceed the mortgage crisis that rocked the global economy in 2008.” By the way, the leading edge of this may already be upon us as coastal property values are beginning to lag inland property values, as reported by the Wall Street Journal.

Separate from the coastal property values threat is another warning about a carbon bubble in fossil fuel markets. Fossil fuel reserves, now claimed as assets, that are not developable in a 2-degrees-Centigrade world become what they call stranded assets. A recent economic publication estimated that collapse of the “carbon bubble” would wipe out “around 82 percent of global coal reserves, 49 percent of global gas reserves, and 33 percent of global oil reserves.” A separate economic review warns that \$12 trillion of fossil fuel industry financial value “could vanish off their balance sheets globally in the form of stranded assets.” Twelve trillion dollars is over 15 percent of global GDP, which is why the Bank of England—which I quoted earlier as a financial regulator—is warning of this carbon asset bubble as a systemic economic risk. That may be the blandest set of words in the English language that convey the worst threat. If you were to graph “blandness of language” and “seriousness of threat,” you would probably come up with systemic economic risk. It basically means economic meltdown. Well, that is what we are looking at.

This level of collapse could cascade beyond the fossil fuel companies. It is not just a question of their shareholders getting wiped out. It is such a crash that it cascades out into the global economy—a crash like that, unfortunately, hits the United States particularly hard because lower cost producers can hold on and unload fossil fuel reserves into the collapsing market at fire sale prices. When they do, the economists warn, “regions with higher marginal costs”—like the United States—“lose almost their entire oil and gas industry.”

The solution is to decarbonize, to invest in more renewables, to broaden our energy portfolio away from this asset collapse risk. One paper concludes that “the United States is worse off if it continues to promote fossil fuel production and consumption.” Another paper concludes—this is the good news:

If climate policies are implemented early on and in a stable and credible framework, market participants are able to smoothly anticipate the effects. In this case there would not be any large shock in asset prices and there would be no systemic risk.

So how do we get to eliminating this hazard of no systemic risk? How do we get to no systemic risk? We do what works for us anyway: move to renewables. As this graph shows, we have to make a big move to avoid this hazard. A carbon price—which is the remedy the fossil fuel industry pretends to support, while sending its political forces out to oppose exactly the laws it pretends to support—would allow this big move to happen, all while generating revenues that could be cycled back to States and citizens and help the hardest hit areas of transition.

The smart move we need to take to make this happen does not have to be painful. We avoid a lot of pain if we

make the move, but that doesn’t mean the move itself has to be painful. Nobel Prize winner Joseph Stiglitz says it is a win economically. He has testified:

Retrofitting the global economy for climate change would help to restore aggregate demand and growth. Climate policies, if well designed and implemented, are consistent with growth, development, and poverty reduction. The transition to a low-carbon economy is potentially a powerful, attractive, and sustainable growth story, marked by higher resilience, more innovation, more livable cities, robust agriculture, and stronger ecosystems.

We could do it the hard way—do nothing; get hit with those dire economic consequences because the status quo is not safe.

Fortune magazine summed up the Trump administration’s climate report quite beautifully, so I will quote them at some length: “The report catalogs the observed damage and accelerating financial losses projected from a climate now unmoored from a 12,000-year period of relative stability.”

What a phrase that is. The Earth’s climate, which we inhabit, is unmoored from a 12,000-year period of relative stability.

It goes on:

The result is that much of what humans have built, and many of the things they are building now, are unsuited to the world as it exists. And as time goes on, the added cost of living in that world could total hundreds of billions of dollars—annually.

Which way we now go depends on the Congress of the United States—on whether Congress can put the interests of our people ahead of the interests of the fossil fuel industry.

The record is not good. I will concede that. Since the Citizens United decision, the politics of climate change have turned into a tale of industry capture and control. So far, despite the fossil fuel industry’s obvious conflict of interest, could there be a more obvious conflict of interest, indeed? Despite their provable pattern of deception and despite clear warnings from, well, virtually everywhere now, the Republican Party has proven itself incapable of telling the fossil fuel industry: No, we tried our best for you. We held in for you as long as we could, and we did everything we could think of, but we are not going to wreck our economy, our climate, our oceans, our country for you.

So it doesn’t look good, but the climate report does say we still have time if we act fast.

I ask unanimous consent that an article by Max Boot, titled, “I was wrong on climate change. Why can’t other conservatives admit it, too?” be printed in the RECORD at the conclusion of my remarks.

It concludes: Why haven’t other Conservatives owned up to this danger?

They are captives, first and foremost, of the fossil fuel industry. . . . It is a tragedy for the entire planet that the United States’ governing party is impervious to science and reason.

I will close with a reference to “The Gathering Storm,” which is Winston

Churchill's legendary book about a previous failure to heed warnings. Churchill quoted a poem of a train bound for destruction, rushing through the night, with the engineer asleep at the controls as disaster looms:

Who is in charge of the clattering train?
The axles creak, and the couplings strain.
... the pace is hot, and the points are near,
[but] Sleep hath deadened the driver's ear;
And signals flash through the night in vain.

Death is in charge of the clattering train!

I contend that we are now that sleeping driver, that the signals are flashing at us, so far, in vain, and that it is decidedly time to wake up.

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

[From The Washington Post]

I WAS WRONG ON CLIMATE CHANGE. WHY CAN'T OTHER CONSERVATIVES ADMIT IT, TOO?
(By Max Boot)

I admit it. I used to be a climate-change skeptic. I was one of those conservatives who thought that the science was inconclusive, that fears of global warming were as overblown as fears of a new ice age in the 1970s, that climate change was natural and cyclical, and that there was no need to incur any economic costs to deal with this speculative threat. I no longer think any of that, because the scientific consensus is so clear and convincing.

The Fourth National Climate Assessment, released Friday by the U.S. government, puts it starkly: "Observations collected around the world provide significant, clear, and compelling evidence that global average temperature is much higher, and is rising more rapidly, than anything modern civilization has experienced, with widespread and growing impacts." The report notes that "annual average temperatures have increased by 1.8 °F across the contiguous United States since the beginning of the 20th century" and that "annual median sea level along the U.S. coast ... has increased by about 9 inches since the early 20th century as oceans have warmed and land ice has melted."

The report attributes these changes to man-made greenhouse gases and warns: "High temperature extremes, heavy precipitation events, high tide flooding events along the U.S. coastline, ocean acidification and warming, and forest fires in the western United States and Alaska are all projected to continue to increase, while land and sea ice cover, snowpack, and surface soil moisture are expected to continue to decline in the coming decades."

The U.S. government warnings echo the United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. In October, it released a report that represented the work of 91 scientists from 60 countries. It describes, in the words of the New York Times, "a world of worsening food shortages and wildfires, and a mass die-off of coral reefs as soon as 2040."

The wildfires are already here. The Camp Fire blaze this month is the most destructive in California history, charring 153,000 acres, destroying nearly 19,000 structures, and killing at least 85 people. The second-most destructive fire in California history was the one last year in Napa and Sonoma counties.

The Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies notes that climate change has contributed to these conflagrations by shortening the rainy season, drying out vegetation and whipping up Santa Ana winds. Massive hurricanes are increasing

along with wildfires—and they too are influenced by climate change.

It is time to sound the planetary alarm. This is likely to be the fourth-hottest year on record. The record-holder is 2016, followed by 2015 and 2017. A climate change website notes that "the five warmest years in the global record have all come in the 2010s" and "the 10 warmest years on record have all come since 1998."

Imagine if these figures reflected a rise in terrorism—or illegal immigration. Republicans would be freaking out. Yet they are oddly blasé about this climate code red. President Trump, whose minions buried the climate-change report on the day after Thanksgiving, told Axios: "Is there climate change? Yeah. Will it go back like this, I mean will it change back? Probably." And, amid a recent cold snap, he tweeted: "Brutal and Extended Cold Blast could shatter ALL RECORDS—Whatever happened to Global Warming?"

By this point, no one should be surprised that the president can't tell the difference between short-term weather fluctuations and long-term climate trends. At least he didn't repeat his crazy suggestion that climate change is a Chinese hoax. Yet his denialism is echoed by other Republicans who should know better. Sen. Joni Ernst (R-Iowa) told CNN on Sunday: "Our climate always changes and we see those ebb and flows through time. ... We need to always consider the impact to American industry and jobs."

We do need to consider the impact on U.S. jobs—but that's an argument for action rather than, as Ernst suggests, inaction. The National Climate Assessment warns that global warming could cause a 10 percent decline in gross domestic product and that the "potential for losses in some sectors could reach hundreds of billions of dollars per year by the end of this century." Iowa and other farm states will be particularly hard hit as crops wilt and livestock die.

Compared with the crushing costs of climate change, the action needed to curb greenhouse-gas emissions is modest and manageable—if we act now. Jerry Taylor, president of the libertarian Niskanen Center, estimates that a carbon tax would increase average electricity rates from 17 cents to 18 cents per kilowatt-hour. The average household, he writes, would see spending on energy rise "only about \$35 per month." That's not nothing—but it's better than allowing climate change to continue unabated.

I've owned up to the danger. Why haven't other conservatives? They are captives, first and foremost, of the fossil fuel industry, which outspent green groups 10 to 1 in lobbying on climate change from 2000 to 2016. But they are also captives of their own rigid ideology. It is a tragedy for the entire planet that the United States' governing party is impervious to science and reason.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. I note that my distinguished colleague from Massachusetts has arrived. We have an order in place in which the Senator from Massachusetts is to be recognized at the conclusion of my remarks and that the distinguished Senator from New Hampshire, Mrs. SHAHEEN, is to be recognized at the conclusion of Senator MARKEY's remarks.

With that, I yield the floor to the co-author of the Waxman-Markey legislation, the person who had done the most successful work to try to solve this climate problem at a time when the situation was slightly less desperate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ROUNDS). The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, I thank Senator WHITEHOUSE, who has been out here on the floor, week after week after week, sounding the warning, like Churchill, that there is danger ahead, that there is a gathering storm. Yet it is not metaphorical as it was for Churchill. It is real. There is a gathering storm. What Senator WHITEHOUSE has been doing, year after year after year, is coming out on the floor to document this gathering storm and to warn that we have to take action.

I thank Senator WHITEHOUSE for his incredible, historic leadership because, between the U.N. and the U.S. scientists, all of the evidence is now there. My belief is, the failure that he talked about to heed the dire warnings on climate change is much more now than that figurative gathering storm; it is literally gathering much fiercer energy in super-charged storms that will bear down on our shores as a result of our warming crisis.

Scientists have shot off the warning flare. In the last 2 months, we have received two of the most alarming reports to date on the threat that climate change poses to our country, our economy, our security, and to our planet. It questions the morality of our country because ultimately that is what it is. It is a moral issue of whether we are going to leave this planet better than we found it.

Are we going to be the stewards of this planet and pass it on to future generations better than we found it? Right now, the gathering evidence from the United Nations and from our own U.S. Government's scientists is that we are not.

The Federal Government's National Climate Assessment that was released last week as well as the recent United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report are clarion calls. The science in these reports is clear. If we fail to act now, storms will grow more frequent and more powerful. Extreme weather events, like Hurricane Michael, which grew more quickly this October than any storm we have seen, will continue to cost the United States hundreds of billions of dollars in damage. The National Climate Assessment—the congressionally mandated report issued by 13 Federal agencies—underscores the specific impacts we are facing now and will continue to face in the future.

In our home region of the Northeast, which Senator SHAHEEN and Senator WHITEHOUSE and I have the privilege to represent, the impacts are going to be truly devastating. The Northeast region will surpass 2 degrees centigrade of warming beyond preindustrial levels by as soon as 2035—not 2050, not 2100 but by the year 2035—if emissions continue at their current pace. That would be the quickest warming in the contiguous United States and would occur as much as two decades before global average temperatures reach a similar point.

The real-world effects of this warming trajectory are shocking. Sea levels

in the Northeast could rise upward of 11 feet by the end of the century. Almost one-third of the sandy shorelines along the Atlantic coast could erode inland at rates of at least 3.3 feet per year. We will feel the impact on our economy, which is so strongly tied to fishing, to our beaches and tourism, and to our natural environmental resources.

In 2012, a 2-degree centigrade water temperature increase boosted lobster landings to high summer levels a month earlier than usual. The result was an early supply glut and a collapse in prices to the lowest level in almost two decades. This type of negative impact on our fishing industries will become more commonplace as the climate continues to warm and our marine life is forced to move to new areas.

Outdoor recreation in the Northeast, which will suffer the consequences of climate change, contributes nearly \$150 billion in consumer spending and supports more than 1 million jobs across our region. Climate impacts, like beach erosion, are an imminent threat to this economic powerhouse. Yet perhaps most devastating will be the impacts on the public's health. According to estimates, up to 10,000 people in Massachusetts could, by the end of the century, visit the emergency room annually due to the rising heat.

Despite these generational warnings from both the United Nations and the scientists in our own country, President Trump has continued to dismiss the impending disaster from our dangerously warming planet.

How did President Trump respond when asked about the conclusion that climate change could devastate the American economy?

His answer: "I don't believe it."

Well, it doesn't matter, Mr. President, if you don't believe it because the world's leading scientists have shown it to be true, and 70 percent of Americans believe it. They believe global warming is happening.

President Trump may deny climate science, but there is no denying the consequences of climate change. Yet the Trump administration will not stop at climate denial. It has a much more insidious scheme to block action on climate—deny, delay, and defund. The list of its climate sins is long, with each action more egregious than the last one.

First came the appointment of an all-star Big Oil Cabinet—Scott Pruitt at the EPA, former Exxon CEO Rex Tillerson at the State Department, and former Texas Governor Rick Perry at the Department of Energy.

Since Mr. Pruitt's ouster after numerous ethics violations, the Trump administration has nominated king coal's favorite son, Andrew Wheeler, to head the EPA. Mr. Wheeler is a former coal industry lobbyist and has downplayed the recent science on the devastating impacts to come from climate change. After these reports came out, he said: "I have some questions

about the assumptions." These are assumptions that have been vetted by 300 leading scientists in the United States and across the planet.

The only question, I believe, is why someone like Andrew Wheeler was put in charge at the EPA. A coal lobbyist is now the head of the EPA. The EPA just turned into every polluter's ally. That is the net result of what Donald Trump has done at the Agency.

The Trump administration is also moving to freeze fuel economy standards rather than pushing for the historic and technically achievable goal of 54.5 miles per gallon by the year 2025. I am the author of the 2007 law that required the first fuel economy increase in 32 years. Increasing our fuel economy standard to 54.5 miles per gallon is the single largest action that any nation has ever taken on climate—that one law. Yet the Trump administration is trying to make a U-turn on those standards that are saving customers money at the pump and reducing the emissions we pump into the air.

The Trump administration is also trying to repeal President Obama's Clean Power Plan. Turning our back on this roadmap for reducing pollution in the electricity sector will result in at least 12 times more carbon dioxide emissions over the next decade.

Why is the Trump administration taking us backward on climate in the face of these dire warnings? Just follow the money.

Yesterday, during the weekly Senate Climate Change Task Force meeting, Senator WHITEHOUSE, Senator CARDIN, other colleagues, and I heard about the complex funding behind the climate countermovement, which the fossil fuel industry has funded and used to mislead the American people and to hold this administration hostage.

The "web of climate denial" is nothing more than dirty energy corporations and their shady front groups spending over a quarter of a billion dollars each year to deceive Americans about climate change. These corporations distort scientific consensus and turn it into an artificial political debate. They produce sham scientific documents, such as "Why Scientists Disagree About Global Warming," a report published by the Heartland Institute and sent to over 300,000 science teachers across the country. Funding 300,000 documents to be sent to every science teacher in America over science that is patently untrue—that is how much money the fossil fuel industry has. That is how high they try to send up a smoke screen around this issue to terrify teachers that they might be getting in trouble if they actually teach accurate science rather than the bogus documents that are sent to them by the fossil fuel industry, by their handmaidens, the Heartland Institute.

These fossil fuel phonies are on a mission to sow doubt, and their efforts seem to be bearing fruit in this administration. The web of denial messaging

strategy is highly sophisticated, disciplined, and politically controlled. Conferences, advertisements, websites, talking heads—this fossil fuel-funded farce may be a well-oiled machine and well funded, but they are wrong.

What do we do in the face of this web of denial? We need to look at the dollars and cents of it all—not the Big Oil and King Coal greenbacks but the success of green energy.

We are ushering our power sector into a clean energy future that is good for our environment and good for our economy. Coal cannot compete against wind, solar, and other renewables and natural gas in the free market. By the early 2020s, it could be cheaper to build new renewables from scratch than to continue operating old, dirty, coal-fired powerplants. That is not a conspiracy; that is called competition. Adam Smith is smiling in his grave, watching this market force begin to take over. And that is why this renewable revolution has become unstoppable. It is because the cost of renewables is plummeting. The cost of solar has fallen 50 to 60 percent over the last 5 to 6 years. In fact, wind and solar are generally cheaper than coal and nuclear energy right now. Coal is losing the war against wind and solar in the free market. That is what we call it—the free market. The War on Coal is a war that has been declared by the free market on coal, and it lost that war.

It is not just happening here in the United States; it is happening all around the globe. Mexico had a power auction at the end of November 2017 where the average price for solar was 1.9 cents per kilowatt hour. In 2017, solar in Saudi Arabia came in at 1.8 cents a kilowatt hour. In Dubai, it is 2.4 cents a kilowatt hour.

Half of all electricity installed around the world last year was renewable. Let me say that again. Half of all new electrical generation capacity in the world that was installed last year was renewable. So it is not just the United States; this is happening globally. The revolution is on.

Renewable energy deployment around the world has increased by 8 percent a year for 7 years in a row. Globally, more than \$330 billion was invested in clean energy last year. This is a global clean energy race. It is a global job-creation race. It is a global clean energy investment race. We are going to save all of creation by engaging in massive job creation, as we have all of these people who are hired in order to install these new technologies.

Right now, we have more than 50,000 megawatts of solar installed here in the United States. By 2020, we are projected to have more than 90,000 megawatts of solar. Solar is projected to add another 35,000 megawatts combined in 2021 and 2022. That means that by the end of 2022—4 years from now—we are going to have 250,000 megawatts of wind and solar in the United States.

If you think of a nuclear powerplant having 1,000 megawatts—the Seabrook

nuclear powerplant, the Diablo Canyon nuclear powerplant—think of 250 solar and wind facilities. That would be the equivalent of each one of those nuclear powerplants. That is what we are talking about.

By the year 2020, we will have 500,000 people employed in the wind and solar industry. Contrast that with the 50,000 people in the coal industry. By 2020, there will be 500,000 in wind and solar. Who are they? They are roofers. They are electricians. They are engineers. They are people who are working with their hands to install all of this equipment.

The President doesn't seem to really care about those blue-collar workers—upwards of 500,000 by the year 2020—but they are working hard, they are working for good wages, and they are also not running the risk of inhaling dangerous air that can be dangerous to their health. That is where we are. We have this incredible opportunity that is before us. It is already happening. The President is in denial.

The climate change fight is not just a question of job creation or economic imperative; it is about the moral imperative we have to act. We know climate change will get worse. We know lives will be lost. We cannot sit back and do nothing.

In 2015, Pope Francis came to Capitol Hill, and he delivered his environmental “Sermon on the Mount.” He told us that mankind created this problem of climate change and now mankind must fix it. With the world's poorest and most vulnerable suffering the worst consequences of climate change—extreme poverty, famine, disease, and displacement—we have a moral obligation to act.

I agree with Pope Francis that the United States and the Congress have an important role to play. We have a responsibility to help those less fortunate amongst us who will be harmed the most by rising seas, a warming planet, and more pollutions spewing into our air and water. That is why, right now and in the next Congress, I am standing here with my colleagues in this fight to ensure that we take climate action, for a price on carbon, for investment in clean energy, for resilient infrastructure, for 100 percent renewable energy in our country.

If there is a tax extenders bill, we will be fighting for clean energy tax credits and for extenders to help reduce our carbon emissions, including for offshore wind, for storage of electricity, and for clean vehicles. We will be standing side by side in that fight in 2019 on the Senate floor so that we continue this revolution.

If there is an infrastructure package, we will be fighting for aggressive renewable energy standards for utilities and the Federal Government and for coastal infrastructure needs.

As we work on appropriations, we will fight for more funding for energy efficiency and programs that protect the health of children and families from climate change.

The climate challenges facing our Nation and the entire world are indeed great, but the United States has the technological imperative to lead on solutions. We have the economic imperative to create opportunities and jobs for all people, and we have the moral imperative to protect our planet for future generations.

The rest the world will not listen to us and follow us if we do not, in fact, take these actions. You cannot preach temperance from a barstool. You cannot ask other countries to act when we ourselves are walking away from the responsibility. That is the moment we are in.

By January 1, 2019, this battle is going to be on. We have been given the warning, and we are heeding it. We are going to have mighty battles up here on the floor to make sure that future generations do not look back at us and wonder why we didn't heed all of those warnings that were given to us by the smartest scientists on the planet.

Now I would like to yield to my great colleague from the State of New Hampshire, a woman who has dedicated her career to the issues of clean energy up in her home State. I give you the great Senator from New Hampshire, JEANNE SHAHEEN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TILLIS). The Senator from New Hampshire.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Thank you, Mr. President.

Thank you to my colleagues Senator MARKEY and Senator WHITEHOUSE. I am pleased to join both of you, who have done such a tremendous job in leading on this issue of trying to get everyone to wake up to the challenges that we face in climate change and what that is going to mean, not just for us in New England but for people across this country and across the globe.

Maybe the reason we feel so passionate about this is because we see it. We already see it happening in New England, as my colleagues detailed so well. We are on the cutting edge of these changes. You don't have to have lived in New Hampshire for very long to have seen what is happening as a result of climate change.

Last week, the U.S. Global Change Research Program released its fourth National Climate Assessment, and that details the profound effect climate change is having and is going to continue to have on the environment, on the economy, and on our public health. The report makes it abundantly clear that every American—every American—is affected by climate change and that the threat it poses will get worse unless we take action.

As I said, people in my State of New Hampshire have no doubt about the reality of climate change because we have been seeing it for years now. We have been experiencing it.

The steady increase in temperatures and the rise in annual precipitation are already affecting New Hampshire's

tourism and outdoor recreation economy. Each year, hundreds of thousands of sportsmen and wildlife watchers come to New Hampshire to enjoy our mountains, our lakes, and all of our beautiful natural resources. The outdoor economy—hunting, fishing, and outdoor recreation—contributes more than \$4 billion to New Hampshire's economy each year, but this is threatened now because rising temperatures are shortening our fall foliage season, and they are negatively affecting our snow- and ice-related winter recreation activities. That includes skiing, snowboarding, and snowmobiling. The New Hampshire ski industry employs 17,000 Granite Staters, and the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services warns that these jobs are threatened by climate change.

New Hampshire's—in fact, all of New England's fall foliage is at risk. This is climate modeling by the Union of Concerned Scientists that shows that by the end of this century, New Hampshire's summers will feel like present-day summers in North Carolina, 700 miles to our south. While the Presiding Officer certainly understands that this works great for North Carolina, it changes dramatically what happens in New Hampshire.

What this shows is that—this red color, which are the maple and beech and birch trees—the maple trees in particular that produce our maple syrup—that make such a difference in our fall foliage—those are going to be gone by 2070—by the end of this century. All of this red that we are seeing throughout—from Pennsylvania, New York, across Northern New Hampshire, Vermont, and Maine—that will all be gone by the end of this century.

Again, this underscores that if we fail to act on climate change, we are going to see a steep loss of jobs and revenue. That is going to affect our outdoor recreation industry, and it is going to affect our traditional maple syrup industry.

New Hampshire produces more than 100,000 gallons of maple syrup annually. That makes it the third largest maple syrup producer in the United States. Maple syrup is entirely dependent on weather conditions. We are already seeing the impact these changes are having because as we get into spring, the temperatures are not getting cold enough at night to make the sap run in the maple trees, and during the day, we are not seeing the fluctuation in temperatures that allows maple syrup to be produced.

The National Climate Assessment notes that the changing climate is putting more and more stress on sugar maples. If we fail to act on climate change, this could destroy New Hampshire's multimillion-dollar maple syrup industry.

Now, it is also affecting our wildlife. It is affecting their habitats.

Probably one of the most iconic symbols of New Hampshire is our moose. Yet they are being threatened. Because

of milder winters due to climate change, ticks and other insects aren't dying off, which leads to infestation on our wildlife and on our trees. According to the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department, the estimated moose population in New Hampshire has decreased by more than 50 percent since the mid-1990s.

That story is even worse for moose calves. A recent study by researchers at the University of New Hampshire found that winter ticks are the primary cause of an unprecedented 70-percent death rate of calves over a 3-year period. On average—and we can see this dramatically in these photos—47,000 ticks were found on each calf that was monitored during this study.

To quote Dr. Peter Pekins, a professor at UNH who is a lead author on the study, “the iconic moose is rapidly becoming the new poster child for climate change in parts of the Northeast.”

We are going to see moose totally disappearing from the Northeast—in fact, from all of the northern part of the United States, if we don't take action.

As my colleagues have said, global warming is also impacting our fishing industry. New Hampshire may have a small coast—18 miles of coastline—but we have an important commercial fishing industry that contributes \$106 million to the State and supports 5,000 jobs. Unfortunately, because of climate change, the average annual temperatures in the waters off of southern New England have increased by about 2.2 degrees Fahrenheit since the 1970s. This change in temperature is driving some of New England's most iconic fisheries northward and further out to sea.

Lobsters, for example, have migrated 40 miles northward to the Gulf of Maine in the last decade. As we can see from this illustration, it shows the red areas where we used to have lobster until the 1970s. They have totally disappeared, and those lobsters have moved north of Cape Cod. They are moving into northern Maine and up into Canada. They are totally gone from the New England Sound. That is devastating to Southern New Hampshire fishing communities where lobster is their livelihood.

Ironically, as I think Senator MARKEY said so well, the lobster migration has contributed to an overabundance in the Gulf of Maine, and that has caused price volatility in the lobster market. So we have seen dramatic fluctuations which have also affected our fishermen.

Of course, the impacts on human health have been dramatic because people are suffering from the impacts of climate change. Rising temperatures increase the number of air pollution action days. They increase pollen and mold levels, and they increase allergies. All of these things are dangerous to some of our most vulnerable populations, including children. In New Hampshire we have one of the highest childhood asthma rates in the country

because of air pollution that has been moving primarily from the Midwest but now is being exacerbated by climate change.

The elderly are affected, as well as those with allergies and those with chronic respiratory conditions.

Rising temperatures also facilitate the spread of insectborne illnesses, such as Lyme disease, which have been a huge factor for people in New Hampshire and across New England.

Now, because New Hampshire and the Northeastern States and New England have been experiencing major negative impacts from climate change, we have been working to reduce carbon emissions to try and transition to a more energy-efficient and clean-energy economy. New Hampshire is one of nine Northeastern States that participates in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, or RGGI, since the program launched in 2009. Massachusetts and Rhode Island are also participants. But carbon emissions in RGGI States have fallen by 51 percent. So in less than a decade, because of RGGI, we have seen a 51-percent reduction in carbon emissions.

In addition, customers in RGGI States have saved an estimated \$773 million on their energy bills, and billions more are expected. That is thanks not just to renewables but to energy efficiency. I am a big believer that energy efficiency is also one of the most important ways we can reduce our carbon emissions. Also, the wholesale price of energy has fallen. So we can see on average 6.4 percent and \$773 million in energy savings.

So climate change—as everyone who has spoken about this evening has pointed out—is probably the greatest environmental challenge the world has ever faced, but we can do something about it if we take action. Through smart energy policies and through thoughtful conservation measures, we can stop climate change from reaching dangerous, irreversible levels, but we have to act now.

So I urge my colleagues and I urge this administration to recognize the economic and environmental imperative of addressing climate change before it is too late.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

OPIOID EPIDEMIC

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I wish to speak tonight about the opioid crisis that has gripped my State of Ohio and our country and talk about some lessons learned.

There was an article in the New York Times that some might have seen on

Sunday about a town in Ohio—Dayton, OH—and the progress they have made in combating this opioid crisis, including a reduction in overdose deaths, which is really significant. Dayton is a city that has had some of the highest overdose death rates in our entire State of Ohio, and Ohio is No. 3 or No. 4 in the country in terms of overdose deaths. They have seen in Dayton, OH, over the last year, about a 50-percent decrease in overdose deaths. It is still totally unacceptable. Unfortunately, there are still hundreds of people who are dying every year. But from this high-water mark, progress has been made. Why is that happening?

Well, I am going to talk a little bit about that tonight and talk about some of the things that are actually working back in our communities and perhaps give us a little sense of optimism about what might be able to happen over the next couple of years as we try to turn the tide on this epidemic.

For a little context, last year we had the highest rate of overdose deaths in the history of our country. Some 72,000 Americans—72,000—lost their lives to overdoses from drugs. In my State of Ohio, that number is particularly high, to the point that it is the No. 1 cause of death now in our State.

I met with the director of the CDC, or the Centers for Disease Control, today and talked about the opioid epidemic and talked about the tragedy he is seeing in places like southwest Ohio, Dayton, and Cincinnati, my hometown, where we see incidences of hepatitis C increasing and even hepatitis A. These are diseases that are primarily increasing because of the sharing of needles and the opioid epidemic.

So we have our work cut out for us, don't we?

In Dayton, OH, by the way, over the last few years, the death rate had gotten so high that the coroner's office was literally running out of space. There wasn't enough room to put all the bodies.

I have held roundtable discussions in Dayton and Montgomery County, which is the county around Dayton, over the past several years and heard the bad news. I have often been with Montgomery County then-Sheriff Phil Plummer, who has been tireless in trying to focus law enforcement, the social workers, the treatment community, the business community, and other community leaders on how to respond to this problem. Our first responders, of course, are as desperate as anybody to address this.

It has been tough. Again, I have been in Dayton, OH, and had to talk about the fact that we had the worst rates in the country of deaths and, therefore, one of the worst in the entire country.

So what has happened? How has Dayton made this progress, this 50 percent reduction?

Well, the New York Times highlights a number of reasons for it. They talk about greater community involvement, the ability for more Medicaid recipients to get treatment, and more

Narcan being distributed throughout the community. Narcan, of course, is this miracle drug that reverses the effects of an overdose.

They talked about helping to deal with the stigma. In other words, by reducing the stigma that is associated with addiction, more people will step forward to get treatment for it, and their families will be more willing to push them forward. That helps to unite communities against what is the biggest public health crisis we face in Ohio and around the country.

I would like to highlight tonight some of the things we have done here in this body just in the last couple of years that contribute to some of the success that we are seeing.

Again, are we there yet? No, we are not. Last year was worse than the year before, but I do believe that we are going to begin to make progress, and, frankly, I think we would already have seen some of these efforts at the Federal level, State level, and local level, which are taking root, make a bigger difference but for one thing, and that is this big influx of synthetic opioids—fentanyl. Fentanyl, carfentanil, and other synthetics have taken over.

I remember being in Dayton, OH, the city we are talking about tonight, about 4 years ago when, for the first time, I heard from a law enforcement official that fentanyl was pushing out heroin. At that time, the big issue was heroin. It wasn't fentanyl. In fact, very few people knew about fentanyl. Fentanyl has hit my State and our country so hard over the past several years—the last 3, 4, 5 years—that it has sort of overwhelmed the system. So as we have begun to make progress on better education, better treatment, better recovery options, and more Narcan, we have also had this big influx of this incredibly powerful drug that is 50 times more powerful than heroin on average—an inexpensive drug.

We will talk in a minute about what we are doing about fentanyl, but, again, I think if we had not seen that influx, we would already be seeing more progress because of some of the things that we will talk about that are happening in Dayton, OH.

Back in 2016, this body, after 4 years of work, passed legislation called the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act. I was proud to coauthor that with my colleague SHELDON WHITEHOUSE. It was bipartisan. It was non-partisan. It was based on evidence. It was based on four conferences we had here in DC. We brought in people from all over the country to talk about this: What is the best treatment option? What is the best way to ensure somebody gets through treatment successfully? How can we do a better job with our veterans? How can we ensure that we are bringing our first responders into this, working with them, and helping them to be able to deal with this crisis? All of that led to this Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act legislation.

The first thing the legislation did, actually, was it said: Let's look at this like a disease. That may be—of all the things that are in that legislation, including significant new funding for our communities—maybe the most important thing, and it is beginning to change the paradigm, so that we don't look at this as a moral failing but rather look at it as something that is a disease. Something changes in your brain when you become addicted.

I can't tell you the number of people I have met in my home State of Ohio who because of an accident or an injury took an opioid, became addicted—physically addicted—shifted to heroin or fentanyl because the prescription drugs were hard to find or too expensive, and then overdosed, and, in some cases, overdosed and died.

But having said that, this legislation—this Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act legislation—focusing on prevention, focusing on treatment, focusing on recovery, focusing on providing Narcan to our communities, has made a difference. There will be \$608 million spent this year on these CARA programs. Our first year it was about \$182 million. It has gone up every year since. Why? Because it is working. It was based on good evidence, and it is helping to offer innovative solutions to this stubborn addiction challenge we face in our country.

Dayton, OH, and Montgomery County have received \$3.5 million in CARA funding. So part of the reason they have had some success is that they have taken this funding and used it in innovative ways. It includes \$2 million for first responders and about \$500,000 for the city of Dayton to develop partnerships between first responders and treatment providers responding to overdoses as a team.

Somebody overdoses, Narcan is applied, and their lives are saved. Unfortunately, still in America in most cases, the person goes back to the community, to the old team, the old gang, and often there is no followup.

In Dayton, what they have said is this: Do you know what? If somebody overdoses and Narcan is applied, we are going to follow up with them, and the team will include law enforcement, but it also will include treatment providers and maybe social workers. This funding has allowed them to pursue that.

Also, there is \$1 million from Montgomery County Public Health to analyze substance abuse issues and identify potential solutions to come up with more innovative and creative ways to deal with this.

Also, in 2016, this Congress passed another piece of legislation. The Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, remember, is funding that goes straight to programs to help on prevention, education, and innovative solutions. The second one was called the 21st Century Cures Act, and this provides funding directly back to the States, and the States then decide how it is spent. That funding is also making a big difference.

In each of the last 2 years, Ohio has received \$26 million in Cures funding to affect the opioid crisis. All of your States have received funding too. The funding is based on the degree to which you have a problem. So the States like my State of Ohio, West Virginia, and Kentucky have gotten significant amounts of money from this because we need it.

Again, the Montgomery County Alcohol, Drug Addiction, and Mental Health Services Board, or the ADAMHS Board, has received about \$2 million in Cures funding over the last 2 years in Dayton, OH. I have seen and heard about how that funding is being put to good use.

Just a couple months ago, I was in Dayton. I took part in a roundtable discussion with the Montgomery County ADAMHS Board and discussed how they are using their Cures money and their CARA money. They are using their Cures money to fund a community-based treatment team. They are partnering with Dayton and Montgomery County Public Health Addiction Services to provide 24/7 ambulance withdrawal support—a community treatment team to help people gripped by addiction get treatment in their own homes and primary care for high-risk addicts, including pregnant women and more.

They are finding that is working. It is working not just to have people be saved from an overdose by Narcan but getting these people directed into treatment to actually help them with their addiction problem longer term.

They are implementing impressive programs to help with some of the most vulnerable groups that are affected by this crisis, and that is mothers who are addicted and their babies, who are too often being born with what is called neonatal abstinence syndrome. Because the mom is addicted, the baby is born with this syndrome which requires the baby—tiny innocent babies—to go through withdrawal. It is a very sad situation. It is happening in hospitals all over our country. Go to your neonatal unit in your hospital, and you will find out that, unfortunately, the numbers of these babies has increased dramatically.

We don't know the impact longer term on these babies who are born to moms who are addicted, but there is a great risk there. What we do know is that hospitals across the country are being filled up with these innocent babies, and they need our help.

After these babies get out of the hospital, by the way, often they can't go back to their moms or their dads because they are addicted, nor should they.

The moms and dads sometimes are in treatment. They can't take their babies with them. What happens to these kids? Well, there are some groups that have started. Community volunteers have stepped up in Dayton, OH, as an example, and started a group called Brigid's Path. Brigid's Path is a shining example of an organization that is

dedicated to helping newborns who are dependent on drugs be able to recover longer term. As these innocent babies are taken through the withdrawal, they also need to be surrounded by love and support.

Earlier this year, I had the opportunity to visit Brigid's Path. It provides short-term inpatient care in a home-like setting for these newborns who are suffering from prenatal drug exposure.

A lot of volunteers are involved. Some of the volunteers do something really important and really simple. You know what it is? They hold the babies. Literally, it is the human contact. Based on all of the psychological studies and looking at how you create a healthy, well-adjusted baby, you have got to have that human contact. For these babies who can't be with their parents because their parents are addicted or maybe the dad isn't around and the mom is addicted, volunteers come in and literally hold the babies, love these babies, and support these babies. We need to provide as much care and treatment as possible to help these kids so that they can achieve their God-given potential in life.

By the way, the opioid legislation that the President signed into law just last month, which this Congress passed, provides for the first time that organizations like Brigid's Path in Dayton, OH—entirely funded up to this point with volunteers, with money from the community, but, frankly, they don't have the resources they need to take care of all the babies who need the help—for these babies whose families qualify for Medicaid, will now be able to get Medicaid reimbursement under what is called the CRIB Act, which the President just signed into law.

It provides \$60 million in funding for babies and recognizes residential pediatric recovery facilities like Brigid's Path as providers under Medicaid. This is a huge difference. It is going to enable not just Brigid's Path but other organizations like this to pop up around our State.

So that may not be affecting the overdose rate per se, but that is affecting something really important, which is the ability for these infants—these babies—to be able to have a normal life and to be able to achieve whatever God has in mind for them in their life, which is not to be growing up in a family with addiction but rather to be able to escape the grips of addiction.

I believe, perhaps most importantly, that the legislation we just passed in Congress recently—adding to Cures, CARA and the CRIB Act—is dealing with fentanyl and will help in Dayton, OH, and around our country.

I mentioned fentanyl earlier, a synthetic opioid 50 times more powerful than heroin and inexpensive. Sadly, while, again, Dayton has made progress, fentanyl remains the No. 1 killer in Dayton.

They told me when I was there a couple months ago that cocaine and meth

deaths—crystal meth—are rising in the Dayton area. That is deaths from cocaine and crystal meth. Why is that?

Typically, you don't hear about people overdosing on cocaine, but you certainly do when fentanyl is mixed in with cocaine, and that is what law enforcement is telling me around Ohio is happening.

These drugs, often mixed with fentanyl, are now deadlier than ever. Fentanyl was involved in more than 70 percent of Ohio's overdose deaths last year. From January until April of this year, despite the overall reduction in overdose deaths, about 77 percent of the overdose deaths in Montgomery County, in Dayton, OH, involved fentanyl.

So, again, we are making progress, but not nearly as much as we all want to make, and a major reason for this is this influx of this deadly synthetic substance. Unbelievably, we know that fentanyl is mostly manufactured in China, and mostly comes to our country through our own United States mail system. Up to now, up until last month when the President signed this legislation, we did not have a way to screen these packages coming in from overseas, specifically from China, coming in through the mail system into our communities, causing all of these deaths and destruction. Now we have in place something that closes the loophole in the international mail screening. It requires the post office to do what the other carriers have had to do since 9/11, which is to provide law enforcement with advanced electronic data to be able to identify these suspect packages and get them offline. I think that is going to make a huge difference, not just because it is going to stop drugs from coming into our country but because, by reducing the supply, you are going to see the costs go up on the street, which has been one of our great challenges.

That is not the ultimate answer. The answer is prevention and education, reducing the demand for these drugs, better treatment and longer term recovery options—all of those things we talked about in terms of taking care of those moms and babies. But we also have to do everything we can to reduce the supply of these drugs, and that legislation that the President just signed is going to help.

We are also going to be helped by a new law that the President just signed last month which says that with regard to residential treatment programs, they are no longer going to be capped by an arbitrary limit of 16 beds. This is a vestige of the 1960s and 1970s, when we wanted to deinstitutionalize these people, and we said: You can't get reimbursement from Medicaid unless you have less than 16 beds for mental health and substance abuse treatment.

Then the opioid crisis hits us, and suddenly we find ourselves with no room at the inn. Literally, people are being turned away at treatment centers and, in the period they are waiting

to get in, overdosing and dying. I have heard these stories. I have heard the moms and dads talk about the pain of a child who finally says: I am ready.

In one case, a dad takes his daughter to a treatment center. This was in a tele-townhall meeting I had. We have them every month, and I hear these stories. These are people who aren't calling to tell these stories, but they end up telling it because we are talking about this issue. In this case, the dad's heart was heavy. He said: We took her. She was ready. There was no room. They couldn't accept her in the treatment center. So we took her back home.

In the 4 weeks that she was waiting to get a slot in the treatment center, what happened? She succumbed, once again, to shooting up—in her case, heroin—and an overdose in her own bedroom.

So this arbitrary limit doesn't make any sense. If the treatment center is doing a good job, don't limit it to 16 beds. If it is not doing a good job, by the way, it shouldn't be getting any reimbursement. But if it is doing a good job and successfully helping people to get beyond their addiction and into recovery, we shouldn't be limiting it. This legislation does that. It actually takes off the cap. It has a 5-year life because it has a cost to it, and I am convinced it is going to work well. Five years from now, we will extend that even further, but this is something some of us have been working on for many years, and it is now done. So, again, progress is being made incrementally. Some of this legislation we talked about tonight is contributing to that.

We need to ensure that if we implement this, we cannot at this point take our eye off the ball. I think when we look back at this year, 2018—and we are coming to the end of the calendar year now—we will see for the first time in the last dozen years a reduction in overdose deaths. I predict that is going to happen. I say that in part because I spoke to the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

I also say that because back in Ohio I am seeing these programs work. I am seeing us finally beginning to turn the tide, despite the influx of fentanyl. But I would just state tonight, if that is true, and if we begin to see some progress—and I see it on the ground and see it in reports from coroners and medical directors around Ohio—if that happens, let's not take our eye off the ball. We succeeded. Let's move on.

We did that back in the 1990s with regard to cocaine; we had solved the problem. We never solved the problem. It is like the tide. It keeps coming in. We have to be vigilant. We have to maintain the support we have provided here in the U.S. Congress to push back against this terrible addiction, this disease, and we have to ensure that we are not just pushing down on one drug and having another drug pop up.

As we make progress on fentanyl or make progress on heroin, let's also be

mindful of the disastrous impact of cocaine, crystal meth, and drugs we haven't even heard of yet—the new synthetic drugs that are coming our way.

I believe that Federal programs like CARA and Cures are making a difference. We are working with our States that are passing their own legislation and helping in many ways. Our local communities are jumping in and figuring out innovative and creative ways of taking that Federal dollar and leveraging it with private sector money and with State and local money.

I believe we are going to make progress with the STOP Act in reducing the supply and therefore raising the cost of the drug on the streets. I think what you have seen in Dayton, OH, which was reported in the New York Times, can continue—and not just in Dayton, but in Toledo, Columbus, Akron, Cincinnati, and St. Clairsville—all over our State and all over our country.

We have a role to play here, and that is to continue to be better partners, as we have been over the last 2½ years here in Congress—better partners with our States and with our local communities and with our families because, ultimately, this is an issue of the heart, isn't it? This is about the future.

We have some pages with us tonight. They are young people who are 16, 17 years old who come to this town because they are selected as bright, young people. They are listening—at least they are acting as though they are listening tonight; thank you. It is about you. It is about what kind of future you are going to have and what kind of future we are going to have, having safe and healthy communities.

Thank you.

I yield back my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding rule XXII, all postcloture time on the Farr nomination expire at 12 noon on Thursday, November 29; that if the nomination is confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action; further, that notwithstanding rule XXII, the cloture vote on the Kraninger nomination occur at 1:45 p.m., Thursday, November 29; and that if cloture is invoked on the Kobes or the Kraninger nomination, all postcloture time be yielded back and the Senate vote on the nominations at a time to be determined by the majority leader, in consultation with the Democratic leader, but not before December 4.

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

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

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

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. 18-43, concerning the Air Force's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Qatar for defense articles and services estimated to cost \$215 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,

CHARLES W. HOOPER,
Lieutenant General, USA, Director.

Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 18-43

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: Qatar.

(ii) Total Estimated Value:

Major Defense Equipment * \$95 million.

Other \$120 million.

Total \$215 million.

(iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for Purchase: The Government of Qatar has requested to buy defense articles and services from the U.S. Government in support of a Direct Commercial Sales of the National Advanced Surface to Air Missile System (NASAMS).

Major Defense Equipment (MDE): Forty (40) AIM-120C-7 Advanced Medium Range Air-to-Air Missiles (AMRAAM).

One (1) spare AIM-120C-7 AMRAAM Guidance Section.

Non-MDE: Also included are one (1) spare AIM-120C-7 control section, eight (8) AMRAAM Captive Air Training Missile (CATM-120C), missile containers, classified software for the AN/MPQ-64F1 Sentinel Radar, spare and repair parts, cryptographic and communication security devices, precision navigation equipment, other software, site surveys, weapons system equipment and computer software support, publications and technical documentation, common munitions and test equipment, repair and return services and equipment, personnel training and training equipment, integration support and test equipment, and U.S. Government and contractor, engineering, technical and logistics support services, and other related elements of logistical and program support.

(iv) Military Department: Air Force (QA-D-YAE); Army (QA-B-UAS).

(v) Prior Related Cases, if any: N/A.

(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: November 27, 2018.

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

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

Qatar—Advanced Medium Range Air-to-Air Missiles (AMRAAM) and Related Equipment and Support for NASAMS

The Government of Qatar has requested to buy defense articles and services from the U.S. Government in support of a Direct Commercial Sale of the National Advanced Surface to Air Missile System (NASAMS). The items Qatar requests include the following: forty (40) AIM 120C-7 AMRAAM missiles, one (1) spare AIM 120C-7 AMRAAM guidance section, one (1) spare AIM-120C-7 control section, eight (8) AMRAAM Captive Air Training Missile (CATM-120C), missile containers, classified software for the AN/MPQ-64F1 Sentinel Radar, spare and repair parts, cryptographic and communication security devices, precision navigation equipment, other software, site surveys, weapons system equipment and computer software support, publications and technical documentation, common munitions and test equipment, repair and return services and equipment, personnel training and training equipment, integration support and test equipment, and U.S. Government and contractor, engineering, technical and logistics support services, and other related elements of logistical and program support. The estimated cost is \$215 million.

This proposed sale supports the foreign policy and national security objectives of the United States by helping improve the security of a key partner which has been, and continues to be, a significant host and member of coalition forces in the Middle East.

This proposed sale improves Qatar's defense capability to deter regional threats and strengthen its homeland defense. The NASAMS capability would provide a full range of protection from imminent hostile cruise missile, unmanned aerial vehicle, rotary wing, and fixed wing threats. Qatar will have no difficulty in absorbing this equipment.

The proposed sale will not alter the basic military balance in the region.

The principal contractor and integrator will be Raytheon Missiles Systems of Tucson, Arizona. There are no known offset agreements proposed in connection with this potential sale.

Implementation of this proposed sale will not require the assignment of additional U.S.

Government and contractor representatives to Qatar.

There will be no adverse impact on U.S. defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 18-43

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

Annex Item No. vii

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology:

1. AIM-120C Advance Medium Range Air-to-Air Missile (AMRAAM) is a radar guided missile featuring digital technology and micro-miniature solid-state electronics. AMRAAM capabilities include look-down/shoot-down, multiple launches against multiple targets, resistance to electronic counter measures, and interception of high flying and low flying and maneuvering targets. AIM-120 Captive Air Training Missiles are non-functioning, inert missile rounds used for armament load training, which also simulate the correct weight and balance of live missiles during captive carry on training sorties. Although designed as an air-to-air missile, the AMRAAM can also be employed in a surface-launch mode when integrated on systems such as National Advanced Surface-to-Air System (NASAMS). The AIM-120C-7, as employed on NASAMS, protects national assets from imminent hostile air threats. The AMRAAM All Up Round is classified CONFIDENTIAL, major components and subsystems range from UNCLASSIFIED to CONFIDENTIAL, and technology data and other documentation are classified up to SECRET.

2. The classified radar operational software utilized with the exportable AN/MPQ-4F1 Sentinel Radar contains specific Electronic Counter-Counter Measures (ECCM) capability, but it does not contain Non-Cooperative Target Recognition (NCTR)/classification capabilities. This software will be released for export only in an executable format with no source code. Without source code, the ability of a foreign company or government to analyze the operating software, its processes, and its algorithms is slowed. The highest classification of this software is SECRET.

3. If a technologically advanced adversary were to obtain knowledge of the specific hardware and software elements, the information could be used to develop countermeasures that might reduce weapon system effectiveness or be used in the development of a system with similar or advanced capabilities.

4. A determination has been made that Qatar can provide substantially the same degree of protection of this technology as the U.S. Government. This proposed sale furthers the U.S. foreign policy and national security objectives outlined in the Policy Justification.

Moreover, the benefits to be derived from this sale, as outlined in the Policy Justification, outweigh the potential damage that could result if the sensitive technology were revealed to unauthorized persons.

5. All defense articles and services listed in this transmittal are authorized for release and export to the Government of Qatar.

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. 18-47, concerning the U.S. Army's proposed

Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Egypt for defense articles and services estimated to cost \$201 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. 18-47

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: The Government of Egypt.

(ii) Total Estimated Value:

Major Defense Equipment * \$156 million.

Other \$45 million.

Total \$201 million.

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

Major Defense Equipment (MDE):

Forty-six thousand (46,000) 120MM Target Practice—Tracer (M831A1) and 120MM Target Practice, Cone Stabilized, Discarding Sabot—(M865) Rounds.

Ten thousand (10,000) 120MM 4th-Generation Kinetic Energy-Tungsten (KE-W) A4 Armor-Piercing Fin-Stabilized Discarding Sabot with Tracer (APFSDS-T) Rounds.

Non-MDE: Also included are four thousand five hundred (4,500) 120MM Insensitive Munitions High Explosive with Tracer (IM HE-T) tank rounds, field implementation, testing inspections, spares and repair parts, support and test equipment, field support publications and technical data, U.S. government and contractor engineering and logistics support services, personnel training and training equipment, quality assurance team support services, preparation of ammunition for shipment, ammunition delivery, component improvement program and repair, other associated equipment and support, and other related elements of logistical and program support.

(iv) Military Department: Army (EG-B-VHH, EG-B-NGB, EG-B-VGS).

(v) Prior Related Cases, if any: EG-B-VAX, EG-B-NFP, EG-B-NFX, EG-B-UWB.

(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: None.

(viii) Date Report Delivered to Congress: November 27, 2018.

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

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

Egypt—120MM Tank Rounds

This notification supersedes and replaces Transmittal No. 18-05 delivered to Congress on September 17, 2018. Although the descriptions and quantities of all defense articles and services are unchanged, the dollar values were under-reported and are updated with this new transmittal.

The Government of Egypt has requested to buy forty-six thousand (46,000) 120MM Target Practice—Tracer (M831A1) and 120MM Target Practice, Cone Stabilized, Discarding Sabot—(M865) rounds and ten thousand (10,000) 120MM 4th-Generation Kinetic Energy-Tungsten (KE-W) A4 Armor-Piercing Fin-Stabilized Discarding Sabot with Tracer (APFSDS-T) rounds. Also included are four thousand five hundred (4,500) 120MM Insensitive Munitions High Explosive with Tracer (IM HE-T) tank rounds, field implementation, testing inspections, spares and repair parts, support and test equipment, field support publications and technical data, U.S.

government and contractor engineering and logistics support services, personnel training and training equipment, quality assurance team support services, preparation of ammunition for shipment, ammunition delivery, component improvement program and repair, other associated equipment and support, and other related elements of logistical and program support. The estimated cost is \$201 million.

This proposed sale will contribute to the foreign policy and national security of the United States by helping to improve the security of a friendly country that continues to be an important strategic partner in the Middle East.

The proposed sale will improve Egypt's capability to meet current and future threats and provide greater security for its critical infrastructure. Egypt will use the 120MM IM HE-T cartridges to maintain a strategic munitions inventory for its M1 A1 tank fleet and in support of operations against militants affiliated with the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria in the Sinai. They will use the target practice rounds to train M1A1 crews in proper crew procedures in a training environment using munitions that cost a fraction of tactical rounds and have nearly zero explosive or penetrating capability. Egypt has been producing this type of ammunition under an existing coproduction agreement for approximately 15 years. Egypt intends to use the APFSDS-T rounds to replace older model 120MM KE-W, KE-W A1, and KE-W A2 ammunition to maintain a strategic munitions inventory for its M1A1 tank fleet. Egypt will have no difficulty absorbing these munitions into its armed forces.

The proposed sale of the munition and support will not alter the basic military balance in the region.

The prime contractor involved in this program is General Dynamics Ordnance and Tactical Systems, St. Petersburg, FL. There are no known offset agreements proposed in connection with this potential sale.

Implementation of this proposed sale will involve multiple trips to Egypt involving up to six (6) U.S. Government and contractor representatives over a period of up to 5 years.

There will be no adverse impact on U.S. defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale.

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. 17-43, concerning the U.S. Army's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Egypt for defense articles and services estimated to cost \$1.0 billion. 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. 17-43

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 Egypt.

(ii) Total Estimated Value:

Major Defense Equipment* \$751 billion.

Other \$249 billion.

Total \$1,000 billion.

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

Major Defense Equipment (MDE):

Ten (10) AH-64E Apache Attack Helicopters.

Twenty-four (24) T700-GE-701D Engines, with containers (20 installed and 4 spares).

Twelve (12) Modernized Target Acquisition and Designation Sights (MTADS)/Modernized Pilot Night Vision Sensors (PNVS) (10 installed and 2 spares).

Twenty-four (24) Honeywell Embedded Global Positioning System with Inertial Navigation System (INS) (EGI) (20 installed, 4 spares).

Twenty-four (24) M299 Hellfire Launchers (20 installed, 4 spares).

One hundred thirty-five (135) Hellfire Missiles, AGM-114R.

Five (5) M36E9 Captive Air Training Missiles (CATM).

Twelve (12) AAR-57 (V) Common Missile Warning Systems (CMWS), (10 installed, 2 spares).

Non-MDE: Also included are M230 30mm Automatic Guns, AVR-2B Laser Detecting Sets, AN/ARC 201E Single Channel Ground and Airborne Radio Systems (SINCGARS), AN/APR-39D Radar Warning Receivers, AN/AVS-6 Night Vision Goggles, and AN/ASN Doppler Radar Systems. Also included in the request are avionic-related software support for the Aviation Mission Planning Systems (AMPS), survivability equipment, communication and electronic equipment, communication/electronics technical assistance, tools and test equipment, integration and checkout, spares and repair parts, training and training equipment, ferry and fuel support, publications and technical documents, U.S. Government and contractor technical assistance, quality assurance, construction services, and other related elements of logistics and program support.

(iv) Military Department: Army (EG-B-VGA).

(v) Prior Related Cases, if any: EG-B-ULB (22 Aug 90); EG-B-VBT (5 Oct 09).

(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: November 27, 2018.

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

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

Egypt—AH-64E Apache Attack Helicopters and Related Equipment and Support

The Government of Egypt has requested to buy ten (10) AH-64E Apache Attack Helicopters, twenty-four (24) 1700-GE-701D Engines, with containers, twelve (12) Modernized Target Acquisition Designation Sights/Pilot Night Vision Sensors (M-TADS/PNVs), twenty-four (24) Honeywell Embedded Global Positioning Systems (GPS) with Inertial Navigation System (INS) (EGI) (20 installed, 4 spares), twenty-four (24) M299 HELLFIRE Launchers, one hundred thirty-five (135) HELLFIRE Missiles, five (5) M36E9 Captive Air Training Missile (CATM) AGM-114R, and twelve (12) AAR-57 (V) Common Missile Warning Systems (CMWS). Also included are M230 30mm Automatic Guns, AVR-2 B Laser Detecting Sets, AN/ARC 201E Single Channel Ground and Airborne Radio Systems (SINCGARS), AN/APR-39D Radar Warning Receivers, AN/AVS-6 Night Vision Goggles, AN/ASN Doppler Radar Systems. Also included in the request are avionic-related software support for the Aviation Mission

Planning Systems (AMPS), survivability equipment, communication and electronic equipment, communication/electronics technical assistance, tools and test equipment, integration and checkout, spares and repair parts, training and training equipment, ferry and fuel support, publications and technical documents, U.S. Government and contractor technical assistance, quality assurance, construction services, and other related elements of logistics and program support. The estimated cost is \$1.0 billion.

The proposed sale will contribute to the foreign policy and national security of the United States by helping to improve the security of a strategic partner in the Middle East region.

Egypt intends to expand its existing fleet of multi-mission heavy attack helicopters to address U.S.-Egyptian interest in countering terrorist activities emanating from the Sinai Peninsula that undermine regional stability. This sale will contribute to Egypt's military goal to update its capability while further enhancing greater interoperability between Egypt, the U.S., and other allies. Egypt will have no difficulty absorbing these additional helicopters into its inventory.

The proposed sale of this equipment and support will not alter the basic military balance in the region.

The principal contractors involved in this program are the Boeing Company, Meza, AZ, Lockheed Martin Corporation, Orlando, FL, General Electric Company, Cincinnati, OH, Lockheed Martin Mission Systems and Sensors, Owego, NY, and Raytheon Corporation, Tucson, AZ. There are no known offset agreements proposed in connection with this potential sale.

Implementation of this proposed sale will require twenty five (25) U.S. Government or contractor representatives to travel to the Government of Egypt for a period of 12 weeks for equipment checkout and training.

There will be no adverse impact on U.S. defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 17-43

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

Annex Item No. vii

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology:

1. The AH-64E Apache Attack Helicopter is an armed attack rotary wing aircraft in the Army inventory. The airframe itself does not contain sensitive technology; however, the aircraft contains communication and target identification equipment, navigational equipment, aircraft survivability equipment, displays and sensors. The highest level of classified material required to be released for training, operation and maintenance is UNCLASSIFIED; however, the highest level which could be revealed through reverse engineering or testing items is SECRET. Components considered to contain sensitive technology in the proposed case are as follows:

a. AN/AVR-2B, Laser Detecting Set—The AN/AVR-2B is a passive laser warning system that enhances crew situational awareness by detecting, identifying and characterizing all three types of laser threats 360 degrees in azimuth and +/-45 degrees in elevation relative to the aircraft. The sensor units—each measuring approximately 8 inches long by 7 inches wide by 3 inches high, and weighing approximately 2.4 pounds—are mounted externally to provide aircraft protection in four quadrants. The externally mounted sensor units detect laser illumination over the entire aircraft. In operation, the laser warning system identifies the threat's direction and prioritizes in order of lethality. The hardware is classified CONFIDENTIAL; releasable technical manuals

for operation and maintenance are classified SECRET.

b. AN/AAR-57, Common Missile Warning System (CMWS) CMWS provides superior detection of infrared missile threats for rotary-wing, transport and tactical aircraft. It is the detection component of a suite of countermeasures to increase the survivability of current generation of combat, airlift and special operations aircraft against the threat posed by infrared guided missiles. Each platform includes: Electro-optical Missile Sensors, and Electronic Control Unit (ECU) Sequencer, and the Improved Countermeasures Dispenser (ICMD). The ECU hardware is classified CONFIDENTIAL; releasable technical manuals for operation and maintenance are classified SECRET.

c. Honeywell Embedded Global Positioning Systems (GPS) with Inertial Navigation System (INS) (EGI). GPS/INS utilizes GPS satellite signals to correct or calibrate a solution from an INS. Inertial navigation systems usually can provide an accurate solution only for short duration. The INS accelerometers produce an unknown bias signal that appears as a genuine specific force. The EGI is UNCLASSIFIED.

d. Target Acquisition and Designation Sights, Pilot Night Vision System (TADS/PNVs). The TADS/PNVs is the combined sensor and targeting unit fitted to the Boeing AH-64 Apache helicopter. Both systems are independent, but housed together. TADS contain stabilized electro-optical sensors, a laser rangefinder and laser target designator. The TADS assembly can rotate +/-120 degrees in azimuth, +30/-80 degrees in elevation and can move independently of the PNVs. TADS contains a tomographic camera and monochrome daylight television camera. PNVs is a mounted above the TADS, and contains an infrared camera slaved to the head movements of the pilot. PNVs can rotate +/-90 degrees in azimuth and +20/-45 degrees in elevation; with a high rate of movement (120 degrees per second) so as to match the head movement of the pilot. Hardware for the TADS/PNVs is UNCLASSIFIED. The technical manuals for authorized maintenance levels are UNCLASSIFIED. Reverse engineering is not a major concern.

e. The AGM-114R HELLFIRE Missile is precision strike, Semi-Active Laser (SAL) guided missile and is the principle air to ground weapon for the AH-64 Apache. The SAL HELLFIRE missile is guided by laser energy reflected off the target. It has three warhead variants: a dual warhead, shape-charge, high explosive anti-tank capability for armored targets, a blast fragmentation warhead for urban patrol boat and other soft targets and metal augmented charge warhead for urban structures. AGM-114R allows selection of warhead effects corresponding to a specific target type. Hardware for the AGM-114R is UNCLASSIFIED. The technical manuals for authorized maintenance levels are UNCLASSIFIED.

f. The AN/APR-39D(V)2 Radar Warning Receiver is currently in development with a projected IOC date of 4Q2017, and will replace the AN/APR-39A(V)1/4 Radar Warning Receiver (RWR) that has been in production since the mid-1970's. The AN/APR-39D(V)2 is an Engineering Change Proposal (ECP) that fixes documented deficiencies against legacy AN/APR-39 systems by merging the AN/APR-39C(V)2 baseline with Northrop Grumman's Digital Receiver Excited (DRE) technology and combines a 4-Channel Crystal Video Receiver (CV R) and a 2 channel Digital Receiver (DR). The result is the following capability improvements: increased Probability of Detection (Sensitivity); Corrects ID/Ambiguity Resolution; Improves DOA Accuracy versus Circular Polarized (CP) Emitters; and improves DOA Indications

versus CID Band Emitters. System will be classified at the SECRET level.

g. The M36E9 Captive Air Training Missile (CATM) is a HELLFIRE training missile (Non-NATO) that consists of a functional guidance section coupled to an inert missile bus. The missile has an operational semi-active laser seeker that can search for and lock-on to laser designated targets for pilot training, but it does not have a warhead or propulsion section and cannot be launched.

2. A determination has been made that Egypt can provide substantially the same degree of protection of this technology as the U.S. Government. This proposed sale is necessary in furtherance of U.S. foreign policy and national security objectives outlined in the Policy Justification. Moreover, the benefits to be derived from this sale, as outlined in the Policy Justification, outweigh the potential damage that could result if the sensitive technology were revealed to unauthorized persons.

3. All defense articles and services listed on this transmittal are authorized for release and export to the Government of Egypt.

VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I was necessarily absent for the November 15, 2018, vote on the motion to table the motion to discharge S.J. Res. 65, a joint resolution relating to the disapproval of the proposed export to the Government of the Kingdom of Bahrain of certain defense articles and services. I would have voted yea on the motion to table.

WORLD DAY OF REMEMBRANCE FOR ROAD TRAFFIC VICTIMS

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, the World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims commemorates the millions of people killed and injured on the world's roads. It is also a day to thank emergency services for their role in saving lives; to reflect on the impact of road deaths on families and communities; and to draw attention to the need for improved legislation, awareness, infrastructure, and technology to save more families from the tragedy of losing a loved one.

Since the United Nations recognized the World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims, its observance has spread to a growing number of countries on every continent. The day has become an important advocacy tool in global efforts to reduce road casualties, and the theme of this year's World Day of Remembrance is "Roads have Stories." Additionally, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 3.6 calls on governments and their stakeholders, including NGOs and private citizens, to address the personal, medical, and financial burdens associated with road deaths and injuries. More than 1 million people die from road crashes every year and tens of millions are seriously injured. Road traffic crashes are the number one killer of young people aged 15–29 and the eighth leading cause of death among all people worldwide.

Rochelle Sobel, president of the Association for Safe International Road

Travel, said, "The World Day of Remembrance is an important opportunity to stand together with the global community to commemorate road victims and call for an end to the crisis on our roads. No one should have to go through the needless, preventable loss of a child, a brother, a mother, a friend, killed in a road traffic crash. This year's theme reminds us that roads and streets are more than connections from point A to point B. They tell stories, some of them tragic, which are worth remembering. We owe it to our loved ones to do what we can to educate our children, drive responsibly and advocate with our governments to implement and enforce policies that will protect road users and prevent more families from suffering the pain of losing a loved one on the road."

We all need to do our part to take action to prevent these avoidable tragedies and to save lives.

TRIBUTE TO WILLIAM GLANVILLE

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize William Glanville of Milford, PA. Mr. Glanville is a U.S. Navy veteran who served in World War II. I am pleased that he will soon be honored by his fellow veterans from Pike County and the surrounding region for his lifetime of service, dedication to his nation, and commitment to his fellow veterans as a longtime member of the American Legion.

Born and raised in Carbondale, PA, Mr. Glanville enlisted in the U.S. Navy in 1943 and eventually volunteered to join the then newly formed Underwater Demolition Teams, UDTs—the forerunners of the U.S. Navy SEALs. Known as frogmen, UDTs were an elite force established during World War II to fulfill a specialized mission, including to conduct beach reconnaissance, submarine operations, and lay and clear underwater mines. UDTs would participate in numerous conflicts in the decades following World War II.

Mr. Glanville was first assigned to a UDT deployed to the European Theater, where he worked with his fellow frogmen to clear the beaches of Normandy prior to D-Day, undoubtedly one of the most important assaults conducted by the Allied Forces during the war. After this operation, Mr. Glanville was assigned to the Pacific Theater where he participated in missions at Guadalcanal, Iwo Jima, Saipan, and Borneo. After the Japanese surrender on August 15, 1945, Mr. Glanville's UDT unit completed the underwater survey of the USS *Missouri* in preparation for the surrender ceremonies that took place on September 2, 1945. Through their heroic action during World War II, men like Mr. Glanville played a critical role in the Allied victory and laid the foundation for today's modern naval special warfare units.

Following his retirement from the Navy in 1955, Mr. Glanville returned home to Carbondale but worked in New

Jersey as a construction equipment operating engineer until his retirement. He then moved to Pike County, PA and became actively involved with the Marsh Kellogg American Legion Post 139 in Milford. As a member of Post 139, Mr. Glanville held numerous leadership roles, including executive board member, judge advocate, adjutant, second vice commander, first vice commander, and twice as commander. In 2016, he was named commander emeritus for his enduring service to the post and his community.

William Glanville's life is distinguished by his dedication to service and his possession of exemplary character traits such as fidelity, honor, and humility. He is a man who, in his youth, chose a path that took him to among the most dangerous parts of the globe in the defense of freedom. He participated in some of our Nation's most important military operations and did so knowing that he might, like so many of his brothers and sisters did over the course of the war, pay the ultimate sacrifice for his country. I am pleased to honor his accomplishments as his fellow veterans recognize him for a lifetime of dedicated service to his nation and his community.

TRIBUTE TO ALEXANDER HUG

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, I wish to recognize Alexander Hug, an exceptional international civil servant who has played a crucial role in ensuring that the world knows the truth about Russia's aggression against Ukraine. This Kremlin-directed war, now entering its 5th year, is responsible for more than 10,300 fatalities and over 24,000 injuries, including as many as 9,000 civilians. It has affected 4.4 million in eastern Ukraine and displaced some 1.8 million people.

Mr. Hug, a Swiss national, completed his tour of duty as Principal Deputy Chief Monitor of the OSCE's Special Monitoring Mission in Ukraine on October 31. He had served in this position since 2014 and oversaw the mission as it grew from approximately 100 monitors to more than 700.

This unarmed civilian mission provides clear, unbiased official reporting from the war zone on ceasefire violations and the human costs of the conflict. It does this despite continuous threats and deliberate attempts to undermine and sabotage its work. The mission's reporting is a crucial counterpoint to the barrage of Kremlin propaganda that seeks to obfuscate the true nature and scale of Russia's role as a direct participant and the aggressor in the war.

The mission has not only kept the world informed about the true nature of the war in eastern Ukraine; under Hug's leadership, it has also helped mitigate the humanitarian catastrophe that the war has caused. In particular, the negotiation of localized ceasefires has allowed for the delivery of humanitarian aid and repairs to be made to critical infrastructure.

Mr. Hug has also been a compelling advocate for basic steps toward peace, such as the withdrawal of heavy weapons and the granting of unfettered access to the monitoring mission across the entirety of Ukraine's sovereign territory.

Mr. Hug's candor and clarity were on full display when he briefed a congressional audience at a Helsinki Commission briefing on November 30, 2017. He movingly paid witness to the human costs of the conflict and left no doubt about the sources behind the flagrant and daily ceasefire violations that continue to fuel the fighting.

Mr. Hug's sterling reputation as a courageous, tough, and principled diplomat is well-earned. He has personally faced significant physical risk in service of the mission's mandate, including direct threats against his convoy by Russia-led forces and being caught in the crossfire between combatants. In July 2014, undeterred by an uncertain security situation, Mr. Hug engaged personally and to great effect at the crash site of Malaysia Airlines Flight 17 in eastern Ukraine.

The dangers faced by Mr. Hug and the monitors he led were made all too clear on April 23, 2017. On that tragic day, Joseph Stone, an American citizen, was killed when his armored vehicle hit a landmine in territory controlled by Russia-led forces.

Alexander Hug's leadership in this challenging position, which kept him away from his family far longer than anticipated, has been exemplary. As chairman of the U.S. Helsinki Commission, I thank him for his contribution to this crucial mission and for all those who have served to advance its work, including Joseph Stone. Their selfless dedication continues to make an inestimable contribution to the cause of peace and security in the world.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

REMEMBERING BILL COORS

• Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, today, I want to remember Bill Coors, who passed away on October 13, 2018, at the age of 102 years old. I want to recognize Bill's dedication to the State of Colorado and the Coors Brewing Company, which he helped build.

Bill was born on August 11, 1916, and started his work at Coors after finishing a graduate degree at Princeton University; by 1959, he had become chairman of the company. During his tenure, he was known for innovation and creativity. As if pioneering the aluminum can weren't enough, Bill then strengthened similar recycling efforts through buyback programs for returned cans.

"Barley is to beer as grapes are to wine." These are words that Bill uttered often and emphasized his understanding that only the best ingredients can make the best beer. He was committed to relationships with barley

growers in the San Luis Valley of Colorado, some of whom have been growing for Coors since 1949. For Bill's 100th birthday in 2016, barley growers honored his commitment to them by naming a barley strain after him, known as the Bill Coors 100.

Bill believed in family values, and his employees were a part of his family. He placed great emphasis on working together, saying, "We don't believe in a 'you' and a 'we'. We believe in 'us'." With this commitment to driving progress as a whole, Bill was able to transform Coors from a once regional brewery to one of the most recognized names in beer across the country.

The values and morals that Bill instilled in the Coors Brewing Company are the same that we hold dear in Colorado. Bill will be remembered for his dedication to Coors and for the work he did to advance the prosperity of our great State.●

TRIBUTE TO HARRY HAFFORD

• Mr. KING. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize Mr. Harry Hafford of Masardis, ME, as he retires his gavel as chair at the Northern Maine Veterans Cemetery. Harry is an extraordinary man, a passionate community leader, an honorable veteran, and a friend to me and my staff. Harry is special in so many ways and has quietly led countless efforts to improve the lives of others. Aroostook County and the entire State of Maine is a better place because of folks like Harry Hafford.

Harry returned to his home town of Masardis, ME, to spend his retirement years quietly after a long career at General Motors, where he also served as a strong and steadfast union steward. This next chapter of Harry's life seemed ideal for some much deserved rest and relaxation, but that isn't who Harry is; instead he became an active member of his community, continuing to serve our State and its people. Harry went back to work serving others. Harry shared his lifelong love of the beautiful natural resources in Maine by advocating for more access to waterways and working with State and local officials to provide additional boat landings in Ashland, Masardis, and Oxbow in northern Aroostook County, including one that is named for him, so that the public would have more access to the beautiful Aroostook River and its native brook trout fisheries. He was a loyal member of the Ashland Rotary Club and earned a Paul Harris Fellow for his service above self. He is an active member of the Caribou American Legion, a moderator for town meetings, a lifetime member of AMVets, Ashland and Presque Isle Fish and Game Clubs, and Sportsman's Alliance of Maine.

Harry's honorable service in the U.S. Army is something I am very appreciative of, but in addition, what is truly inspirational is the dedication Harry has shown to veterans for all of his adult life, especially in retirement.

He was instrumental in creating and sustaining a veteran's surplus clothing organization to ensure that the needs of his fellow veterans were met. Perhaps his most notable and impressive work was as a founding member of the Northern Maine Veterans Cemetery Corporation, which developed the Maine Veterans Cemetery-Caribou. I was proud to be Governor of Maine when this effort began and was pleased to sign the document creating the committee to determine the cemetery's viability. Had I known Harry then as well as I do now, I could have just looked for his name on the roster of volunteers and been immediately assured of 100 percent success. Harry has chaired that committee since its inception in 2003 and has decided to retire his gavel at the end of 2018.

People like Harry are a rare breed. They give for the right reasons and ask nothing in return. The entire State of Maine has benefited from Harry's hard work for many years, and while we will miss him, we hope that he can finally enjoy retirement the way it should be.●

REMEMBERING ELLEN CAMPBELL

• Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I speak today in memory of a friend and dear Alaskan, Ellen Campbell of Juneau, who passed away on October 16, 2018, at age 96.

Ellen was the mother of McKie Campbell, who served as Republican staff director for the Energy and Natural Resources Committee from 2008–2013. On behalf of my Senate colleagues, I take this opportunity to extend condolences to McKie, his siblings and their spouses, and the many grandchildren, great-grandchildren, nieces, and nephews who held Ellen dear. She was a very special person.

Ellen was a native of Waynesboro, GA. She grew up wanting to be a stewardess. That is what women who wanted to fly aspired to in Ellen's day, but after college, her career took a decidedly different direction. She went to work helping the war effort. That was during World War II when women were needed to backfill positions held by men who went off to war. She was a link trainer operator at the Atlanta Naval Base and then went on to lecture pilots. That led Ellen to wonder whether she might become one herself.

"It seemed absurd to be lecturing about flying and not have a private pilot's license, so I asked my father for my birthday present if he would give me flying lessons," Ellen explained. Shortly after obtaining that license, she applied to serve in the Women's Airforce Service Pilots, the WASP program. The hardest thing about it, Ellen said, was the fear that she would wash out during training. Ellen came darn close but managed to pass the three primary qualification tests.

She served in the WASP program from its inception in 1942 to its disbandment on December 20, 1944. Her

role was that of an engineering test pilot. Stationed in Jackson, MS, she flew many different kinds of aircraft; her favorite was the B-25 bomber.

Ellen was one of 1,074 women who earned their WASP wings. Her service and those of her fellow WASPs was honored with a Congressional Gold Medal authorized by law on July 1, 2009. Ellen traveled to Washington, DC, to receive her medal in March 2010.

When asked how she felt about her time in the WASPs by the Juneau Empire, the first word that came to mind was "service." She went on to offer a favorite quote from Marian Wright Edelman, "Service is the rent we pay for being. It is the very purpose of life, and not something you do in your spare time."

These were words that Ellen lived by, during her service to our Nation and throughout the remainder of her life. Ellen came to Alaska with her husband Charles, who had been recruited to head the Alaska Department of Corrections. He retired from the department in the 1980s. Ellen threw herself into community service. A person of deep faith, Holy Trinity Episcopal Church in Juneau was her anchor.

She ran a weekly Bible study group at Lemon Creek Correctional Center. Inspired by interactions with women who struggled to reenter society after serving their sentences, she founded Haven House, a nonprofit ministry to foster healing and self-sufficiency for women coming out of prison in Southeast Alaska.

McKie told the Juneau Empire, "Without being naive at all, she was convinced that everyone was good and had potential. She always saw the best in people."

Ellen relocated to northern Virginia in 2009, with Charles, who died in 2012. It was there that she passed away, but Ellen's legacy will long be remembered in Juneau, which celebrated her life in a memorial service at Holy Trinity on Tuesday, November 13.

I am honored to pay tribute to Ellen Campbell, a force of nature who helped people find the best in themselves.●

REMEMBERING BARNEY GOTTSTEIN

● Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, today, as the Senate returns from recess, I wanted to speak in loving memory of Barney Gottstein, a patriarch of Alaska's Jewish community, who passed away on October 21 at the age of 91. He was buried in the Anchorage Cemetery on October 22, in accordance with Jewish burial traditions.

I suspect that my colleagues might not be aware that Alaska is home to a thriving Jewish community or that the origins of that community preceded statehood by generations. One might be even more surprised to know that Barney was not the first generation of Gottsteins to occupy a leadership role in pre-Statehood Alaska, but the second generation. The Gottstein family

is up to four generations of leadership, with a fifth—the great-grandchildren—now in place.

The first generation, Barney's father, Jacob B. Gottstein, originally of Des Moines, IA, came to Anchorage in 1915, selling cigars and confections out of the tent city established to construct the Alaska Railroad. Jake, as he was known, then opened a wholesale grocery and dry goods business, known as J.B. Gottstein & Co., which made sales calls by dog sled. You can't get more Alaskan than that. Jake passed away in 1963.

Barney was born in Des Moines in 1925, but soon moved to Anchorage, population 2,500, where he was raised. He enlisted in the Army and served in the Army Air Corps. After the war, Barney went to the University of Washington studying to be an aeronautical engineer. That didn't work out so well. He was told by a counselor that anti-Semitism would likely prevent Barney from getting a job in his chosen field, so he switched to business and economics and came home to work in the family business, but he didn't abandon his love for flying. Barney was a licensed private pilot who loved to fly around Alaska and beyond.

By the time Barney returned home, the family business was growing as fast as the state. The focus had changed from dry goods to wholesale groceries. Barney took it the next step. One of J.B. Gottstein's customers was the Carr Brothers Grocery. The rest is history.

Barney partnered with Larry Carr to grow the retail grocery business and pursue real estate ventures. Carr's Quality Centers sprung up throughout Alaska, along with an associated chain of Eagle markets. By the late 1980s, the Carr-Gottstein group of companies was the largest Alaska-owned business in the State. Barney and Larry sold the grocery side of the business in 1990 but remained in the real estate business. Today, the Carr's name remains on grocery stores in Anchorage, Eagle River, and the Mat-Su Valley.

In 1989, Barney was inducted into the Alaska Business Hall of Fame, and in 1991, he was awarded an honorary doctor of laws degree by the University of Alaska Fairbanks.

Barney's business success in Alaska was deeply respected, but his community engagement even more so. He was chair of the Alaska Board of Education and provided financial assistance that enabled hundreds of Alaska Natives to pursue schooling. He was an inaugural member of the Alaska State Commission on Human Rights as well.

Barney was active in Alaska's political life as well. He was chairman of the Alaska Democratic Party, Alaska's Democratic National Committeeman, and an Alaska delegate to the Democratic National Conventions.

I mentioned that Barney was one of the patriarchs of Alaska's Jewish community. An early supporter of the State of Israel, he was the face of the

American Israel Public Affairs Committee, AIPAC, in Alaska for many years. Today, Barney's son, David, leads the AIPAC group in Alaska and in that capacity is a frequent visitor to my office. He provided financial support to enable young Jewish Alaskans to participate in the "March of the Living," so that they might better understand the legacy of the Holocaust. He visited Israel on many occasions and took on the cause of supporting Ethiopian Jews who had made Aliyah to Israel integrate into society and pursue advanced degrees.

Barney was not only a father figure to the Alaska Jewish community. He was the patriarch of a large family himself. Barney is survived by Rachel, his second wife, of 32 years, who not surprisingly he met on a trip to Israel. Barney was father to seven children. Some of Barney's children have followed in their father's footsteps to achieve positions of great respect and prominence in Alaska. I am proud to count Robert, David, and Jim among my friends. A fourth generation of the Gottstein family, the grandchildren, are just beginning to make their mark, and there are great-grandchildren behind them.

On behalf of my Senate colleagues, I proudly pay my respects to Barney Gottstein and his wonderful family. May his memory be a blessing.●

TRIBUTE TO SKYLER MANSELL

● Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, today I recognize Skyler Mansell, an intern in my Washington, DC, office, for all the hard work he has done on behalf of myself, my staff, and the State of South Dakota.

Skyler is a graduate of the University of North Alabama in Florence, AL. Currently, he is pursuing his master of business administration with a concentration in finance at the University of North Alabama. Skyler is a dedicated and diligent worker who has been devoted to getting the most out of his internship and who has been a true asset to the office.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Skyler for all of the fine work he has done and wish him continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO MATTHEW REEVES

● Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, today I recognize Matthew Reeves, an intern in my Washington, DC, office, for all the hard work he has done on behalf of myself, my staff, and the State of South Dakota.

Matthew is a graduate of the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville, AR. Later this year, he will complete his master of science degree in defense and strategic studies at Missouri State University. Matthew is a dedicated and diligent worker who has been devoted to getting the most out of his internship experience and who has been a true asset to the office.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Matthew for all of the fine work he has done and wish him continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO ENID WONNACOTT

● Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President today, I would like to recognize an extraordinary Vermonter, Enid Wonnacott, on her more than 30 years as executive director of the Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont, NOFA-VT. For three decades, Enid has worked tirelessly to build the organic agriculture movement and develop a sustainable, resilient, and accessible food system in our State of Vermont and across the United States.

During Enid's tenure at NOFA-VT, Vermont has grown from 50 organic farms to more than 700, and many of those farmers, as well as countless consumers and agricultural advocates, have benefitted greatly from technical assistance and training provided by NOFA-VT under Enid's guidance.

Recognizing that those farmers need good market opportunities to be viable businesses, Enid helped foster the growth of farmers' markets, community supported agriculture, and initiatives for institutions to procure locally grown food. She helped develop Vermont's farm-to-school program that provides students with healthy food and connects them to local agriculture through educational programming. I especially appreciate Enid's long-held belief, which I share, that healthy local food should be accessible to all people regardless of income, and I applaud NOFA-VT's efforts to make good food affordable through subsidized farmers' market coupons, CSA shares, and more.

Enid has worked on many Federal and State policies to promote sustainable agriculture. She was instrumental in developing Federal organic standards and was an early advocate for agricultural systems whereby farmers enhance the quality of the soil and environment while they also produce healthy food. Enid has been mentor to many agriculture and food system leaders throughout the State and region and has served on the Vermont Sustainable Agriculture Council. It should come as no surprise to anyone who knows her, Enid received the Vermont Agriculture Hall of Fame Award this year for her many contributions to our State.

Of course, Enid did not do these things alone. First, she has an excellent and committed staff, but perhaps even more important, she has the unwavering support of her husband Harry Frank and their wonderful children, Lila and Eli. Her family is a large part of Enid's success, including the countless hours they spent working alongside her at NOFA events, more than a few of which involved staffing a portable, wood-fired pizza hearth.

I am not only enormously grateful for all of Enid's many contributions

over the years, but I am also proud to count her as a good friend. At a time when there is a growing recognition of the profound impact agriculture and food have on our health and the health of the planet, it is heartening to know that we have people like Enid Wonnacott fighting for a more environmentally sound and fundamentally just food system.●

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 12:16 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, without amendment:

S. 1768. An act to reauthorize and amend the National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program, and for other purposes.

S. 3389. An act to redesignate a facility of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

The message also announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 1567. An act to promote economic partnership and cooperation between the United States and Mexico.

H.R. 4591. An act to impose sanctions with respect to Iranian persons that threaten the peace or stability of Iraq or the Government of Iraq.

H.R. 5273. An act to reduce global fragility and violence by improving the capacity of the United States to reduce and address the causes of violence, violent conflict, and fragility, and for other purposes.

H.R. 6207. An act to support democracy and accountability in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and for other purposes.

H.R. 6622. An act to designate the Federal building located at 2110 First Street in Fort Myers, Florida, as the "George W. Whitehurst Federal Building and United States Courthouse".

H.R. 6793. An act to transfer a bridge over the Wabash River to the States of Illinois and Indiana, and for other purposes.

H.R. 7120. An act to amend the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 to extend through 2023 the authority of the Federal Election Commission to impose civil money penalties on the basis of a schedule of penalties established and published by the Commission.

H.R. 7163. An act to designate the outstation of the Department of Veterans Affairs in North Ogden, Utah, as the Major Brent Taylor Vet Center Outstation.

The message further announced that the House agreed to the amendment of the Senate to the text of the bill (H.R. 390) to provide emergency relief for victims of genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes in Iraq and Syria, for accountability for perpetrators of these crimes, and for other purposes, and that the House agreed to the amendment of the Senate to the title of the aforementioned bill.

The message also announced the House agreed to the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 4254) to amend the National Science Foundation Authorization Act of 2002 to strengthen the aerospace workforce pipeline by the promotion of Robert Noyce Teacher Scholarship Program and National

Aeronautics and Space Administration internship and fellowship opportunities to women, and for other purposes.

The message further announced that the House agreed to the amendment of the Senate to the amendment of the House to the bill (S. 140) to amend the White Mountain Apache Tribe Water Rights Quantification Act of 2010 to clarify the use of amounts in the WMAT Settlement Fund.

The message also announced that the House agreed to the following concurrent resolution, without amendment:

S. Con. Res. 51. Concurrent resolution to correct the enrollment of S. 140.

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

At 12:32 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bills:

H.R. 390. An act to provide relief for victims of genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes who are members of religious and ethnic minority groups in Iraq and Syria, for accountability for perpetrators of these crimes, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4254. An act to amend the National Science Foundation Authorization Act of 2002 to strengthen the aerospace workforce pipeline by the promotion of Robert Noyce Teacher Scholarship Program and National Aeronautics and Space Administration internship and fellowship opportunities to women, and for other purposes.

The enrolled bills were subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 1567. An act to promote economic partnership and cooperation between the United States and Mexico; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

H.R. 4591. An act to impose sanctions with respect to Iranian persons that threaten the peace or stability of Iraq or the Government of Iraq; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

H.R. 5273. An act to reduce global fragility and violence by improving the capacity of the United States to reduce and address the causes of violence, violent conflict, and fragility, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

H.R. 6207. An act to support democracy and accountability in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

H.R. 6622. An act to designate the Federal building located at 2110 First Street in Fort Myers, Florida, as the "George W. Whitehurst Federal Building and United States Courthouse"; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

H.R. 6793. An act to transfer a bridge over the Wabash River to the States of Illinois and Indiana, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

H.R. 7163. An act to designate the outstation of the Department of Veterans Affairs in North Ogden, Utah, as the Major Brent Taylor Vet Center Outstation; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

MEASURES DISCHARGED

The following joint resolution was discharged from the Committee on

Foreign Relations by motion, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1546a, and placed on the calendar:

S.J. Res. 54. Joint resolution to direct the removal of United States Armed Forces from hostilities in the Republic of Yemen that have not been authorized by Congress.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-7177. A communication from the Deputy Secretary of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “De Minimis Exception to the Swap Dealer Definition” (RIN3038-AE68) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 15, 2018; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-7178. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “*Bacillus Amyloliquefaciens* Strain ENV503; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance” (FRL No. 9985-98) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 19, 2018; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-7179. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Pyriproxyfen; Pesticide Tolerances” (FRL No. 9977-14) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 20, 2018; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-7180. A communication from the Administrator of the Specialty Crops Program, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Oranges and Grapefruit Grown in Lower Rio Grande Valley in Texas; Decreased Assessment Rate” ((7 CFR Part 906) (Docket No. AMS-SC-18-0044; SC18-906-1)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 26, 2018; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-7181. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Homeland Defense and Global Security), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled “Preparedness of the Department of Defense to Provide Support to Non-Contiguous States and Territories in Response to Disasters, Threats, and Emergencies”; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-7182. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition and Sustainment), transmitting, pursuant to law, a correspondence relating to the report on the amount of Department of Defense purchases from foreign entities in fiscal year 2018; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-7183. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller), transmitting, pursuant to law, a semiannual report entitled, “Acceptance of Contributions for Defense Programs, Projects, and Activities; Defense Cooperation Account” and a semiannual listing of personal property contributed by coalition partners; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-7184. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to

Yemen that was declared in Executive Order 13611 of May 16, 2012; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-7185. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on the continuation of the national emergency that was originally declared in Executive Order 13712 of November 22, 2015, with respect to Burundi, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 16, 2018; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-7186. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Financial Research, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Office’s 2018 Annual Report to Congress; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-7187. A communication from the Sanctions Regulations Advisor, Office of Foreign Assets Control, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Final Rule Amending the Democratic Republic of the Congo Sanctions Regulations” (31 CFR Part 547) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 19, 2018; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-7188. A communication from the Chief Counsel, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Suspension of Community Eligibility; North Carolina: Charlotte, City of, Mecklenburg, et al.” ((44 CFR Part 64) (Docket No. FEMA-2018-0002)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 26, 2018; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-7189. A communication from the General Counsel of the Federal Housing Finance Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Affordable Housing Program Amendments Final Rule” (RIN2590-AA83) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 26, 2018; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-7190. A communication from the General Counsel, Office of Management and Budget, Executive Office of the President, transmitting, pursuant to law, seven (7) reports relative to vacancies in the Office of Management and Budget, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 20, 2018; to the Committees on the Budget; and Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-7191. A communication from the Administrator and Chief Executive Officer, Bonneville Power Administration, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Administration’s Annual Report for fiscal year 2018; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-7192. A communication from the General Counsel, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Supply Chain Risk Management Reliability Standards” ((RIN1902-AF48) (Docket No. RM17-13-000)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 15, 2018; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-7193. A communication from the Chief of the Branch of Domestic Listing, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Designation of Critical Habitat for Three Plant Species on Hawaii Island” (RIN1018-AZ38) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 16, 2018; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-7194. A communication from the Chief of the Branch of Delisting and Foreign Species, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Reclassifying Tobusch Fishhooks Cactus from Endangered to Threatened and Adopting a New Scientific Name” (RIN1018-BB90) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 16, 2018; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-7195. A communication from the Chief of the Branch of Foreign Species and Delisting, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Removing the Black-Capped Vireo From the Federal List of Endangered and Threatened Plants” (RIN1018-BB79) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 16, 2018; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-7196. A communication from the Chief of the Branch of Delisting and Foreign Species, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Removal of the Lesser Long-nosed Bat from the Federal List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife” (RIN1018-BB91) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 16, 2018; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-7197. A communication from the Conservation Policy Advisor, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “2018-2019 Refuge-Specific Hunting and Sport Fishing Regulations” (RIN1018-BC07) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 16, 2018; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-7198. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Air Plan Approval; Alaska; Fine Particulate Matter Infrastructure Requirements” (FRL No. 9986-49-Region 10) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 19, 2018; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-7199. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Air Plan Approval; Connecticut; Volatile Organic Compound Emissions from Consumer Products and Architectural and Industrial Maintenance Coatings” (FRL No. 9983-32-Region 1) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 19, 2018; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-7200. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Implementation of the 2015 National Ambient Air Quality Standards for Ozone: Nonattainment Area State Implementation Plan Requirements” ((RIN2060-AS82) (FRL No. 9986-53)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 19, 2018; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-7201. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division,

Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “National Emission Standard for Hazardous Air Pollutant Emissions: Petroleum Refinery Sector” ((RIN2060-AT50) (FRL No. 9986-68)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 19, 2018; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-7202. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Maryland; Regional Haze Five-Year Progress Report” (FRL No. 9986-76-Region 3) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 20, 2018; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-7203. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; State of Utah; Logan Nonattainment Area Fine Particulate Matter Sate Implementation Plan for Attainment of 2006 24-Hour Fine Particulate Matter National Ambient Air Quality Standards” (FRL No. 9986-14-Region 8) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 20, 2018; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-7204. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Notice: Adjusted Applicable Dollar Amount for Fee Imposed by Sections 4375 and 4376” (Notice 2018-85) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 14, 2018; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-7205. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Allocation of Costs under the Simplified Methods” (RIN1545-BG07) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 19, 2018; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-7206. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “2019 Cost-of-Living Adjustments to the Internal Revenue Code Tax Tables and Other Items” (Rev. Proc. 2018-57) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 20, 2018; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-7207. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Guidance under Section 132(g) for the Exclusion from Income of Qualified Moving Expense Reimbursements” (Notice 2018-75) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 20, 2018; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-7208. A communication from the Director, Office of Regulations and Reports Clearance, Social Security Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Income-Related Monthly Adjustment Amounts for Medicare Part B and Prescription Drug Coverage Premiums” (RIN0960-AI37) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 20, 2018; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-7209. A communication from the Chief of the Trade and Commercial Regulations Branch, Bureau of Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Technical Corrections to the Vessel Repair Unit Regulations” (CBP Dec. 18-12) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 26, 2018; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-7210. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, the certification of a proposed license amendment for the export of defense articles, including technical data and defense services to Japan to support the development, integration, and support for Assault Amphibious Vehicles Reliability, Availability, Maintenance/Rebuild to Standard (AAV7A1 RAM/RS) vehicles in the amount of \$100,000,000 or more (Transmittal No. DDTC 18-058); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-7211. A communication from the Assistant Legal Adviser for Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to the Case-Zablocki Act, 1 U.S.C. 112b, as amended, the report of the texts and background statements of international agreements, other than treaties (List 2018-0191-2018-0202); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-7212. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on Developmental Disabilities Programs for fiscal years 2013-2014; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-7213. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled “Report to Congress on HHS Activities to Improve Women’s Health As Required by the Affordable Care Act”; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-7214. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Employee Benefits Security Administration, Department of Labor, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Moral Exemptions and Accommodations for Coverage of Certain Preventative Services Under the Affordable Care Act” (RIN1210-AB84) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 15, 2018; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-7215. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Employee Benefits Security Administration, Department of Labor, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Religious Exemptions and Accommodations for Coverage of Certain Preventative Services Under the Affordable Care Act” (RIN1210-AB83) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 15, 2018; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-7216. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Employee Benefits Security Administration, Department of Labor, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Religious Exemptions and Accommodations for Coverage of Certain Preventative Services Under the Affordable Care Act” (RIN0938-AT54) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 15, 2018; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-7217. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Employee Benefits Security Administration, Department of Labor, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Moral Exemptions and Accommodations for Coverage of Certain Preventative Services Under the Affordable Care Act”

(RIN1210-AB84) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 15, 2018; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-7218. A communication from the Deputy Assistant General Counsel for Regulatory Affairs, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Benefits Payable in Terminated Single-Employer Plans; Interest Assumptions for Paying Benefits” (29 CFR Part 4022) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 27, 2018; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-7219. A communication from the Deputy Director, Directorate of Construction, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Cranes and Derricks in Construction; Operator Qualification” (RIN1218-AC96) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 26, 2018; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-7220. A communication from the Secretary of Labor, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department of Labor’s Agency Financial Report for fiscal year 2018; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-7221. A communication from the General Counsel, Office of Management and Budget, Executive Office of the President, transmitting, pursuant to law, seven (7) reports relative to vacancies in the Office of Management and Budget, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 20, 2018; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-7222. A communication from the Secretary of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department of Transportation’s Semiannual Report of the Office of Inspector General for the period from April 1, 2018 through September 30, 2018; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-7223. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller), transmitting, pursuant to law, the Uniform Resource Locator (URL) for the Department of Defense Agency Financial Report for fiscal year 2018; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-7224. A communication from the Board Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Farm Credit Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the 2018 annual report on the Farm Credit System; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-7225. A communication from the Chairman, Farm Credit System Insurance Corporation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Corporation’s annual report for calendar year 2018; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-7226. A communication from the Board Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Farm Credit Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Administration’s Semiannual Report of the Inspector General and the Semiannual Management Report on the Status of Audits for the period from April 1, 2018 through September 30, 2018; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-7227. A communication from the Archivist of the United States, National Archives and Records Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Administration’s Agency Financial Report for fiscal year 2018; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-7228. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant

to law, the Uniform Resource Locator (URL) for the Department's Agency Financial Report for fiscal year 2018; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-7229. A communication from the Director, Congressional Affairs, Federal Election Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's Agency Financial Report for fiscal year 2018; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-7230. A communication from the President and CEO, Inter-American Foundation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Foundation's Annual Management Report for fiscal year 2018; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-7231. A communication from the Acting Chief Financial Officer, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department's Agency Financial Report for fiscal year 2018; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-7232. A communication from the Chairman, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's Agency Financial Report for fiscal year 2018; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-7233. A communication from the Director, Office of Government Ethics, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Annual Financial Report for the Office of Government Ethics for fiscal year 2018; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-7234. A communication from the Chair of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's Semiannual Report of the Inspector General for the period from April 1, 2018 through September 30, 2018; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-7235. A communication from the Acting Commissioner, Social Security Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Agency Financial Report for fiscal year 2018; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-7236. A communication from the Assistant Attorney General for Administration, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Agency Financial Report for fiscal year 2018; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-7237. A communication from the Chair of the Board of Governors, Federal Reserve System, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Inspector General's Semiannual Report for the six-month period from April 1, 2018 through September 30, 2018; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-7238. A communication from the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the cost of response and recovery efforts for FEMA-3403-EM in the Commonwealth of Virginia has exceeded the \$5,000,000 limit for a single emergency declaration; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-7239. A communication from the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the cost of response and recovery efforts for FEMA-3404-EM in the State of Hawaii has exceeded the \$5,000,000 limit for a single emergency declaration; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-7240. A communication from the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the cost of response

and recovery efforts for FEMA-3405-EM in the State of Florida has exceeded the \$5,000,000 limit for a single emergency declaration; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-7241. A communication from the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the cost of response and recovery efforts for FEMA-3404-EM in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands has exceeded the \$5,000,000 limit for a single emergency declaration; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-7242. A communication from the Chairman of the National Credit Union Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the semi-annual report of the Inspector General for the period from April 1, 2018 through September 30, 2018; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-7243. A communication from the Administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Semiannual Report of the Inspector General for the period from April 1, 2018 through September 30, 2018; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-7244. A communication from the Acting Chairman of the National Endowment of the Arts, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Endowment's Performance and Accountability Report for fiscal year 2018; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-7245. A communication from the Chairman of the Securities and Exchange Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Uniform Resource Locator (URL) for the Securities and Exchange Commission's fiscal year 2018 Agency Financial Report; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-7246. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Federal Employees Health Benefits Program: Extension of Eligibility to Certain TRICARE-Eligible Individuals; Effective Date of Enrollment" (RIN3206-AN58) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 16, 2018; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-7247. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Personnel Management in Agencies" (RIN3206-AL98) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 16, 2018; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-7248. A communication from the General Counsel, Office of Management and Budget, Executive Office of the President, transmitting, pursuant to law, seven (7) reports relative to vacancies in the Office of Management and Budget, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 20, 2018; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-7249. A communication from the Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Annual Report to Congress on Investigation, Enforcement, and Implementation of the Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act Requirements"; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-7250. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled

"Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod by Vessels Using Pot Gear in the Central Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska" (RIN0648-XF891) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 15, 2018; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-7251. A communication from the Chief of Staff, Media Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Modernization of Media Regulation Initiative; Revisions to Cable Television Rate Regulations; Implementation of Sessions of the Cable Television Consumer Protection and Competition Act of 1992: Rate Regulation; Adoption of Uniform Accounting System for the Provision of Regulated Cable Service; Cable Pricing Flexibility" (FCC 18-148) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 15, 2018; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-7252. A communication from the Deputy Chief, Mobility Division, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Review of Part 87 of the Commission's Rules Concerning the Aviation Radio Service" ((WT Docket No. 01-289) (FCC 18-155)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 15, 2018; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-7253. A communication from the Chief of Staff, Media Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Form 325 Data Collection; Modernization of Media Regulation Initiative" ((MP Docket No. 17-290 and MP Docket No. 17-105) (FCC 18-136)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 15, 2018; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-7254. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Safety Zone; Upper Mississippi River, Miles 179 to 190, St. Louis, MO" ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2018-0815)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 19, 2018; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-7255. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Safety Zone; Columbia River, Cascade Locks, OR; Final Rule; Termination of Existing Safety Zone" ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2018-0998)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 19, 2018; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-7256. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Safety Zone; Delaware River, Camden, NJ; Fireworks Display" ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2018-0948)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 19, 2018; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-7257. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Safety Zone; Penn's Landing Fireworks, Delaware River, Philadelphia, PA" ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2018-0371)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 19, 2018; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-7258. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Safety Zone; Coast Guard Sector New Orleans Annual and Recurring Safety Zones Update" ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2018-0736)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 19, 2018; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-7259. A communication from the Chief of the Pricing Policy Division, Wireline Competition Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Regulation of Business Data Services for Rate-of-Return Carriers; Business Data Services in an Internet Protocol Environment; Special Access Services for Price Cap Carriers" ((WC Docket Nos. 17-144, 16-143, 05-25) (FCC 18-146)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 19, 2018; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-7260. A communication from the Deputy Chief, International Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "In the Matter of Amendment of Parts 2 and 25 of the Commission's Rules to Facilitate the Use of Earth Stations in Motion Communicating with Geostationary Orbit Spaces in Frequency Band's Allocated to the Fixed Satellite Service" ((IB Docket No. 17-95) (FCC 18-138)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 19, 2018; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-7261. A communication from the Honors Attorney, Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Pipeline Safety; Plastic Pipe Rule" ((RIN2137-AE93)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 26, 2018; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-7262. A communication from the Honors Attorney, Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Hazardous Materials: Response to Petitions from Industry to Modify, Clarify, or Eliminate Regulations" ((RIN2137-AF09)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 26, 2018; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-7263. A communication from the Chief of Staff, Media Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Procedural Revision to the Filing of Open Video System Certification Applications" ((MB Docket No. 17-105) (FCC 18-150)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 26, 2018; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-7264. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Airbus SAS Airplanes" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2018-0297)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 26, 2018; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-7265. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthi-

ness Directives; Airbus SAS Airplanes" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2018-0589)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 26, 2018; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-7266. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Airbus SAS Airplanes" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2018-0637)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 26, 2018; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-7267. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Airbus SAS Airplanes" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2018-0758)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 26, 2018; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-7268. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Airbus SAS Airplanes" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2018-0908)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 26, 2018; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-7269. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Airbus SAS Airplanes" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2018-0957)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 26, 2018; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-7270. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2018-0027)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 26, 2018; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-7271. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2018-0408)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 26, 2018; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-7272. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2018-0510)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 26, 2018; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-7273. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthi-

ness Directives; SOCATA Airplanes" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2018-0326)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 26, 2018; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-7274. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Engine Alliance Turbofan Engines" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2018-0934)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 26, 2018; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-7275. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Honeywell International Inc. Turboprop Engines" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2018-0216)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 26, 2018; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-7276. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier, Inc. Airplanes" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2018-0551)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 26, 2018; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-7277. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier, Inc. Airplanes" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2018-0585)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 26, 2018; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-7278. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; International Aero Engines (IAE) Turbofan Engines" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2018-0404)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 26, 2018; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-7279. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; International Aero Engines (IAE) Turbofan Engines" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2018-0431)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 26, 2018; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-7280. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airspace Designations; Incorporation by Reference Amendments" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2018-0770)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 26, 2018; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-7281. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendment of Class D and E Airspace; and Revocation of Class E Airspace; Juneau, AK"

((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2018-0125)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 26, 2018; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-7282. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Standard Instrument Approach Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments (150)" (RIN2120-AA65) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 26, 2018; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-7283. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Standard Instrument Approach Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments (64)" (RIN2120-AA65) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 26, 2018; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS

The following petitions and memorials were laid before the Senate and were referred or ordered to lie on the table as indicated:

POM-306. A resolution adopted by the Senate of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania urging the United States Congress to pass the language from the Hemp Farming Act of 2018, as contained in the Farm Bill of 2018, removing industrial hemp from the Schedule I Controlled Substance List and legalizing commercial industrial hemp production in the United States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 421

Whereas, A bipartisan effort has taken place at both the Federal and State levels to pass legislation which would allow American farmers to compete with foreign nations in industrial hemp production; and

Whereas, The United States relied upon hemp production from the time period of the Mayflower voyage to the War of 1812 and through every world war; and

Whereas, Hemp production in Pennsylvania has a 260-year history due to the favorable climate and soil; and

Whereas, Industrial hemp plants are cultivated for products derived from the whole plant, including stalk, seeds, flower and roots for products including fiber, food, oil and extracts; and

Whereas, Industrial hemp has thousands of applications and can be refined into a variety of commercial products including paper, textiles, biodegradable plastics, cannabinoids, paint, insulation, biofuel, food and animal feed; and

Whereas, Each year, American companies are forced to import millions of dollars' worth of industrial hemp seed and fiber products annually from China, Canada, Europe and other countries; and

Whereas, Industrial hemp has often been confused with marijuana, as it is a member of the cannabis family; however, it has no psychoactive effect due to a very low level of tetrahydrocannabinol; and

Whereas, Chapter 7 of Title 3 of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes defines industrial hemp as the plant *Cannabis sativa* L. and any part of the plant with less than three-tenths of one percent tetrahydrocannabinol, also known as THC; and

Whereas, Uncertainty about Federal laws inhibits investment in the United States and

Pennsylvania hemp industry by agricultural producers, manufacturers, processors and other businesses; and

Whereas, Section 7606 of the Agricultural Act of 2014, the Farm Bill of 2014 and the Omnibus Appropriations Act of 2016, authorized State industrial hemp agricultural pilot research programs and the activities associated with such programs; and

Whereas, The Department of Agriculture of the Commonwealth, farmers, researchers and industry leaders recognized the potential for opportunities in industrial hemp production and products and in investment in Pennsylvania's industrial hemp industry where this Commonwealth could become a national leader to take advantage of the potential \$1 billion national market for growing, producing, processing and selling industrial hemp and industrial hemp products; and

Whereas, To this end, in 2016, the General Assembly and Governor of the Commonwealth enacted Act 92 of 2016, which established Chapter 7 of Title 3 of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes and authorized an industrial hemp research pilot program to commence the initial research into such potential opportunities; and

Whereas, In the fall of 2018, the Congress of the United States is poised to pass the language from the Hemp Farming Act of 2018, as contained in the 2018 Farm Bill, which removes industrial hemp from the Schedule I Controlled Substance List and legalizes commercial industrial hemp production in the United States; and

Whereas, The Department of Agriculture of the Commonwealth is encouraged to immediately commence a study of this Commonwealth's industrial hemp pilot program and other industrial hemp pilot programs in other states and their regulations to recommend and draft statutory or draft regulatory language to the General Assembly to expedite the entry of this Commonwealth into the commercial industrial hemp market upon passage of the language from the Hemp Farming Act by the Congress of the United States; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Senate of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania urge the Congress of the United States to pass the language from the Hemp Farming Act of 2018, as contained in the Farm Bill of 2018, removing industrial hemp from the Schedule I Controlled Substance List and legalizing commercial industrial hemp production in the United States; and be it further

Resolved, That the Senate of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania urge the Department of Agriculture of the Commonwealth to begin a study of the industrial hemp research pilot programs established under Act 92 of 2016 and similar research pilot programs in other states and their regulations to prepare any recommended draft legislation for submission to the General Assembly and a framework for any draft regulatory provisions that incorporate the following:

(1) The growth and cultivation of industrial hemp produced in compliance with Federal law is an agricultural crop.

(2) The producers of industrial hemp with this Commonwealth have access to United States-supplied seed, germplasm, rooted cuttings and other genetics.

(3) All industrial hemp projects, including genetics, that are produced in the Commonwealth shall be able to be freely shipped across State lines into and out of this Commonwealth.

(4) The Department of Agriculture of the Commonwealth prepares a process for institutions of higher education in this Commonwealth to obtain approval to conduct industrial hemp research that complies with existing law and is eligible for Federal grant funding.

(5) The Department of Agriculture of the Commonwealth prepares educational programs and materials for the education of youth and the public on the growth, cultivation and market potential for industrial hemp; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the Governor, the Secretary of Agriculture of the Commonwealth, the presiding officers of each house of Congress and to each member of Congress from Pennsylvania.

POM-307. A resolution adopted by the Mayor and City Council of the City of Jackson, Alabama memorializing their support for continued and increased exploration and production of the Gulf of Mexico, and urging the United States Congress to keep its commitment under the Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act to share Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) revenues with Gulf producing states and their coastal political subdivisions; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

POM-308. A petition from a citizen of the State of Texas relative to the acceptance of government-produced currency; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Ms. COLLINS, from the Special Committee on Aging:

Special Report entitled "Ensuring Trust: Strengthening State Efforts to Overhaul the Guardianship Process and Protect Older Americans" (Rept. No. 115-392).

By Ms. MURKOWSKI, from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, without amendment:

S. 1149. A bill to amend the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act to repeal a provision limiting the export of timber harvested from land conveyed to the Kake Tribal Corporation under that Act (Rept. No. 115-393).

H.R. 3186. A bill to establish an Every Kid Outdoors program, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 115-394).

By Ms. MURKOWSKI, from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 2560. A bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to establish a program to facilitate the transfer to non-Federal ownership of appropriate reclamation projects or facilities, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 115-395).

By Mr. HOEVEN, from the Committee on Indian Affairs, with amendments:

S. 2599. A bill to provide for the transfer of certain Federal land in the State of Minnesota for the benefit of the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe (Rept. No. 115-396).

By Mr. CORKER, from the Committee on Foreign Relations, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 3247. A bill to improve programs and activities relating to women's entrepreneurship and economic empowerment that are carried out by the United States Agency for International Development, and for other purposes.

S. 3654. A bill to amend the United States International Broadcasting Act of 1994, to avoid the duplication of public diplomacy programs and efforts, to improve the research and evaluation of public diplomacy, and for other purposes.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. CORKER for the Committee on Foreign Relations.

Michael T. Harvey, of Texas, to be an Assistant Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development.

Lucy Tamlyn, of New York, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Central African Republic.

Donald Armin Blome, of Illinois, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Tunisia.

Craig Lewis Cloud, of Florida, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Botswana.

Judith Gail Garber, of Virginia, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Career Minister, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Cyprus.

Dennis B. Hankins, of Minnesota, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Mali.

Simon Henshaw, of Massachusetts, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Guinea.

William H. Moser, of North Carolina, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Michael Peter Pelletier, of Maine, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Madagascar, and to serve concurrently and without additional compensation as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Union of the Comoros.

Robert K. Scott, of Maryland, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Malawi.

Jeffrey Ross Gunter, of California, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Iceland.

Richard Carlton Paschall III, of North Carolina, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of The Gambia.

Eric Williams Stromayer, of Virginia, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Togolese Republic.

Eric George Nelson, of Texas, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Dennis Walter Hearne, of Virginia, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the

United States of America to the Republic of Mozambique.

Patricia Mahoney, of Virginia, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Benin.

John Mark Pommersheim, of Florida, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Tajikistan.

Susan N. Stevenson, of Washington, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Equatorial Guinea.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, for the Committee on Foreign Relations I report favorably the following nomination lists which were printed in the RECORDS on the dates indicated, and ask unanimous consent, to save the expense of reprinting on the Executive Calendar that these nominations lie at the Secretary's desk for the information of Senators.

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

Foreign Service nominations beginning with Michael Ashkouri and ending with John H. Piggott, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on June 11, 2018. (minus 2 nominees: Jeffries Blunt de Graffenried, Jr.; Omar Robles)

Foreign Service nomination of Daniel Mark Smolka.

Foreign Service nominations beginning with James Robert Adams and ending with Christopher M. Zveare, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 31, 2018.

Foreign Service nominations beginning with Sandi R.B. Allaway and ending with Shirlene Yee, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on September 24, 2018.

Foreign Service nominations beginning with Zachary Maxwell Aberman and ending with Daniella Jaoska Zelaya, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on October 5, 2018.

Foreign Service nominations beginning with Mark A. Dries and ending with Ralph K. Bean, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on October 5, 2018.

By Mr. JOHNSON for the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

*Richard S. Tischner, of Virginia, to be Director of the Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency for the District of Columbia for a term of six years.

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

(Nominations without an asterisk were reported with the recommendation that they be confirmed.)

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first

and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. COTTON:

S. 3662. A bill to limit the availability of funds to extend the implementation of the New START Treaty, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. GRASSLEY:

S. 3663. A bill to amend the Overtime Pay for Protective Services Act of 2016 to extend the Secret Service overtime pay exception through 2020, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. MERKLEY (for himself and Mr. WHITEHOUSE):

S. 3664. A bill to amend the Clean Air Act to create a national zero-emission vehicle standard, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Ms. DUCKWORTH (for herself, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Ms. BALDWIN):

S. 3665. A bill to provide for a more inclusive voluntary civilian national service program to promote civic engagement, enhance national unity, and foster a sense of shared sacrifice by helping young Americans participate in national service, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself and Mr. BLUNT):

S. 3666. A bill to enhance pre- and post-adoptive support services; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MERKLEY (for himself, Ms. WARREN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. SANDERS, and Mrs. FEINSTEIN):

S. 3667. A bill to prevent a nuclear arms race resulting from weakened international restrictions on the proliferation of intermediate- and shorter-range missile, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Ms. KLOBUCHAR):

S. 3668. A bill to amend the Federal Trade Commission Act to eliminate the common carrier exemption for telecommunications companies; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. CASEY):

S. 3669. A bill to assist States in improving guardianship oversight and data collection; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. SCOTT:

S. 3670. A bill to reauthorize the National Flood Insurance Program; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself and Ms. DUCKWORTH):

S. 3671. A bill to require the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to revise certain ethylene oxide emissions standards under the Clean Air Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself, Mr. BOOKER, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, and Ms. SMITH):

S. 3672. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to establish a mission statement of the Department of Veterans Affairs; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. DAINES, Mr. GARDNER, Ms. HARRIS, and Mr. HEINRICH):

S. 3673. A bill to require the Secretary of Energy to carry out quantum information science research, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself and Ms. DUCKWORTH):

S. 3674. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify the global intangible low-taxed income by repealing the tax-

free deemed return on investments and determining net CFC tested income on a per-country basis; to the Committee on Finance.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Ms. SMITH):

S. Res. 710. A resolution supporting Lights On Afterschool, a national celebration of afterschool programs held on October 25, 2018; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 428

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 428, a bill to amend titles XIX and XXI of the Social Security Act to authorize States to provide coordinated care to children with complex medical conditions through enhanced pediatric health homes, and for other purposes.

S. 802

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the names of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE), the Senator from Iowa (Mrs. ERNST), the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO), the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR), the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES), the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN), the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) and the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) were added as cosponsors of S. 802, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal in honor of Lawrence Eugene "Larry" Doby in recognition of his achievements and contributions to American major league athletics, civil rights, and the Armed Forces during World War II.

S. 821

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 821, a bill to promote access for United States officials, journalists, and other citizens to Tibetan areas of the People's Republic of China, and for other purposes.

S. 928

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 928, a bill to prohibit, as an unfair or deceptive act or practice, commercial sexual orientation conversion therapy, and for other purposes.

S. 1089

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1089, a bill to require the Secretary of Energy to review and update a report on the energy and environmental benefits of the re-refining of used lubricating oil.

S. 1503

At the request of Ms. WARREN, the name of the Senator from South Da-

kota (Mr. THUNE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1503, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in recognition of the 60th anniversary of the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame.

S. 1533

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1533, a bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to cover physician services delivered by podiatric physicians to ensure access by Medicaid beneficiaries to appropriate quality foot and ankle care, to amend title XVIII of such Act to modify the requirements for diabetic shoes to be included under Medicare, and for other purposes.

S. 2029

At the request of Mr. REED, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2029, a bill to establish a National and Community Service Administration to carry out the national and volunteer service programs, to expand participation in such programs, and for other purposes.

S. 2237

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2237, a bill to amend the Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council Act of 1978 to improve the examination of depository institutions, and for other purposes.

S. 2272

At the request of Ms. HARRIS, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2272, a bill to amend the Revised Statutes to grant State attorneys general the ability to issue subpoenas to investigate suspected violations of State laws that are applicable to national banks.

S. 2918

At the request of Ms. HARRIS, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2918, a bill to amend the Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993 to protect civil rights and otherwise prevent meaningful harm to third parties, and for other purposes.

S. 2957

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2957, a bill to amend the Horse Protection Act to designate additional unlawful acts under the Act, strengthen penalties for violations of the Act, improve Department of Agriculture enforcement of the Act, and for other purposes.

S. 3020

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3020, a bill to establish in the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor of the Department of State a

Special Envoy for the Human Rights of LGBTI Peoples, and for other purposes.

S. 3167

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3167, a bill to provide competitive grants for the operation, security, and maintenance of certain memorials to victims of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001.

S. 3324

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3324, a bill to establish a voluntary program in the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to encourage consumers to purchase or lease new automobiles made in the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 3470

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the names of the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE) and the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) were added as cosponsors of S. 3470, a bill to promote United States-Mongolia trade by authorizing duty-free treatment for certain imports from Mongolia, and for other purposes.

S. 3583

At the request of Mr. HELLER, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3583, a bill to direct the National Science Foundation to provide grants for research about STEM education approaches and the STEM-related workforce, and for other purposes.

S. 3588

At the request of Mr. SCHATZ, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3588, a bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to establish an Office of Federal Correctional Education, and for other purposes.

S. 3622

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3622, a bill to condemn gross human rights violations of ethnic Turkic Muslims in Xinjiang, and calling for an end to arbitrary detention, torture, and harassment of these communities inside and outside China.

S. 3644

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3644, a bill to authorize a special resource study on the spread vectors of chronic wasting disease in Cervidae, and for other purposes.

S. 3649

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the names of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. YOUNG) and the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) were added as cosponsors of S. 3649, a bill to provide for programs to help reduce the risk that prisoners will recidivate upon release from prison, and for other purposes.

S. 3656

At the request of Mrs. ERNST, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3656, a bill to authorize the Department of Energy to conduct collaborative research with the Department of Veterans Affairs in order to improve healthcare services for veterans in the United States, and for other purposes.

S.J. RES. 54

At the request of Mr. SANDERS, the names of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) and the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) were added as cosponsors of S.J. Res. 54, a joint resolution to direct the removal of United States Armed Forces from hostilities in the Republic of Yemen that have not been authorized by Congress.

S. RES. 633

At the request of Mrs. MCCASKILL, the names of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) and the Senator from Nevada (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 633, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that Congress should take all appropriate measures to ensure that the United States Postal Service remains an independent establishment of the Federal Government and is not subject to privatization.

S. RES. 709

At the request of Mr. JOHNSON, the names of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER), the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT), the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS), the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. KYL), the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON), the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY), the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY), the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR), the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN), the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE), the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO), the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE), the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS), the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN), the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN), the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI), the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER), the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS), the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH) and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 709, a resolution condemning Russia's provocative actions in the Kerch Strait against the Ukrainian navy.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. CASEY):

S. 3669. A bill to assist States in improving guardianship oversight and data collection; to the Committee on Finance.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President. As Chairman of the Senate Aging Committee, I rise today to introduce the "Guardianship Accountability Act of 2018," a bill that would assist States in improving guardianship oversight and data collection. I am pleased to be joined by our Committee's Ranking Member, Senator BOB CASEY.

Protecting older Americans from financial fraud and exploitation is one of my top priorities. According to the National Center for State Courts, an estimated 1.3 million adults are under the care of guardians—family members or professionals—who control approximately \$50 billion of their assets. Guardianship is a legal relationship created by a court that is designed to protect those with diminished or lost capacity. In many cases, however, the system lacks basic protections leaving the most vulnerable Americans at risk of exploitation.

Today, the Aging Committee released a bipartisan report to help change the tide, implement reforms, and restore trust in guardianship. Titled, "Ensuring Trust: Strengthening State Efforts to Overhaul the Guardianship Process and Protect Older Americans," the report is the culmination of the Committee's year-long work investigating the guardianship system.

Throughout the course of the year, we heard harrowing tales from families around the Nation who have struggled with abusive guardians. We also spoke with families who had heartening stories to share—of dedicated and faithful guardians stepping up to protect the assets of seniors with dementia and other conditions affecting capacity. A good guardian can provide years of support for a protected individual, ensuring a full life directed, wherever possible, by the person's own choices and preferences. Once a guardianship is imposed, however, the individual's rights are removed, and oversight to protect the individual from abuse, neglect, and exploitation becomes critical.

Our Committee has gathered information, analysis and recommendations from States, courts, and organizations representing older Americans and those with disabilities around the country, and received more than 100 comments pointing to gaps in the system and, most important, offering solutions. The Committee found a pattern of barriers to proper oversight and a need for greater use of alternatives to guardianship. We identified persistent and widespread challenges that require a nationwide focus in order to ensure the guardianship system works on behalf of the individuals it is intended to protect. The Committee's report outlines policy recommendations at local, state, and federal levels that would improve outcomes for Americans subject to guardianship.

The Guardianship Accountability Act addresses many of our report's recommendations. The bill would direct the Elder Justice Coordinating Council to establish a National Online Re-

source Center on Guardianship to collect and publish information relevant to guardianship for use by guardians, individuals subject to guardianship, courts, states, local governments, and community organizations. The resource center would also publish model legislation and best practices developed pursuant to the Elder Abuse Prevention and Prosecution Act, compile and publish training materials for guardians, share research related to guardianship, and maintain a database on State laws regarding guardianship and the use of less restrictive alternatives. In addition, the bill would also expand the availability of Federal demonstration grants, established by the Elder Justice Act, to include use for the development of State guardianship databases, training for court visitors, and sharing of information on guardian background checks.

Combating financial abuse and exploitation of seniors requires law enforcement and social service agencies at all levels of government to work collaboratively together, which the Guardianship Accountability Act promotes. I'm proud to have worked on this bill with Senator CASEY, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself and Ms. DUCKWORTH):

S. 3671. A bill to require the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to revise certain ethylene oxide emissions standards under the Clean Air Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 3671

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

SECTION 1. ETHYLENE OXIDE EMISSIONS STANDARDS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (referred to in this section as the "Administrator") shall amend—

(1) subparts O and FFFF of part 63 of title 40, Code of Federal Regulations, to revise the standards for the emission of ethylene oxide under those subparts based on the results described in the report of the National Center for Environmental Assessment of the Environmental Protection Agency entitled "Evaluation of the Inhalation Carcinogenicity of Ethylene Oxide" and dated December 2016; and

(2) subpart O of part 63 of title 40, Code of Federal Regulations, to apply maximum achievable control technology (within the meaning of the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7401 et seq.)) requirements to chamber exhaust vents.

(b) NOTIFICATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 30 days after the Administrator learns of a violation of the standards revised under subsection (a), the Administrator shall notify the public of the violation in a manner determined to be appropriate by the Administrator.

(2) FAILURE TO NOTIFY.—If the Administrator fails to notify the public under paragraph (1) by the end of the period described in that paragraph, the Inspector General of the Environmental Protection Agency shall carry out an investigation to determine—

(A) the reason or reasons for which the Administrator failed to notify the public;

(B) the public health risks associated with the failure of the Administrator to notify the public; and

(C) any steps the Administrator should take to ensure the Administrator meets the requirements described in paragraph (1) in the future.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 710—SUPPORTING LIGHTS ON AFTERSCHOOL, A NATIONAL CELEBRATION OF AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS HELD ON OCTOBER 25, 2018

Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Ms. SMITH) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 710

Whereas more than 28,000,000 children in the United States have parents who work outside the home;

Whereas high-quality programs that expand learning opportunities for children, such as afterschool, before-school, summer, and expanded learning opportunities, provide safe, challenging, engaging, and fun learning experiences, including experiences that encourage the study of science, technology, engineering, and math, that help children and youth develop social, emotional, physical, cultural, and academic skills;

Whereas high-quality afterschool programs and high-quality expanded learning opportunities provide students with hands-on, engaging lessons that are aligned with the school day;

Whereas high-quality afterschool programs complement regular and expanded school days and support working families by ensuring that the children of those families are safe and productive during the hours parents are working;

Whereas high-quality afterschool programs engage families, schools, and diverse community partners in advancing the well-being of children and youth in the United States;

Whereas high-quality afterschool programs that partner with high-quality community-based organizations build stronger communities by integrating schools with the larger community; and

Whereas Lights On Afterschool, a national celebration of afterschool, before-school, summer, and expanded learning opportunities programs, held on October 25, 2018, highlights the critical importance of those high-quality programs to children and the families and communities of those children: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate supports Lights On Afterschool, a national celebration of afterschool programs held on October 25, 2018.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I have 11 requests for committees to meet during today's session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority leaders.

Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today's session of the Senate:

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

The Committee on Agriculture is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, November 28, 2018, at 9:30 a.m., to conduct a hearing on the following nominations: Mindy Brashears, of Texas, to be Under Secretary for Food Safety, Naomi C. Earp, of Maryland, to be an Assistant Secretary, and Scott Hutchins, of Indiana, to be Under Secretary for Research, Education, and Economics, all of the Department of Agriculture.

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

The Committee on Environment and Public Works is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, November 28, 2018, at 9:30 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled "Addressing America's Surface Transportation Infrastructure Needs."

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

The Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, November 28, 2018, at 9:30 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled "The Global Fight to End Modern Slavery."

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

The Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, November 28, 2018, at 2 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

The Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, November 28, 2018, at 9:30 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled "Reducing Health Care Costs: Improving Affordability through Innovation."

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

The Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, November 28, 2018, at 9:30 a.m., to conduct a hearing on the following nominations: Ronald D. Vitiello, of Illinois, to be an Assistant Secretary of Homeland Security, Richard S. Tischner, of Virginia, to be Director of the Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency for the District of Columbia, and Dennis Dean Kirk, of Virginia, to be Chairman, and Julia Akins Clark, of Maryland, and Andrew F. Manuz, both to be a Member, all of the Merit Systems Protection Board.

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

The Committee on Indian Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, November 28, 2018, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a legislative hearing.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

The Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session

of the Senate on Wednesday, November 28, 2018, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing on the following nominations: Brian C. Buescher, to be United States District Judge for the District of Nebraska, Clifton L. Corker, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Tennessee, M. Miller Baker, of Virginia, and Timothy M. Reif, of the District of Columbia, both to be a Judge of the United States Court of International Trade, and Donald W. Washington, of Texas, to be Director of the United States Marshals Service, Department of Justice.

COMMITTEE ON RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

The Committee on Rules and Administration is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, November 28, 2018, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing on the following nominations: Donald L. Palmer, of Florida, and Benjamin Hovland, of Maryland, both to be a Member of the Election Assistance Commission.

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

The Special Committee on Aging is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, November 28, 2018, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing entitled "Ensuring Trust: Strengthening State Efforts to Overhaul the Guardianship Process and Protect Older Americans."

SUBCOMMITTEE ON CYBERSECURITY

The Subcommittee on Cybersecurity of the Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, November 28, 2018, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a closed hearing.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Marcus Wright of my staff be given floor privileges for the remainder of this Congress.

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

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Ariel Caspillo, a legislative fellow in my office, be permitted floor access for the remainder of the 115th Congress.

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

PEPFAR EXTENSION ACT OF 2018

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of H.R. 6651, which was received from the House.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 6651) to extend certain authorities relating to United States efforts to combat HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria globally, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be

considered read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The bill (H.R. 6651) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

RECOGNIZING THREATS TO FREEDOM OF THE PRESS AND EXPRESSION AROUND THE WORLD

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 545, S. Res. 501.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant bill clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 501) recognizing threats to freedom of the press and expression around the world and reaffirming freedom of the press as a priority in efforts of the Government of the United States to promote democracy and good governance.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution, which had been reported from the Committee on Foreign Relations without amendment and with an amendment to the preamble.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to; that the committee-reported amendment to the preamble be agreed to; that the preamble, as amended, be agreed to; and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 501) was agreed to.

The amendment to the preamble was agreed to as follows:

Whereas freedom of the press is a cornerstone of American democracy and is enshrined in the first amendment to the Constitution;

Whereas Article 19 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted in Paris, France, on December 10, 1948, states that "[e]veryone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers";

Whereas, in 1993, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed May 3 of each year as "World Press Freedom Day" to—

(1) celebrate the fundamental principles of freedom of the press;

(2) evaluate freedom of the press around the world;

(3) defend against attacks on the independence of the media; and

(4) pay tribute to journalists who have lost their lives in the exercise of their profession;

Whereas, on December 18, 2013, the United Nations General Assembly adopted United Nations General Assembly Resolution 163 (2013) on the safety of journalists and the issue of impunity, which unequivocally condemns, in both conflict and non-conflict situations, all attacks on and violence against journalists and media workers, including torture, extrajudicial killing, enforced disappearance, arbitrary detention, and intimidation and harassment;

Whereas the theme for World Press Freedom Day 2018 is "Keeping Power in Check: Media, Justice and The Rule of Law";

Whereas the Daniel Pearl Freedom of the Press Act of 2009 (22 U.S.C. 2151 note; Public Law 111-166), which was passed by unanimous consent in the Senate and signed into law by President Barack Obama in 2010, expanded the annual Country Reports on Human Rights Practices of the Department of State to include an examination of freedom of the press;

Whereas the 2017 World Press Freedom Index, published by Reporters Without Borders, warned that "media freedom has retreated wherever the authoritarian strongman model has triumphed";

Whereas Freedom House noted in the report "Freedom of the Press 2017" that—

(1) global press freedom has declined to its lowest point in 13 years; and

(2) only 13 percent of the global population enjoys a free press, meaning a media environment in which "coverage of political news is robust, the safety of journalists is guaranteed, state intrusion in media affairs is minimal, and the press is not subject to onerous legal or economic pressures";

Whereas journalists working inside the United States are not immune from violence against the media, as was demonstrated on the afternoon of June 28, 2018, when a 38-year-old gunman with a long-standing grudge against the reporting of the Capital Gazette entered the newspaper's newsroom in Annapolis, Maryland, and killed 5 employees with a shotgun;

Whereas, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists—

(1) in 2017—

(A) the 2 deadliest countries for journalists on assignment were Iraq and Syria;

(B) 46 journalists were killed in cases in which the motive for the killing was confirmed to be related to reporting by those journalists;

(C) 20 journalists were killed in cases in which the motive for the killing was unconfirmed;

(D) there were 21 cases in which journalists were jailed for "false news", which represented more than double the number of cases in which journalists were jailed for "false news" in 2016; and

(E) the percentage of female journalists who were killed in a year was the highest on record;

(2) the most dangerous subject for a journalist to report is politics, followed only then by war; and

(3) as of December 1, 2017, 262 journalists worldwide were imprisoned for their work, marking the second consecutive year that the number of journalists imprisoned for their work hit a historic high;

Whereas freedom of the press is a key component of democratic governance, activism in civil society, and socioeconomic development; and

Whereas freedom of the press enhances public accountability, transparency, and participation in civil society and democratic governance: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) expresses concern about the threats to freedom of the press and expression around the world;

(2) welcomes the celebration of World Press Freedom Day 2018 on May 3, 2018;

(3) commends journalists and media workers around the world for their essential role in promoting government accountability, defending democratic activity, and strengthening civil society, despite threats to the safety of those journalists and media workers;

(4) pays tribute to journalists who have lost their lives carrying out their work;

(5) calls on governments abroad to implement United Nations General Assembly Resolution 163 (2013) on the safety of journalists and the issue of impunity by thoroughly investigating and seeking to resolve outstanding cases of violence against journal-

ists, including murders and kidnappings, while ensuring the protection of witnesses;

(6) condemns all actions around the world that suppress freedom of the press;

(7) reaffirms the centrality of freedom of the press to efforts of the Government of the United States to support democracy, mitigate conflict, and promote good governance domestically and around the world; and

(8) calls on the President and the Secretary of State to—

(A) on the basis of the protections afforded under the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, preserve and build upon the leadership of the United States on issues relating to freedom of the press;

(B) improve the means by which the Government of the United States rapidly identifies, publicizes, and responds to threats against freedom of the press around the world;

(C) urge foreign governments to conduct transparent investigations and adjudications of the perpetrators of attacks against journalists; and

(D) highlight the issue of threats against freedom of the press—

(i) in the annual Human Rights Reports of the Department of State; and

(ii) throughout the year.

The preamble, as amended, was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, as amended, was passed.

SUPPORTING LIGHTS ON AFTERSCHOOL, A NATIONAL CELEBRATION OF AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS HELD ON OCTOBER 25, 2018

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 710, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant bill clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 710) supporting Lights On Afterschool, a national celebration of afterschool programs held on October 25, 2018.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. PORTMAN. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, that the preamble be agreed to, and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 710) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

APPOINTMENT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair announces, on behalf of the Majority Leader and the Democratic Leader, pursuant to the Public Law 110-298, the appointment of the following individual to serve as a member of the Federal Law Enforcement Congressional Badge of Bravery Board: Charles Dunne of New York (vice Rick McCubbin of Kentucky).

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY,
NOVEMBER 29, 2018

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m., Thursday, November 29; further, that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed; further, that following leader remarks, the Senate proceed to

executive session and resume consideration of the Farr nomination under the previous order; finally, that all time during recess, adjournment, morning business, and leader remarks count postcloture on the Farr nomination.

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

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M.
TOMORROW

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come be-

fore the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 7:10 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, November 29, 2018, at 10 a.m.

CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by the Senate November 28, 2018:

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

KAREN DUNN KELLEY, OF PENNSYLVANIA, TO BE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF COMMERCE.