

create vacuums in Syria and Afghanistan. We know from experience that Russia and Iran would be only too happy to fill those vacuums.

If we truly care about containing Russia, the battleground is not only on Twitter or Facebook but also in the world of old fashioned geopolitics.

So my amendment would offer Senators the ability to speak on all these subjects. I honestly did not expect this would be controversial stuff. I didn't expect that my colleagues across the aisle would make a partisan stand and try to block this straightforward "sense of the Senate" amendment when it really just restates—restates—what most of us thought was a broad bipartisan consensus about American leadership in the world, but that is what our Democratic colleagues did.

They tried to block it. Democrats objected to a vote on this amendment, apparently because it would expose a rift among their own membership—a division between those Senate Democrats who still subscribe to the vision for America's leadership and their colleagues who have abandoned those principles at the urging of the very far left or are too afraid to take either position—either one. It is quite the split. It shows how caught up my Democratic colleagues are in the partisanship of this moment.

My amendment simply reemphasizes the expertise and counsel offered by experts who have served Presidents of both parties. It is a mainstream amendment with 19 cosponsors, but apparently a significant portion of today's Democratic Party isn't sure—isn't sure—they believe in these principles any more. They would rather try to squash the debate and dodge the vote altogether.

Well, that is not going to work. These are exactly the kinds of issues the Senate should be debating. The Senate has a special role in foreign policy.

Americans are serving in harm's way in Syria and Afghanistan. The American servicemembers, diplomats, and aid workers in those conflict zones all deserve to know whether their elected officials support their efforts or whether we no longer believe their tireless efforts serve our national interest.

Our constituents deserve to know which Senators welcome a thorough debate over Syria and Afghanistan and which are simply trying to duck the debate. Well, despite my Democratic colleagues' attempt, I can assure the American people that they are going to learn precisely that. I filed cloture on the amendment yesterday afternoon, and we will vote on it. Regardless of whatever political contortions the far left may be demanding from Senate Democrats, the American people are going to learn exactly where their Senators stand. Our institution will not shrink from this important duty.

H.R. 1

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, on an entirely different matter, I spoke for the first time, yesterday, on the subject that House Democrats have crowned as their signature effort for this Congress—H.R. 1, also known as the "Democratic Politician Protection Act." Speaker PELOSI and her colleagues are advertising it as a package of urgent measures to save American democracy. What it really seems to be is a package of urgent measures to rewrite the rules of American politics for the exclusive benefit of the Democratic Party.

Yesterday, I gave a brief tour through several of the most bizarre components of their proposal. Today, I would like to focus on just one of the legislation's major victims—the American taxpayer.

H.R. 1 would victimize every American taxpayer by pouring their money into expensive new subsidies that don't even pass the laugh test. In several new ways, it would put every taxpayer on the hook to line the pockets of candidates, campaigns, and outside consultants.

Do you look forward to bumper stickers, robocalls, attack ads, and campaign mail that descend on the country in seemingly endless cycles?

Speaker PELOSI must think you do, because she wants you to pay for these things with your tax dollars. You get the opportunity, with your money, to pay for attack ads and bumper stickers and the rest. This bill creates brand-new government subsidies—government subsidies—both for political campaign donors and for the campaigns themselves.

The Federal Government would start matching political donations the same way some employers match gifts to charity. You would be literally funding attack ads for the candidates you disagree with. How about that—your money funding ads for the candidates you disagree with?

Maybe that is why every Democrat opposed our tax cuts for middle-class families and small businesses. They were counting on that money to pull off this stimulus package, if you will, for campaign consultants.

And for what reason? To increase the competition? Well, studies have shown that incumbents win just as often in taxpayer-funded elections as they do when campaigns are funded with private money.

To reduce corruption? Hardly. Jurisdictions that have toyed with taxpayer-funded political systems have turned out to be replete with misappropriation, personal use, straw donors, and public corruption scandals.

So I remain curious why, exactly, the "Democratic Politician Protection Act" wants to offer the American people's money to thousands of candidates that run for the House of Representatives every 2 years, whether they support these candidates or not. They want citizens to bankroll political materials that they totally disagree with.

But they aren't stopping there. Democrats also want taxpayers on the hook for generous new benefits for Federal bureaucrats and government employees.

Their bill would make election day a new paid holiday for government workers and create an additional brandnew paid leave benefit for up to 6 days for any Federal bureaucrat who decides they would like to hang out at the polls during any election. Just what America needs—another paid holiday and a bunch of government workers being paid to go out and work, I assume, for our colleagues on the other side on their campaigns.

This is the Democrats' plan to "restore" democracy—a brandnew week of paid vacation for every Federal employee who would like to hover around while you cast your ballot? A Washington-based, taxpayer-subsidized clearinghouse for political campaign funding? It is a power grab that is smelling more and more like exactly what it is.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

STRENGTHENING AMERICA'S SECURITY IN THE MIDDLE EAST ACT OF 2019—Resumed

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 1, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1) to make improvements to certain defense and security assistance provisions and to authorize the appropriation of funds to Israel, to reauthorize the United States-Jordan Defense Cooperation Act of 2015, and to halt the wholesale slaughter of the Syrian people, and for other purposes.

Pending:

McConnell amendment No. 65, to express the sense of the Senate that the United States faces continuing threats from terrorist groups operating in Syria and Afghanistan and that the precipitous withdrawal of United States forces from either country could put at risk hard-won gains and United States national security.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I appreciate the fact that the majority leader has put before the Senate an important piece of legislation that reemphasizes our support for our allies in the Middle East, a very dangerous neighborhood that has a tendency to have others drawn into the neighborhood and into the fight. This legislation is comprised of four bills that have enjoyed bipartisan support, but we weren't able to

get them done before the deadline at the end of the 115th Congress.

Each of these four bills speaks directly to our national security interests in the Middle East and the support for our allies, particularly allies like Jordan and Israel. Every day, the State of Israel faces attacks from adversaries in the region, ranging from rocket and missile attacks to various explosives and foot soldiers—namely, Hezbollah, the Iranian-financed and trained effort to try to exterminate the Jewish State.

Israel is also enduring a different type of warfare, this time an economic war known as Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions or the BDS movement. This campaign began in 2005 with more than 170 Palestinian nongovernmental organizations lobbying foreign governments, corporations, and academic institutions to sever all their ties with Israel. In the years since, this movement has expanded with participants seeking to isolate Israel both economically and politically.

For some, their participation in the movement is simply a means of voicing their opposition to Israeli policies in the Middle East—something that at least in the United States, they have every right to do under the First Amendment. For others, though, it is part of a strategy to isolate Israel politically and economically, either to delegitimize the State or to force it to redraw its map.

State-sponsored BDS is incredibly harmful. We have seen support for BDS in capitals across Europe and, sadly, even in the United Nations, where the movement has been supported by countries with questionable humanitarian records, such as China, Russia, and Venezuela. A few years ago, the U.N. Human Rights Council called for the creation of a so-called blacklist, naming companies that do business with Israel. Then, in a report in January, the U.N. Human Rights Council laid the groundwork for utilizing those databases to boycott those businesses, including at least 22 American companies.

It is shameful, really, that the U.N. has chosen to fuel this movement by encouraging countries to boycott these businesses for what they claim are illegal activities, even though that argument has absolutely no bearing on either the United States or Israel. This effort to choke off Israel's economy by ending business ties with other countries could have serious impacts. We want to make sure State and local governments have the flexibility to avoid business with entities that support the BDS movement if they wish.

One of the bills included in the legislation we are considering is called the Combating BDS Act, led by our colleagues Senator RUBIO and Senator MANCHIN.

Before I talk about what the bill does, I want to talk about what it does not do. Nothing in this bill restricts constitutionally protected speech. The law only impacts commerce-related or

investment-related activities in the course of interstate or international commerce. The law does not punish companies for expressing their opposition to Israel or its policies or engaging in anti-Israel boycotts, for example.

What this legislation does do, however, is clarify that State and local governments have every right to counter boycotts of Israel without fear that they are somehow violating Federal law. It assures those local governments and State governments that if they decide not to issue contracts or otherwise do business with entities that are boycotting or divesting from Israel, they have every legal right to do so. This is not a new concept, as 34 States have already enacted legislation to combat BDS.

In 2017, Texas became the 18th State to pass legislation preventing tax dollars being used to support the boycott of Israel. When Governor Abbott signed that bill into law, he said, at the time, "Anti-Israel policies are anti-Texas policies, and we will not tolerate such actions against an important ally."

I agree with his sentiment, certainly, and I believe it is time to provide all 50 States with the flexibility to make this decision to forgo any business that would harm the Jewish State.

It goes without saying, but perhaps we should reiterate that Israel is an important and valuable friend and ally to the United States. It is one of the main stabilizing influences in the Middle East, an admittedly dangerous neighborhood, with aggressors on all sides wanting to literally wipe the State of Israel off the map. Of course, Israel is the only democracy in the Middle East. Ensuring its viability is critical to protecting U.S. interests abroad and here at home, and it is important that we support our closest ally in the region.

Passing this legislation is a step to support Israel in their efforts to promote democracy in the Middle East. It takes a strong stance against the anti-Israel and anti-Semitic BDS movement and confirms our longstanding support of Israel. So I look forward to voting yes on this important legislation when the time comes, hopefully, very soon.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

(The remarks of Mr. ROBERTS pertaining to the introduction of S. 273 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. 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.

S. 1

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, the Senate is currently debating the Strengthening America's Security in the Middle East Act. These are issues that we need to deal with, and it is really an important time to be talking about these issues.

Really, there are four different things that this bill does.

The first thing this bill does is to go further in providing security for Israel. I think virtually everybody in the Senate—there may be an exception or two—understands that Israel is our greatest ally in the Middle East, that Israel is a great source of intelligence for us as we try to work our way through problems in the Middle East, and that we rely on Israel for the partnership we have there in the things that Israel has done to study and test. Unfortunately, it has gotten to test in real situations military defense systems that will intercept things that are coming at us. As for the whole concept of a bullet that can hit a bullet, which some people thought was such a farfetched idea when President Reagan talked about it in the 1980s, Israel has proven one can do it with our help with regard to some of the technology. It is a partnership. Israel, unfortunately, is in a place that actually uses it to really intercept things that are coming at its citizens, and we found out it works.

Security for Israel is security for the United States. In 2016, the United States and Israel signed a 10-year agreement on security assistance. This bill makes sure that the agreement will continue to have the full force of law. This legislation makes sure that we are giving some concrete aid to help Israel protect itself and to protect its own security.

It also states very clearly that the policy of the United States is to ensure that Israel can counter and defeat threats when it faces its enemies. These are countries and other groups that don't like Israel. It is in their schools, their propaganda, and their commitments as nations to talk about the importance of Israel's not existing. In fact, some of them use maps on which Israel doesn't exist. If you were to look at the educational structures of some of Israel's neighbors, you would have to find something outside of what you learn in school to understand that there even is an Israel. Of course, there is Iran, Hezbollah, and Hamas. There are plenty of threats to Israel and to what Israel and the United States stand for.

This part of the bill has previously passed both Houses of the Congress in slightly different forms. Now it is time for both Houses to pass it in the same form, to put it on the President's desk

so as to further defend and define the things that are there. This is an important thing to do.

The second part of the bill extends our cooperation between us and Jordan. We have no more faithful partner outside of Israel than Jordan. Frankly, that Israeli-Jordan border is critically important in how that cooperation works. We saw what happened when the Syrians looked for a safe place to go, and they went to Jordan. So we have done our best to ensure that Jordan can meet its humanitarian crisis based on what has happened in Syria. The economic stability of Jordan—believe me—is critical to the economic stability of the region. This bill also comes up with new ways to assist our allies when they face these unanticipated situations, and some of these situations last for a long time once they start.

The third part of the legislation imposes sanctions on anyone who does business with the Government of Syria. The tragedy of Syria—the tragedy of the Syrian people, the chemical warfare of Bashar Assad, the barrel bombs that have been dropped in neighborhoods where innocent people live, those being children and senior citizens, and where people are trying to work every day—makes it clear that this is not a country that we should support.

Actually, this portion of the legislation already passed the House by voice vote. We need to join the House with its commitment to continue to put pressure on Syria for Syria to meet the standards that civilization should require of those we deal with. We can't deal with Syria as long as it continues to act in the way it has been acting. It is something we know needs to be done. Hopefully, we will have a vote that will move this further toward reality.

The fourth part of the package we are talking about is another thing that we can do in our support for Israel. There are groups of people who seek to target Israel through a series of boycotts and disinvestments and sanctions. These are usually not governments. They are individuals and institutions that are trying to harm Israel by boycotting any kind of business there.

This anti-Israel activity is shameful. Those who promote it should be penalized. If they want to find out what it is like to not be able to trade, we should show them what it is like not to be able to trade. There are 26 States that have already passed legislation that allows them to deal in different ways with people who have either disinvested in or boycotted Israel. This bill provides some further definition of how they can move forward. Boycotting Israel is unacceptable. That is an important part of this package.

All of these things need to be done, and this is an important time to send that message around the world—that not only our allies inside world can count on us but that our enemies in the world—our adversaries—can also ex-

pect us to do what we should do to support our allies, to defend freedom, to look forward as one amendment that has been offered will do that I have cosponsored to meet our commitments to NATO, to understand the continued dangerous nature of terrorist threats, to be thoughtful as we make decisions that move us further away from the safe havens that those threats have used in the past. This is an important time for us to send the very message that this bill and the proposed amendment do send. I look forward to seeing that message sent first by the Senate and then by the House, with then, hopefully, a signature from the President of the United States.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, first, I associate myself with the remarks that we just heard from the distinguished Senator from Missouri, who made some wonderful points about how important the bill that we are discussing on the floor continues to be. I appreciate his remarks and his leadership in this body.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. President, I come to the floor to discuss a different topic, which is that the government has reopened for 3 weeks. It is welcome news that President Trump has signed the stopgap funding measure and has fully paid furloughed Federal workers.

There was an important workforce story that, I believe, was lost over the last couple of weeks during the shutdown—the story about the great news of the American economy. I certainly feel it at home. I know the Presiding Officer does in Utah, as do others, as we head home and see the “help wanted” signs that are up and the people who are looking to hire more people.

This economy continues to fire on all cylinders. It is fueled, certainly, in part by what Republicans have been able to accomplish due to our policy, which is a pro-job policy of tax cuts and regulatory relief. Since the tax cut law that was signed a year ago, this economy has created 2.6 million American jobs in the last year. There is additional good news. I hear it in Wyoming, I heard it last weekend, and I expect to hear it this weekend. Americans are seeing that there is actually more money in their paychecks. There is more money for a couple of reasons. One is that wages are up, and the other is that taxes are down. Last month, there was a 3.2-percent year-over-year increase in average hourly wages. It matched October as the biggest increase since 2009. This wage increase was even stronger for production workers and non-managers, who saw an additional increase in year-over-year growth.

The economy is working well. It is producing more jobs. For 9 straight months now, there have been more available jobs in this country than individuals looking for work. Last week,

we saw jobless claims drop to the lowest level since November of 1969—1969, the year we put a man on the Moon and the year of Woodstock. That was 50 years ago. It was the lowest since then. That is half a century.

Now that this partial shutdown is over, I believe we need to refocus our attention on continuing to grow the economy, continuing to increase wages, and continuing to create more high-paying jobs for American workers. Meanwhile, Democrats seem to want to put the brakes on the economy. They are proposing higher taxes and expansive new regulations.

We still have our work cut out for us. This excellent economic news underscores the need for us to work together to resolve our differences on important government funding legislation. Let's keep in mind that 70 percent of the government is already funded all the way through the end of the fiscal year. Congress still has the job to do of funding the remaining 25 percent, and we need to do that by the middle of February—by February 15.

By signing the 3-week continuing resolution, the President has given Congress the opportunity to come together to secure the southern border and to fund the government. During the shutdown standoff, Democrats repeatedly called for the President to reopen the government. They asked for 3 weeks so they could seriously negotiate, they say, on border security. Well, we now have a 3-week agreement, but time is going to tell whether Democrats are serious about solving this border security crisis and protecting the American people.

A full-year spending deal has to include significant funding for a comprehensive border security package. We need more personnel, we need more technology, and we need more physical barriers.

Security barriers are not the sole solution, but they are an essential part of the solution. That is why the last four Presidents built 650 miles of physical barriers along our 2,000-mile border with Mexico. Democrats, including Speaker PELOSI, voted for all this construction. In fact, the Speaker's home State of California has a physical barrier on the border with Tijuana, Mexico.

Like his four predecessors, President Trump has listened to the security experts. Those four were President Obama, President Clinton, President George W. Bush, and President George Herbert Walker Bush. Four Presidents prior to President Trump listened to the experts.

The experts today say we need 200 more miles of physical barriers strategically located where illegal traffic is surging. Despite the experts' support, Democrats have abruptly changed their position on barriers—changed completely—and they have denied the President the funding he has requested.

Given that Democrats had supported 650 miles of the physical barriers we

currently have, why are they opposing the next 200 miles, strategically placed where illegal traffic is surging? To me, it seems personal, and it seems aimed at President Trump. The American people expect us to solve problems not as Democrats and Republicans but as elected representatives of the people.

The priority is to move full-year Homeland Security Department spending legislation through Congress that provides wall funding. Today, House-Senate negotiators are working to produce a compromise package that can pass with the other six bills and get it done by February 15. This conference committee—a committee of the two Houses—will be meeting later today. Conferees may also add other provisions, including immigration reforms.

Already, the President has offered to extend protections for the Dreamers, who were brought here as children, and immigrants whose temporary visas are expiring. So the President has offered an opportunity and a solution. These modest proposals are an immigration policy bandaid. Yet they could be the start of broader bipartisan immigration talks. From a policy perspective, I believe we are not that far apart.

Americans agree that border security is important and that our immigration system does need reform. The country's safety and security must always come first.

In my opinion, the President is open to reasonable changes to his plan. I believe he has been very willing to compromise. As long as Democrats define victory as blocking President Trump, however, on his key priority, everyone loses, and that includes Federal workers, the American people, and immigrants.

The American people expect us to work together to resolve our differences. This isn't a winner-take-all political game. It never should be. Members of both parties must be flexible. Once Congress passes a full-year spending bill, we can move on to other priorities facing us as a nation.

President Trump has incredible determination to build physical barriers where Border Patrol tells us they are most needed, and the President is right when he says walls work. Democrats supported construction before President Trump took office; they should support it now. The President has presented a path to compromise. Now Democrats should follow suit. All we need to succeed is cooperation. The best position on this negotiation highway is the middle lane. It is time to move to the middle and move forward on border security. By working together, we can produce a winning solution for America.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

ECONOMIC GROWTH

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, Republicans started out the last Congress with one goal, and that is to make life better for American families.

After years of economic stagnation in the Obama administration, too many families were struggling, wages were stagnant, and opportunities were few and far between. Republicans were determined to change that. We knew American workers and American businesses were as driven, creative, and innovative as ever. We also knew we were facing a lot of obstacles, including burdensome regulations and an outdated tax code that acted as a drag on economic growth. So we took action.

We eliminated excessive regulations. We undertook historic reform of our tax bill to put more money in Americans' pockets and get our economy going again. The Tax Code may not be the first thing people think of when they think about economic growth, but it is actually one of the key factors that determine how well our economy functions. The Tax Code can encourage growth and job creation or it can make it difficult for businesses to even operate, much less grow and create jobs.

Prior to the passage of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, our Tax Code was not helping our economy. Large and small businesses were weighed down by high tax rates and growth-killing tax provisions and all the regulatory and compliance burdens that came along with it. Our outdated international tax rules left America's global businesses at a competitive disadvantage in the global economy. That had real consequences for American workers.

A small business owner struggling to afford the annual tax bill for her business was highly unlikely to be able to hire a new worker or raise wages. A larger business struggling to stay competitive in the global marketplace, while paying substantially higher tax rates than its foreign competitors, too often had limited funds to expand or increase investment in the United States.

In December of 2017, after months of work, we passed a comprehensive reform of our Nation's Tax Code. We took action to put more money in American families' pockets immediately by cutting tax rates, doubling the child tax credit, and nearly doubling the standard deduction. Then we focused on improving the playing field for American workers by improving the playing field for businesses. We lowered tax rates across the board for owners of small- and medium-sized businesses, farms, and ranches. We lowered our Nation's massive corporate tax rate, which up until January 1, was the highest corporate tax rate in the developed world. We expanded business owners' ability to recover the cost of investments they make in their businesses, which frees up cash they can reinvest in their oper-

ations and in their workers. We brought the U.S. international tax system into the 21st century so American businesses are not operating at a competitive disadvantage next to their foreign counterparts.

Now we are seeing the results. Our economy is thriving. The economy grew at a robust 3.4 percent in the third quarter of 2018. There were 312,000 jobs created in December, and more than 2.6 million jobs have been created since tax reform was signed into law. In 2018, we saw the most impressive job growth in the manufacturing sector since 1997, and 2018 also saw 19 States reach record-low unemployment rates. This month, initial jobless claims dropped below 200,000 for the first time since 1969.

In 2018, for the first time ever, the number of job openings outnumbered the number of job seekers. The Department of Labor reports that for 9 straight months, there have been more job openings than people looking for work. Think about that. There were more job openings than people looking for work for 9 straight months. Wage growth has accelerated, which was stagnant for so many years in the previous administration. Wages are now currently growing at the fastest rate since 2009. Small businesses had a record optimism in 2018, and the list goes on.

In human terms, this means job seekers are finding it easier to find jobs—and not just any job but jobs they actually want. Fewer families are having to choose between repairing the car or paying for a child's braces; more individuals are able to put money away for their retirement; more families can afford to take that family vacation or to put money away for their kids' college.

I am proud the work we have done is making life better for American families. Republicans are going to continue working to expand operations for Americans even further, and I hope our colleagues on the Democratic side of the aisle will work with us in order to make that happen.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

MILITARY READINESS

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I rise to address the state of our military readiness. We live in an uncertain world, one that is perhaps more unstable than at any time since the end of the Cold War.

As Russia increases its belligerence abroad and China invests millions in a systemic effort to undermine us, we find ourselves confronted by strategic competitors in new and in dangerous ways.

For decades, violent extremism was our No. 1 security challenge. While the threat from global terrorism remains a priority, the United States and our ideals are now being challenged by nations seeking to reshape the globe according to their own design. This is a design that does not include the respect for freedom and democracy that

we so deeply cherish. We must not stand idly by and let the rising tide of totalitarianism and autocracy sweep away the free global order that America and her allies have fought so hard to establish and to preserve. As Americans, it is up to us to meet these challenges head-on. That effort begins in the Senate.

Every Member of this body took an oath of office to support and defend the Constitution. There is no greater service to that oath and to the people we represent than to ensure the defense of the Nation. That is why, in the 116th Congress, we must build on past efforts and continue to make the necessary investments to our military. Doing so will maintain the safety and security of our Nation for decades to come.

As a senior member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, I have become deeply familiar with the warnings that senior leaders at the Department of Defense have been delivering for years. They warn of shortfalls in munitions, soldiers who are short on training, pilots without adequate time in the cockpit, and facilities that are crumbling from underfunding and neglect. Yet, in politically charged times, that message sometimes gets muffled against the backdrop of other debates.

I am concerned that some may not appreciate how serious the issue of readiness has become. While we took a significant step forward with the funding that was authorized in last year's National Defense Authorization Act, we cannot fix this issue in just a single year. The depth of the problem is reflected in the very metrics that the services use to measure their ability to fight.

For my colleagues who may be skeptical about the need to make these investments in our military, I would point to the following facts.

In the U.S. Army, the world's most distinguished ground fighting force, only 50 percent of brigade combat teams are fully trained—50 percent.

In the Navy, which protects our Nation against threats around the globe and defends free commerce on the world's oceans, only 30 percent of ship maintenance has been completed on time since fiscal year 2012. Because of this, ships have been unavailable for training and operations for thousands of days. This has made the already significant workload placed on sailors even worse, and it has increased its risk of a catastrophic mishap.

In the Marine Corps—a critical expeditionary force that is essential for 21st century combat—limitations that have been imposed by reduced training hours and a fleet of amphibious ships that have been cut in half since 1990 have impacted its ability to fight a major conflict.

In the Air Force, there are 30 percent fewer airmen and 39 percent fewer aircraft today than during Desert Storm. With an average fleet age of 28 years, our airmen have a tall task of defending against a range of cutting-edge threats.

Across all services, the physical infrastructure, which comprises everything from soldiers' barracks to runways, has become badly dilapidated. An average of one in four military facilities receives a poor or a failing grade.

This is unacceptable not simply because it means we may not be prepared to defend ourselves should we need to fight against a nation that seeks to harm us but because it is our frontline soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines who suffer the consequences when we do not address readiness. Tragically, it is our men and women in uniform, who serve day in and day out—on holidays and at home and abroad—who are put at risk if we do not make the collective decision in this body to support our military by providing them with the necessary funding. These are problems we can fix, but it is going to require us to work together to find common ground so as to ensure that America's military remains the most capable and professional force the world has ever known.

As we debate today in the U.S. Senate, hundreds of America's sons and daughters are standing the watch on every continent while protecting and defending our way of life. They are stationed across oceans, in arid deserts, in dense jungles, and here at home. No matter what happens, we know that they are serving faithfully, each and every day, to safeguard our liberty and our freedom.

It is time for us to show them that they are not alone and that the U.S. Senate has their backs. Let's keep working together so that this year will be remembered as one in which, despite our other differences, we will have agreed on this—that our men and women in uniform should have the resources they need to fulfill their mission and that we will continue to provide for a strong defense of the United States of America.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. 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.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, as most people are painfully aware, we just went through a 35-day government shutdown. It didn't work for anybody. I am here today to talk about a very simple way to keep these shutdowns from happening in the future. I am also here to talk a little bit about how it fits into the broader discussion we are having.

What I am not suggesting is that we somehow leave the border security issue aside. It is a very important issue. We have to address it. The President has presented a reasonable plan. His plan is, actually, to rely on the ex-

perts to determine what kind of barriers ought to be along the border. His funding of \$5.7 billion that he talks about for these barriers is to fund exactly the top 10 priorities of what the experts are saying, which are within the Customs and Border Protection's "Border Security Improvement Plan."

Along with many other things, I think that makes sense. A structure alone—a barrier alone—is not enough. You have to have cameras. You have to have ways to see who is coming, and you have to have ways to respond to it. You have to have more Border Patrol, and you have to have more technology. He also has more drones in his proposal. He has screening at the ports of entry to be able to stop some of these drugs from coming into our communities—the cocaine, the crystal meth, and the heroin, most of which are coming from Mexico.

I think it is a good plan. I think we should provide him help on this plan. We have a true crisis at the border, no matter how you measure it—whether it is in terms of the drugs, whether it is in terms of people coming over, or whether it is in terms of the human trafficking that is occurring, according to the experts. Let's do it the right way. Let's do it through experts. Let's not do it because the politicians say it is the right thing to do; let's do it because the experts on the border say it is the right thing to do. Let's put the right kind of barriers in the right kind of place. That is what I see in the President's plan.

He is also talking about working with Democrats on some immigration priorities they have had over the years. For the last 10 years, there have been Democrats who have talked about these young people who came here as children through no fault of their own. The President has said he would like to give them more certainty as part of this plan. Let's take him up on that. Why would we miss this opportunity? It is a good idea. It is the right thing from a policy perspective. By providing that kind of help to those DACA recipients—those young people who are now working, who are in school, and who are in our military—I think we can actually also get some Democrats to be helpful, to provide more border security at the same time we are helping those who are here and who are deserving of that help.

The President has also proposed to help people who come from 10 different countries around the world stay here with some certainty for another few years. These are people who are in the so-called TPS program, the temporary protected status program, people from 10 countries where there is war, famine, and natural disasters, and you don't want to send those people back. They are working on that and working on getting their work authorizations. That is what this is about. A lot of employers here are eager for them to stay so they can continue to work for some period of time. So there would be some

security for those individuals, tens of thousands of whom live in States where there are two Democratic Senators, States such as Maryland and Virginia. Those Senators have been stalwarts and advocates for making sure there is more certainty for these individuals. It seems to me we have a good combination here. Let's get it done.

The conferees are talking right now, but in the meantime, let's not go back to a government shutdown. That is not going to help us get to a solution. In fact, I would argue that is not only not leverage on behalf of the President or any of us, it actually works the other way because when the government shuts down, everybody loses.

I am hearing from Senators on both sides of the aisle who say they are fed up with these shutdowns. There is now a building bipartisan consensus that we need to end government shutdowns. I am encouraged because I am also hearing from people around the country about this. There is a bipartisan consensus among individuals about it.

There is an interesting poll out today that will give you a sense of this. People were given three options. They were asked: What if these talks break down? Which one of these three things should we do: shut down the government again; turn to a national emergency, as the President has been talking about, as a possible option; or not do either of those first two but, rather, do the default, which is to have a continuing resolution and let the spending from last year continue? Guess what. Only 9 percent of those polled wanted another government shutdown. Ninety-one percent said: No, let's not go back there. I call that a consensus. I think it is time for us to take action here in the Congress to say: Let's stop this.

By the way, people feel this way because they get it. They know that these shutdowns are a hardship for Federal employees who are furloughed or who are forced to go to work without being paid. They are a hardship for small businesses that can't get government work paid for—work they have done. They are a hardship for taxpayers who want good taxpayer services, such as having the national parks open or having food inspections or having the IRS hotline open, which we as taxpayers pay for.

Of course, I heard from a lot of constituents in Ohio during the last 35 days.

I heard from a TSA officer in Cincinnati who, like most people I represent, lives paycheck to paycheck. He told me he could not sleep at night. Why? Because he had never missed a mortgage payment, and he had to miss one because he lost two paychecks.

I heard about a butcher shop in Cleveland, OH. I actually went to visit it. It is a new butcher shop that just opened. It has an interesting mission. It is a deli and a butcher shop in a low-income neighborhood. They want to provide fresh, relatively inexpensive

but quality and healthy food for this neighborhood. It is needed. It is one of these areas where you hear there is a food desert. In some areas, particularly in inner cities, sometimes there is just not good, healthy food anywhere. Well, this little butcher shop was excited about offering it, but guess what. Because of the shutdown, they couldn't get the required Federal permission to accept food stamps. So they had their opening, and everything was great, but they couldn't complete their mission. Their mission was to help these people have better food.

I heard from others as well. I heard from our Federal prosecutors in Ohio. I do a lot of work in trying to push back against the opioid issue, the heroin and the fentanyl, and the fact that we have these drug rings in Ohio and elsewhere that are causing so much harm. These prosecutors said they couldn't pursue these cases. One said: We can't pay informants during the shutdown. Think about that. We are slowing down our prosecution of human trafficking, opioids, rape, and so many horrible issues we want to address. We can't do it during a shutdown as effectively because the funds aren't there to pursue these investigations.

I heard from Ohio craft beer breweries. These are small businesses in Ohio. I am told there have been about 65 new ones in the last couple of years in Ohio. It is a big deal. It is probably in your State too. These are great businesses. They have not been able to expand over the last several weeks during this 35-day shutdown or to introduce new products, which is absolutely essential to their revenue stream. They come out every season with a new product in order to continue to get folks to drink these craft beers, but they need a permit from the Federal Government to do that, so they couldn't introduce their new products.

By the way, I talked to one of them today. We have been trying to help them, and they told me they still can't get the necessary Federal permits and licenses to do this. Why? Because the Federal Government office is so backed up because of the shutdown. So here we are almost a week after the shutdown, but we are really still shut down for the purposes of these small businesses.

I have heard from the young men and women of the U.S. Coast Guard. In Ohio, we have Lake Erie, we have Coast Guard stations, and we have a lot of great patriots who have been struggling financially as they worked for no pay. By the way, they were determined to do their duty, and I applaud their patriotism.

I applaud the patriotism of all of the Federal workers who showed up without getting paid and did their duty and were proud to do their duty. A lot of these folks missed two paychecks, but they didn't miss a beat, and we appreciate them.

In addition to the impact this shutdown has had on those Federal employees and their families, it has also had a

real impact on our economy. We should pay attention to that.

The Congressional Budget Office just released a report on Monday estimating the economic impacts the shutdown had on our economy. Remember, this was just a partial shutdown. Most of the funding for defense, as an example, we had appropriated, but for 25 percent of it, we had not.

This is what happens: When paychecks don't flow into the economy, when furloughed Federal workers can't perform needed services and are paid after the fact anyway, and when there are sudden disruptions for Federal contractors and other businesses that rely on timely payment from these Agencies, it has a real impact, and taxpayers are worse off.

CBO estimated that the partial shutdown reduced GDP by \$11 billion in the near term, \$8 billion in the first quarter of this year, and \$3 billion in the fourth quarter of 2018. Fortunately, the Agency expects an offsetting increase in economic activity now that the government has reopened and Federal employees are receiving backpay, but over the long term, CBO estimates that \$3 billion will never be recovered in our economy. So it has an economic impact on all of us, and that goes for jobs, wages, and economic growth.

Some of that economic impact, of course, also means less revenue. Is it significant in terms of the overall revenue for our government? Some would say no, but it is less tax revenue to the Federal Government.

The aviation industry was hit particularly hard by the shutdown. The FAA was subject to the shutdown, and many of my constituents expressed concerns about aviation safety. We heard about the long delays at some of the airports. That has an economic impact.

I will tell you that airlines, such as Delta Airlines and Southwest Airlines, reported that they lost tens of millions of dollars in revenue in January. So this is over and above the CBO estimate I was talking about. Delta lost about \$25 million. Southwest lost between \$10 and \$15 million. These lost earnings have decreased Federal tax revenues, of course, to the government. CBO didn't put a price on that, but, in fact, it is even worse than CBO estimates because of the budgetary impacts that lead to some of these revenue impacts as well.

The bottom line is that the lower economic growth and the disruptions for Federal employees ultimately cost taxpayers more than if Congress had just passed these appropriations bills on time and we hadn't gotten into this shutdown.

It doesn't have to be this way. Again, that is why I am working to ensure we don't go there again. In every Congress for the last five Congresses since I was elected in 2010, I have introduced legislation called the End Government Shutdowns Act. I was involved with this when I was on the House side

under President Bush, and now I am involved with it here because I think these shutdowns make no sense. I have introduced it under Republican and Democratic Presidents. I have introduced it under Republican and Democratic control of the House and the Senate. So this is not a political issue to me; this is a good-government issue.

The bill is a very simple, common-sense step that would continue funding from the previous year for any appropriations bill that is not done, and when there is a continuing resolution, as there is now, whenever that continuing resolution expires, we would just continue the funding from the previous year. Some have called that an auto CR. Instead of shutting down, at least the government would continue to operate.

A CR is not the ultimate answer. What we really want to do is to get this place—Congress—to actually do its work and to pass the individual appropriations bills. That is how you reform government. That is how you ensure there is certainty and predictability, particularly at the Department of Defense, where they worry a lot about that.

My bill also says that after the first 120 days—4 months—there will be a 1-percent across-the-board reduction in spending to get people to the table so that appropriators who like to spend money actually have some incentive to not just continue the CR. I think that is important. We would then reduce it by 1 percent every 90 days thereafter if Congress doesn't get its act together and put these bills together.

I think this will help to not just stop shutdowns but also to keep us from having perpetual continuing resolutions. Only through passing these individual bills can we do our constitutional duty—and it is our duty.

By the way, some Democrats have said they are not wowed by the 1 percent across the board after 4 months. They have said that somehow Republicans would like that better than they would. I just don't agree with that. I will tell you, 53 percent of the spending in this category is defense spending. It is not security spending, which is more than that, but 53 percent of it—more than half—is defense spending. It is Republicans on this side of the aisle who talk about this every year, and we have accomplished increasing defense spending. We are not going to want to cut defense spending.

By the same token, some on the other side will feel strongly about their priorities, and some of us have other priorities as well. We all have priorities. This is not meant to be an uneven balance; it is meant to be fair—1 percent across the board for everything.

My hope is that we can pass this legislation. We now have 28 cosponsors in the Senate. More than half of the Republicans are on this bill. We have the opportunity to actually move this forward, I hope, in this current negotia-

tion over the border I talked about and over the immigration policies I talked about. Let's do it.

On the other side of the Capitol, my friend TROY BALDERSON, a Republican Representative from Ohio, and a Democrat, JEFF VAN DREW from New Jersey, have introduced this bill. They introduced it last week, so now we have a companion bill that is bipartisan in the House as well.

You have heard Speaker PELOSI say she is against shutdowns. You have heard CHUCK SCHUMER, who is the leader over here for the Democrats, say he is against shutdowns. You have heard a lot of our leadership say they are against shutdowns. Well, this might be something we can actually get together on and do something about.

My hope is that we can move forward. We hope we can put a common-sense bill in place that doesn't allow us to fall back into another one of these painful government shutdowns. They are not good for anybody.

Let's forge a bipartisan agreement on this funding. We are not that far apart, as I said earlier. Let's be sure we have border security. Let's deal with some of these lingering immigration issues where the President has extended the olive branch. Let's do something good for the people we represent, but at the same time, let's find a will to include in this package legislation that ends these government shutdowns while what happened these last several weeks is still fresh in our minds. Having gone through this bitter experience of the longest shutdown in history, let's be sure we don't let people down. Instead, let's make sure we do not let this moment pass and indeed stop these government shutdowns once and for all.

I yield back my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—AMENDMENT
NO. 65

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, as you know, today, or very shortly, the Senate is going to be taking up S. 1, called the Strengthen America's Security in the Middle East Act.

Through the Chair, I would say, S. 1 is being offered by Senator MARCO RUBIO, the senior Senator from Florida. He is, as we also know, whip smart, and Senator RUBIO has forgotten more about foreign policy than I will ever know. I have enormous respect for him, and nothing I say today is meant to criticize his extraordinary efforts on this bill, much of which I have supported and will continue to support, but there is a deficiency in S. 1. We can do better by filling that hole.

Once again, Congress is paying lip service to protecting our allies in the Middle East. We are calling this bill a protector of our allies in the Middle East, and in large part it is, with a major exception—because, once again, the U.S. Senate is leaving behind our friends and allies, the Kurds.

It is not the first time the Kurds have been left behind. The Kurds were

left behind when the Ottoman Empire collapsed, and they remained a stateless people. The Kurds were left behind as modern states grew up around them, in Syria, Iran, Iraq, and Turkey, where they had no political representation, where the Kurds had no future besides oppression. The Kurds were left behind again in 2011, when allied troops pulled out of Iraq, and ISIS was just beginning to emerge. It is time we break that pattern, once and for all, and the Senate can do it in Senator RUBIO's stellar effort in the form of S. 1.

As I said, S. 1 does some really good things. I thank Senator RUBIO. It will reaffirm our commitment to protecting Israel, certainly our closest friend in the region, maybe our best friend in the world. Sometimes I think Israel is our only friend in the world. S. 1 will strengthen our bond with Jordan, another key ally in fighting terrorism and the humanitarian catastrophe caused by the Syrian refugee crisis. It will combat a radical economic warfare campaign against Israel. Let me say that again because it is important. S. 1 will combat a radical economic warfare campaign against Israel. I support that unconditionally. S. 1 will create new sanctions on the Government of Syria that targets those who have been laundering money to help the Assad regime.

I support all of those things, but with all the respect I can muster, I say, gently, it is a lie. It is a lie for anyone to say that S. 1 protects all of our allies in the Middle East because it will not. S. 1 makes no mention of our Kurdish allies at all. I have an amendment pending—I have offered an amendment, rather, that would fix that.

There are 30 million Kurds in the Middle East. They don't have a state, they don't have a country to call their own. They are not really safe anywhere. As a result, the Kurdish people have suffered tremendously throughout history. They have been subjected to discrimination, massacres, forced relocation, and countless other human rights violations.

Saddam Hussein attacked more than 4,000—4,000 Kurdish villages—not people, Kurdish villages—with poison gas and other chemical weapons during the Iran-Iraq war. One hundred eighty thousand people died. They were murdered. Many more were tortured. Even more were imprisoned. Thousands fled, not that they had anywhere to go.

In the 1990s, Turkish soldiers made a hobby out of burning down Kurdish villages. Since 1984, more than 40,000 Turkish Kurds have been killed. They still face oppression today in nearly every country they inhabit. The Turkish Defense Minister made that clear in December, when he said that when the time comes, the Kurds “will be buried in the ditches they dug. No one should doubt this.” That is a quote.

Through all this incomprehensible suffering, the Kurds have stood by America, and we have stood by them through the decades, through thick and

through thin. The Kurds have been instrumental at every phase of U.S. engagement in Iraq and Syria, every phase.

Going back to the 2003 invasion, Kurdish fighters have been crucial boots on the ground in the fight against Islamic tyranny, and that is just a fact. The parts of Iraq retaken and controlled by the Kurds were strongholds for Western values like democracy and capitalism and multiculturalism. In fact, when allied forces withdrew in 2011, not a single U.S. soldier had lost his or her life in Kurdish territory.

The Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces, better known as the SDF, have been another set of boots on the ground in the fight against ISIS. With the help of coalition supplies, weapons, and airstrikes, the SDF recaptured large parts of Northern and Eastern Syria from ISIS's iron grip.

Four years ago, the Presiding Officer will recall, there were 100,000 ISIS soldiers. Thanks in large part to our Kurdish allies, those numbers today are 5,000. Today, ISIS has surrendered 99 percent of its territory, including its capital in Raqqa. The so-called caliphate fighters are now being held to a small sliver of territory on the eastern border with Iraq near the Euphrates River. Our Kurdish allies deserve much of the credit for these successes.

It is plain to see that the Syrian Kurds have been invaluable in America's fight against jihadists and tyrants in the Middle East. The SDF, Syrian Kurds, controls nearly one-quarter of Syria right now. That is land that doesn't belong to ISIS; that is land that doesn't belong to Assad, a butcher; that is land that doesn't belong to Russia; and that is land that doesn't belong to Iran. More importantly, it is land where the Syrian Kurds know they will be free from persecution and from slaughter.

For a while now, I have been asking my colleagues in the Senate to support my amendment to S. 1. My amendment would promote stability and security for our close friends in the Middle East because it is the right thing to do. It is the moral thing to do, and America's foreign policy has always had a moral component.

My amendment will allow the United States to defend the Kurds in Syria by giving the President—not requiring the President to do anything. It would give the President the authority to use our military as he deems fit to keep our promise and to protect our allies—and all of our allies. After all, the Kurds have contributed to the fight against ISIS, and we owe them some peace of mind as we draw down our presence in the region. As we draw down our presence in the region, it is time to stand up and stand by our friends to make sure the fight stays won.

The threat of U.S. military force has been a major deterrent for the reemergence of jihadists like ISIS and al-Qaida. As the Presiding Officer knows

well, weakness invites in wolves. Our presence has held back Assad, it has held back Turkey, it has held back Russia, and it has held back Iran from gaining stronger footholds in the area. Without assurances of our support, as we wind down our effort in Syria, the Kurds will be left behind to fend for themselves. Without the Kurds, we cannot be certain who will step in to fill the power vacuum in the areas of Syria they currently control. We can only guess, and the answers to those guesses don't look good.

If the Kurds are vulnerable to attack from Turkey or Syrian rebels, they might have to turn to their enemies for protection out of fear. Even if they don't, they can't fight off the Turkish military if the Turkish military decides to attack and pursue the remnants of ISIS at the same time.

To abandon the Kurds now would be unconscionable. To abandon the Kurds now would compromise the security of our allies, Israel and Jordan, and it would risk exposing the region to more turmoil.

I urge my colleagues in the Senate to think about the Kurds as they consider how best we can strengthen America's interests and security in the Middle East. It is time we make sure America keeps the promises we made to all of our allies—not just some of our allies, all of our allies—in the Middle East.

Mr. KENNEDY. Toward that end, I hereby offer a second amendment that I am sending to the desk. This second-degree amendment will amend amendment No. 65 proposed by Senator McCONNELL. I ask that the amendment be read.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is the Senator offering the amendment?

Mr. KENNEDY. I am.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. That requires unanimous consent because the Senate is in a period of debate only.

Mr. KENNEDY. I hear no objection. May I ask that my amendment be read?

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

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COTTON). Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. KENNEDY. Afterward, I would ask that my amendment be read.

Now I would again ask for a quorum call.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I would like to temporarily withdraw my unanimous consent on my amendment, although I reserve the right to return.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Consent is withdrawn.

The majority leader.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

MORNING BUSINESS

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

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

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE OFFICE OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, this year marks the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the Legislative Drafting Service, which we now know as the Office of the Legislative Counsel. In recognition of the anniversary, I would like to make a few comments about the history of the office.

During the first 130 years of Congress, 1789–1918, legislation for Congress was drafted by Members of Congress, congressional staff, Executive agencies, and outside individuals and groups which sometimes led to legislation that was not always clear, consistent, organized, and well written.

In 1911, Columbia University established a Legislative Drafting Research Fund to conduct research and work toward the better drafting of statutes and sent Professor Middleton Beaman and Thomas Parkinson to Congress to demonstrate the feasibility and value of the use by Congress of a full-time staff of professional legislative drafters.

The positive experiences of committees, Members, and staff of Congress, including the Ways and Means Committee of the House of Representatives, in working with professional legislative drafters led to the introduction and consideration of legislation to establish a Legislative Drafting Bureau, including S. 1240, 63rd Congress, which was reported to the Senate on June 17, 1913.

During the debate on the establishment of a Legislative Drafting Bureau, Senator Elihu Root of New York argued in favor of establishment citing the use of counsel by the British House of Commons and stating that “[t]he fundamental idea . . . to give the benefit of a trained, experienced student in the preparation of bills. . . . We need trained and intelligent assistance in the drafting of laws.”

On February 24, 1919, Congress enacted section 1303 of the Revenue Act