The House met at noon and was called to order by the Speaker.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer: Gracious and merciful God, we give You thanks for giving us another day. In this Chamber, where the people's House gathers, we pause to offer You gratitude for the gift of this good land on which we live and for this great Nation which You have inspired in developing over so many years. In these days, please send Your holy spirit to inspire those members of the conference committee, that a constructive compromise might be reached to secure the funding of all government services. May all that is done this day be for Your greater honor and glory. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House her approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. The Chair will lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance. The Speaker 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.

ADJOURNMENT

The SPEAKER. Without objection, the House stands adjourned until 11:30 a.m. Monday, February 4, 2019.

Thereupon (at 12 o'clock and 1 minute p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until Monday, February 4, 2019, at 11:30 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

78. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. Act 22-575, "Health Insurance Marketplace Improvement Temporary Amendment Act of 2019", pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Reform.

79. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. Act 22-576, "Controlled Substance Testing Temporary Amendment Act of 2018", pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Reform.

80. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. Act 22-564, "Sexual Blackmail Elimination and Immigrant Protection Amendment Act of 2018", pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Reform.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. SCOTT of Virginia (for himself and Ms. BOST of Illinois, Mr. BOST, Mr. ROYDEN DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. WILCHE, Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia, Mr. NORCROSS, Mr. LAMB, Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mrs. MILLER, and Mr. FITZPATRICK):

H.R. 935. A bill to provide for transfers to the 1974 UMWA pension plan and a reduction in the minimum age for allowable in-service distributions to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. RASKIN (for himself, Mr. ROUDA, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. CARBAJAL, Ms. NORTON, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. SOTO, Mr. BLUMENAUER, and Mr. POCAH):

H.R. 936. A bill to amend the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 and the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 to prohibit a corporation from making disbursements for a political purpose unless the corporation has assessed the preferences of its shareholders with respect to such disbursements, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services, and in addition to the Committee on Oversight and Reform, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. SCHRADE (for himself and Mr. WILCHE):

H.R. 937. A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to prevent the misclassification of drugs for purposes of the Medicare drug rebate program; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. SCHRADE (for himself and Mr. CARTER of Georgia):

H.R. 938. A bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act, with respect to eligibility for approval of a subsequent generic drug, to remove the barrier to that approval posed by the 180-day exclusivity period afforded to a first generic applicant that has not yet received final approval, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. SCHNEIDER (for himself, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. QUOY and Mr. KELLY of
H.R. 938. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to require federally licensed firearms importers, manufacturers, and dealers to require requirements with respect to securing their firearms inventory, business records, and business premises; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. GALLAGHER (for himself, Mr. KING, Mr. PANETTA, Mr. LAHOOD, Mr. COLE, Mr. HILL of Arkansas, Mr. COOPER of California, Mr. BARTLETT of California, Mr. COHEN, Mr. CURTIS, Mr. BRYER, Mr. BANKS, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mr. BACON, Mr. WHITMER, Mr. BASS, Mr. BARR, and Mr. SUOZZI):

H.R. 940. A bill to amend the Trade Expansion Act of 1962 to impose limitations on the authority of the President to adjust imports that are determined to threaten national security, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Rules, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. BERGMAN:

H.R. 941. A bill to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to adopt certain strategies for preventive colorectal screenings for veterans for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs.

By Mr. HIMES (for himself, Ms. Kuster of New Hampshire, Ms. HILL of South Carolina, Mr. CLARKE of New York, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. PELLMUTTER, Mr. SOTO, and Mrs. MURPHY):

H.R. 942. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide an enhanced research credit for the development of smart energy and commerce technologies; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Ms. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York:

H.R. 943. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Energy to enter into agreements with Indian Tribes or States for the development of smart energy and commerce technologies; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. FITZPATRICK (for himself and Mr. MURPHY):

H. Res. 94. A resolution raising awareness and encouraging the prevention of stalking by expanding support for the designation of January 2019 as “National Stalking Awareness Month”; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. SCOTT of Virginia:

H.R. 934. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, clause 18 of the Constitution of the United States.

By Mr. MCKINLEY:

H.R. 935. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Section 8—Powers of Congress. To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. RASKIN:

H.R. 936. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

“The Congress shall have Power . . . To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.

By Mr. SCHNEIDER:

H.R. 937. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. GALLAGHER:

H.R. 940. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. BERGMAN:

H.R. 941. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 clearly grants Congress the authority “To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations”—not the President. This bill reclaims delegated Congressional authority over Section 282 tariffs.

By Mrs. MURPHY:

H.R. 942. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution, as this legislation provides for the general welfare of the United States.

By Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York:

H.R. 943. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the Constitution of the United States.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H. Res. 94. A resolution raising awareness and encouraging the prevention of stalking by expanding support for the designation of January 2019 as “National Stalking Awareness Month”; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. RASKIN:

H.R. 935. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Section 8—Powers of Congress. To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

Article I, Section 8

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 51: Ms. SPANBERGER.
H.R. 117: Ms. WILSON of Florida.
H.R. 119: Ms. WILSON of Florida.
H.R. 141: Mr. FOSTER and Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana.
H.R. 205: Mr. POSEY.
H.R. 273: Mr. FOSTER, Mr. BRYER, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Ms. KELLY of Idaho, Ms. DELAURA, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. GALLEGOS, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. RUSH, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. SUOZZI, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. CICILLINE, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER.
H.R. 514: Mr. WIEBBER, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. ZELDIN, Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. YOHIO, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, and Mr. CURTIS.
H.R. 389: Mr. KILMER.
H.R. 394: Ms. WILSON of Florida.
H.R. 479: Mr. CLOUD, Mr. YOHO, Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia, Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana, and Mrs. LESEK.
H.R. 531: Ms. WILSON of Florida.
H.R. 535: Ms. DRAN.
H.R. 549: Mr. SIEHES.
H.R. 553: Mr. ROGERS, Mr. SPANO, Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana, and Mr. PAPPAS.
H.R. 557: Mr. CARBAJAL.
H.R. 565: Mr. GRALIA.
H.R. 615: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY and Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ.
H.R. 653: Ms. WILSON of Florida.
H.R. 678: Ms. HALLAND, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. LYNCH, Ms. ADAMS, Mrs. HAYES, Ms. LOPFREN, Ms. BASS, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Mr. LEWIS, Ms. FLASKETT, Mr. BISHOP of South Carolina, Mr. BUSCH, Mr. COLES, Mr. FUDGE, Mrs. DEMINGS, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. MEeks, and Mr. THOMPSON of California.
H.R. 708: Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 736: Mrs. AXNE.
H.R. 739: Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. GUEST, Mr. WATKINS, and Mr. MAST.
H.R. 748: Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. YARMUTH, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mrs. LEE of Nevada, Mr. CARBAJAL, Mr. MAST, Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. TURNER, and Mr. CARSON of Indiana.
H.R. 757: Mr. STEWART.
H.R. 761: Mr. CARSON of Indiana.
H.R. 781: Mr. HIGGINS of New York and Mr. MAST.
H.R. 791: Mr. DeSAULNIER.
H.R. 809: Mr. DeFAZIO.
H.R. 869: Ms. SLOTKIN.
H.R. 874: Ms. MING and Mr. TED LIEU of California.
H.R. 878: Mr. LAMB, Mr. CISNEROS, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, and Mrs. HAYES.
H.R. 885: Mrs. HAYES.
H.J. Res. 18: Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania.
H.J. Res. 37: Mr. ESPAILLAT, Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. BROWN of Maryland, and Ms. PRESSLEY.
H.R. 38: Mr. GONZALEZ of Texas, Ms. HOULAHAN, and Mr. KENNEDY.
H. Res. 38: Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER, Mr. HARDER of California, Mr. MOULTON, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. GIBBS, Mr. MCKINLEY, Mr. FOSTER, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Ms. SCHAOKOWSKY, and Mr. MCGOVERN.
H. Res. 58: Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York.
H. Res. 84: Mr. CARSON of Indiana.
PRAYER
The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:
Let us pray.
Lord of the harvest, we continue to seek You, for we desire to do Your will. You are the strength of our lives. As our lawmakers strive to walk uprightly, provide them with the harvest of truth, justice, and righteousness. May they cultivate such ethical congruence that their rhetoric will be undergirded by right actions.
Lord, keep them aware of Your continued presence as they find in You fullness of joy. Show them the path to life as Your truth brings them to a safe harbor.
We pray in Your merciful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
The President pro tempore 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.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER
The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH). The majority leader is recognized.

S. 1
Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, earlier this week, Senate Democrats stopped filibustering the important legislation before us. They finally joined Republicans and voted to advance these measures to renew our commitment to Israel, deepen our cooperation with Jordan, and deliver justice for the victims of Assad’s brutality in Syria.

But it appears some of my Democratic colleagues are not finished with their obstruction just yet.

On Tuesday, I offered a straightforward amendment to allow for a straightforward debate about the Senate’s continued commitment to ongoing missions in Syria and Afghanistan. It is not a partisan amendment. It is not complicated. There is no poison pill. It is simply an opportunity for Senators to go on the record about what our country should be doing in Syria and Afghanistan.

I have been clear about my own views on these subjects. I believe the threats remain. ISIS and al-Qaeda have yet to be defeated, and American national security interests require continued commitment to our missions there.

But I guess some Senate Democrats don’t want to vote on these important subjects. Perhaps it could have put some of my colleagues with aims beyond the Senate at odds with parts of the far left. Whatever the reason, our colleagues tried to avoid taking a position and tried to block my amendment from getting a vote.

Make no mistake. Today, the Senate will vote on this amendment. Members will go on the record about what our allies and our partners in the Middle East.

When Senator Kunín introduced S. 1, which is just a collection of bipartisan bills, I hoped for an open amendment process so that the Senate could debate important matters of national security. I am disappointed that our friends on the other side of the aisle have chosen to make that impossible.

Another issue I had hoped we could address is America’s Ironclad commitment to the transatlantic alliance. NATO has a proud history of delivering greater security to America and our allies and greater peace to the world. We stood shoulder to shoulder with our NATO allies throughout the Cold War; they stood with us following 9/11. NATO’s mission in Afghanistan today is an essential element of bringing peace and stability to that troubled country.

NATO will continue to be critical to transatlantic security, but it must adapt to new challenges. The United States has made significant new investments in our security posture in Europe, most notably through troop deployments all along the eastern flank and through the European Deterrence Initiative, which has bipartisan support here in Congress.

Former Secretary Mattis was also instrumental in pushing NATO to reform, especially in the areas of capabilities modernization, readiness, and military mobility. These reforms are essential to ensuring NATO readiness.

President Trump has also reaffirmed our Nation’s commitment to NATO. As recently as just a few days ago, he said the United States will “be with NATO 100 percent.”

The President is right to call upon our allies to contribute their fair share toward our collective defense. As NATO’s Secretary General recently explained, President Trump has “clearly stated that NATO allies need to invest more. . . . we agreed to do more . . . and now we see the results. . . . by the end of next year, NATO allies will add . . . 100 billion extra U.S. dollars [for] defense.”

Here is how the Secretary General summed it up: “So we see some real money, and some real results, and we see that the clear message from President Trump is having an impact.”

We need to build on this momentum and continue strengthening NATO, dispelling all doubt—all doubt—about America’s commitment to this alliance, which has reshaped history for the better.

NATO deserves the Senate’s support. I believe it has the Senate’s support, and at some point I hope this institution is able to debate that matter.
Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, on a totally different matter, earlier this week I began discussing H.R. 1. This is the House Democrats’ marquee bill for the new Congress.

I have stated this week that it really adds up to a unprecedented partisan power grab, an effort to centralize more control over America’s speech and America’s voting here in Washington—the “Democratic Politician Protection Act.” I am pleased that people are beginning to pay attention to this monstrosity—a monstrosity.

Today I want to focus on how the power grab would affect our elections because when Washington politicians suddenly decide their top priority is grabbing unprecedented control over how they get elected and sent to Washington in the first place, alarm bells should start ringing all over this place.

After all, article I, section IV of the Constitution gives—clearly gives—State legislatures primary responsibility for “the Times, Places, and Manner of holding Elections for Senators and Representatives.”

There are times in American history when it has come to that. There have been times when our Nation has needed the Federal Government to get involved to expand and protect the franchise or to respond to a national emergency, for example, bills like the Voting Rights Act, which secured the franchise for African Americans, or the Help America Vote Act, which provided guideposts—to prevent a crisis like the Bush v. Gore recount from occurring a second time.

So what is the alleged crisis now? What is the alleged crisis now, in 2019, that has House Democrats calling for an unprecedented Federal takeover of elections across our country? Why is this Democratic bill—which would universities the Federal Government mandates over the minutia of the election process than has ever been done in the past—necessary now?

There are 15 more elections every year than the biggest elections in a Presidential election in American history. Now, with population growth, that isn’t entirely surprising, but the turnout rate was the third highest since 1968. So people are voting in great numbers.

Let’s look at the 2018 midterms—the highest midterm turnout in 50 years. People voted in the midterms.

Listen to what Americans themselves had to say about their experience. After the election, 92 percent—92 percent—of surveyed voters told the Pew Research Center their voting experience was “very easy” or “somewhat easy”—92 percent—very easy or somewhat easy to vote. Regardless of when they voted and how they voted, huge majorities communicated that there were no real trouble—no real trouble—casting their ballots. No trouble.

My Democratic friends seem to be implying there is a supposed crisis here that conveniently is not rooted in the facts or in the opinions of American voters.

There is no objective basis for the sweeping Federal takeover of elections that House Democrats have dreamed up. There is no emergency. It is just a Washington power grab for its very own sake.

Decision after decision that our Constitution properly leaves to the States just melts away in this proposal. Practically every variable of any consequence to American elections gets a top-down mandate written by whom? Why, the Democrats, of course.

Could States accept a signature to vote under the Democrats’ bill? Only if they accept a computerized mark, making that signature requirement about as serious as clicking one check box on a website.

What if States and localities want to make sure that ineligible voters under the age of 18 don’t end up on the voter rolls or decide whether or how convicted felons have their voting rights restored? Well, under the “Democratic Politician Protection Act,” States have no choice in the matter.

How many early days of voting should there be? Do polls need to be open on Sundays? What is the best way to make absentee ballots available? When can early voting take place, and how long and where should the polling places be located?

Different States and communities have come to different legitimate judgments on all of these questions. It is a part of our pluralistic system, and the decentralization of our election process leads to a more democratic system with more direct impact on the elections of those decision makers.

The United States of America has never been about centralizing all power in Washington, and Washington should not get to micromanage the processes that determine who comes to Washington.

But, alas, House Democrats don’t seem to care if their partisan power grab upsets this constitutional balance. These Representatives even—get this—want the Federal Government to dictate to States how their very own congressional districts will be drawn. They want the Federal Government to tell the States how to draw their congressional districts.

Right now, there is a competition of ideas among the States about the best way to handle this. Different places arrive at different answers. Naturally, House Democrats have a different idea. They want to force every State to use a commission that is designed by them—by Washington Democrats. Every State will have to use a commission designed by Washington Democrats whose structure and procedures are prescribed, of course, by Washington Democrats. If a State doesn’t know how to bow to their will, then the DC Federal court will make the decisions that have been reserved for the State legislatures going back to our Nation’s founding.

I know it is not fashionable on the far left to praise the wisdom of our constitutional structure. It seems to be out of fashion. I am sure that in some corners I will be derided for referencing the Constitution at all. They will say: How could it still be relevant after all these years?

Of course, this thinking shows exactly why our founding principles are so important.

Our Constitution is there to protect our liberties and protect our form of government from the whim of whoever happens to be in power. These guardrails exist to stop things like a narrow partisan majority in the House of Representatives grabbing control of election laws just to benefit themselves politically. We need to stand with Alexander Hamilton and our Constitution, not with the House Democrats’ partisan power grab.
Mr. MCCONNELL. I move to proceed to Calendar No. 7, S. 47.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion to proceed.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 7, S. 47, a bill to provide for the management of the natural resources of the United States, and for other purposes.

CLOTURE MOTION
Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I send a cloture motion to the desk on the motion to proceed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

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 move that the Senate proceed to Calendar No. 7, S. 47, a bill to provide for the management of the natural resources of the United States, and for other purposes:

Mitch McConnell, Pat Roberts, Shelley Moore Capito, Mitt Romney, Richard Burr, John Cornyn, Rick Scott, Mike Crapo, Cindy Hyde-Smith, Michael B. Enzi, Kevin Cramer, Mike Braun, John Boozman, Steve Daines, James M. Inhofe, Thom Tillis, Joni Ernst.

NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT ACT—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. MCCONNELL. I move to proceed to Calendar No. 7, S. 47.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion to proceed.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 7, S. 47, a bill to provide for the management of the natural resources of the United States, and for other purposes.

CLOTURE MOTION
Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I send a cloture motion to the desk on the motion to proceed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

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 move that the Senate proceed to Calendar No. 7, S. 47, a bill to provide for the management of the natural resources of the United States, and for other purposes:

Mitch McConnell, Pat Roberts, Shelley Moore Capito, Mitt Romney, Richard Burr, John Cornyn, Rick Scott, Mike Crapo, Cindy Hyde-Smith, Michael B. Enzi, Kevin Cramer, Mike Braun, John Boozman, Steve Daines, James M. Inhofe, Thom Tillis, Joni Ernst.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum calls be waived.

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

Mr. MCCONNELL. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The quorum call is so ordered.

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

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

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, I am pleased the Senate is finally debating S. 1 after three inexplicable Democratic attempts to filibuster the bill. This package of Middle East policy bills, all of which have bipartisan support, addresses a number of key issues.

For starters, this legislation will further strengthen our relationship with our closest ally in the Middle East, Israel. It authorizes 10 years of military support funding to Israel. It reaffirms the U.S. commitment to ensuring that Israel has better weapons and equipment than its enemies. It will also foster increased technical cooperation between Israel and the United States to support the security of both of our countries.

The legislation also strengthens our relationship with another close ally of ours in the Middle East, the Kingdom of Jordan. The Senate Intelligence Committee report on Tuesday was a timely reminder of the importance of investing in our alliances. Senior intelligence officials testified that China and Russia are becoming increasingly aggressive in seeking to increase their influence, not just in their own regions but in other parts of the world. Russia's support in the Syrian regime is a prime example.

Now, more than ever, it is vital that we maintain close relationships with our allies before us and others so that we can help hold accountable individuals who have supported the atrocities of the Assad regime. It directs the Treasury Department to investigate whether the Syrian government is laundering money for the Syrian Government.

The conflict in Syria has claimed hundreds of thousands of lives and driven literally millions of Syrians from their country. While the United States still faces a conflict around the world, it is vital that we make it very clear the United States will not tolerate those who have contributed to the brutality of Bashar al-Assad's government.

Finally, the legislation we are considering today will protect the right of State and local governments to decline to do business with entities that have chosen to boycott Israel. As I said, all of the bills in the legislation before us today have support, and I hope the Senate will pass this legislation with a strong bipartisan majority.

AMENDMENT NO. 65

Madam President, I also would like to take a few moments to talk about an amendment the leader has proposed. As I noted, this week, our intelligence community leaders gave a frank assessment of the threats, and we should be wary of letting our guard down or becoming complacent about our strengths. For that reason, I would like to state my support for Leader McConnell's amendment to express the sense of the Senate that we should be cautious about any premature withdrawal of our troops from Syria and Afghanistan.

We don't have to look back very far for a reminder that prematurely withdrawing our troops can create a power vacuum that terrorists and others will step in to fill. Our too-hasty withdrawal from Iraq, on a timeline we announced to our enemies, created the circumstances that allowed for the rise of ISIS. We need to be wary about allowing something like that to happen again.

Terrorist groups are not the only entities we have to worry about. Adversaries like Russia and Iran are already trying to flex their power in the Middle East, and the United States could very well take advantage of an early U.S. withdrawal to strengthen their foothold in the region.

While I understand and respect President Trump's desire to bring our troops home and to end these protracted wars, we must do so in a way that ensures enduring stability and protects our interests and those of our allies. The leader's amendment is an important reminder of the need for caution and reflection as we consider troop withdrawal and would make it clear that the United States does not intend to abruptly leave them in the midst of the battle.

I hope all my colleagues will support the leader's amendment when we vote on it later today.

USS "SOUTH DAKOTA"

Madam President, before I close, I would like to mention the commission of the Navy's newest Virginia-class attack submarine, the USS South Dakota, which will occur this Saturday, February 2, 2019, in Groton, Connecticut. Designated SSN 790, the USS South Dakota will be the 17th submarine of her class, pushing the envelope of U.S. maritime technology and underwater dominance.

We are proud the State of South Dakota will once again be represented in the fleet by this engineering marvel, which will project America's strength and protect our national interests throughout the maritime domain and beyond.

In March 2012, I led the South Dakota delegation, which then included Senator Tim Johnson and Congresswoman Kristi Noem, in writing Secretary of the Navy Mabus to request that the Navy name its next attack submarine, the USS South Dakota. I joined them and all South Dakotans in saying we are excited to see this honor come to fruition.

The South Dakota will build on the legacy of her forebears, a Pennsylvania-class armored cruiser that served as a troop escort in World War I and a battleship that was one of the most decorated battleships in World War II. The battleship South Dakota was a proud representative of the 68,000 South Dakotans who answered their country's call to serving the war, earning 13 battle stars in the Pacific theater.

The South Dakota led with her nine 16-inch guns in the battles of the Santa Cruz Islands and Guadalcanal, which earned her a reputation as a fighting machine by defending U.S. aircraft carriers and disabling the enemy's.
In her second Pacific tour, the South Dakota supported marine landings on the Marshall Islands with shore bombardments before joining the Battle of the Philippine Sea and fighting through a bomb hit in order to defend our carriers. As information on U.S. military tactics the time, she was often referred to as “Bat-
sarities on their toes.
mine warfare—all while keeping adver-
sion and reconnaissance, and ir-
s operations forces, strike war-
are, irregular warfare, intelligence,
veillance and reconnaissance, and
ine warfare—all while keeping adver-
saries on their toes.
The submarine South Dakota will con-
tinue this distinguished tradition of service. Her force is the nature of the sub-
marine force, the accomplishments of
this new boat and her crew may be
even more secretive than those of her
battleship predecessor’s. In fact, it
could be decades until we fully appre-
ciate all the South Dakota might do in her
30-plus-year service life. We may
very well read about her exploits in a
sequence to “Blind Man’s Bluff”—the dar-
ing account of early U.S. submarine es-
ploration and power projection.
Because of the nature of their work, the submariners of the U.S. Navy are
underrated. The service is often an undersung hero of the U.S. military’s. I
have certainly never seen a submarine at an airshow or coming down Main
Street in a parade. The nature of the sub force’s mission is as secretive as it is
hidden from the public’s eyes. At any given mo-
moment, the U.S. submarine force is pat-
trolling the depths of the ocean and is
monitoring littoral waters for threats
against our Nation and our allies.
The South Dakota will project power
at sea and ashore with her payload of
torpedoes and Tomahawk cruise mis-
siles, which can be delivered without
warning. Undetected, she will carry out
the seven core competencies of the sub-
marine force—anti-submarine warfare,
anti-surface warfare, the delivery of
special operations forces, strike war-
are, irregular warfare, intelligence,
veillance and reconnaissance, and
mine warfare—all while keeping adver-
saries on their toes.
When South Dakota leaves for her
Homeport in Pearl Harbor, she will take
the Great Plains. I am confident that such
hardiness will be replicated in all offi-
cers and crew members of the South
Dakota. They live up to the boat’s
motto, which says, “Under the sea,
we rule.”
As boat sponsor Deanie Dempsey
brings the boat to life on Saturday, we
thank the officers and crew of the
South Dakota for their dedicated serv-
cice to our country.
May God bless the USS South Dakota
and keep watch over her as she patrols
the seas.
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. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I ask
the officers and crew of the
South Dakota to rise.
Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I want
to continue talking about a subject
that I talked about yesterday, and that
is our situation in the Middle East—
specifically, but not exclusively, with
respect to Syria.
To focus my thoughts, I want to
begin talking about S. 1, which we are
considering and will be considering
shortly. We have been considering the
procedural matters.
S. 1 is the Strengthening America’s
Security in the Middle East Act. Its
sponsor is the senior Senator from the
Presiding Officer’s State, Senator
RUBIO. He has done an extraordinary
job with this bill. We both know Sen-
ator RUBIO. He is whip-smart, as I said
yesterday. Speaking for me, he has for-
gotten more foreign policy than I will
ever know.
This is a good bill. I will just men-
tion a couple of things. Senator RISCH
has worked very hard on it as well. He
is, of course, the chairman of our For-
enign Relations Committee.
There is a lot to like in S. 1. I just
made a list walking over here. No. 1, S.
1 is going to reaffirm our commitment
to protecting Israel. Israel is easily our
most important ally in the Middle East
and is easily our most important friend
in the Middle East. On some days, I
think they are easily our only friend in
the world, and we should support our
friends. Let me say that again. We
have to support our friends, and Israel
is a friend. This bill will support Israel,
and I like that. So I am going to vote for
the bill.
No. 2, Senator RUBIO’s bill strength-
ens our bond with Jordan, another key
ally. Jordan is a key ally in fighting
terrorism and the humanitarian catas-
trophe caused by Assad’s butchering of
his own people in Syria, along with the
help of Vladimir Putin in Russia.
No. 3, Senator RUBIO’s bill will com-
bat a radical economic welfare cam-
paign against Israel. That is very im-
portant. You either support Israel or
you don’t. It is time for everybody to
stand up and be counted.
Finally, Senator RUBIO’s bill creates
new sanctions on the Government of
Syria. I am not sure they are going to
be enough, but it is a start. It targets
those who have been laundering money
to help the Assad regime.
I support all of these things. I sup-
port S. 1, sponsored by Senator RUBIO.
I thank him, Senator RISCH, and every-
body who has worked so hard on S. 1.
There is a way to make S. 1 better, and
I have an amendment pending that
will do that. I have heard some of my
colleagues correctly say that S. 1 is about
standing with our allies, and that
is important. Certainly, America’s for-

cial policy is shaped, in part, around
interests but not exclusively around interests. Values are important
too. If you have a foreign policy just
based on your nation’s interests, all
you do is go from deal to deal to deal,
and everything becomes expendable,
depending on what day it is.
America’s foreign policy has never
been based exclusively on interests. I
am not saying interests aren’t in-
volved but that it has values. One of
our values in America is that we
stand with our allies. That is what S. 1
does. It stands with our friend Israel. It
stands against our enemy Assad. It
stands with Jordan.
I will tell you who it doesn’t stand with—
the Syrian Kurds. The Kurdish
people are one of the largest—if not the
largest—minorities in the world that is
stateless. There are Kurds in Iraq, Iran,
Turkey, and Syria. They don’t have a
country. They don’t have a state. They
are occupying northeast Syria right
now, and I believe they want peace.
I believe—one of my colleagues
disagree with me—that they believe in
democracy, and that they, in large
part, would embrace Western values.
I understand that is debatable, but I
will tell you one thing that is not de-
batable. We would not have defeated
ISIS without the help of the Syrian
Kurds. That is just an actual fact. You
can write that one down and take it
home to Mama.
Before somebody starts saying, well,
we haven’t defeated ISIS, I say: You
never defeat the terrorist group. They will just change their names. Has every jihadist in the world been eliminated in the Middle East? No. Duh. We will never eliminate all of them, but that doesn’t mean the President was wrong to say a couple of years ago, when he became President, that we know there were at least 100,000 of them, but there aren’t 100,000 of them now. We wouldn’t have beaten back ISIS without the help of the Syrian Kurds.

The President has announced that he is going to pull American troops out of Syria, and he is talking about pulling American troops out of Afghanistan. I know there is a lot of debate about that. To be truthful, I don’t know who is right and who is wrong.

Senator PEREZ has a vote on his amendment to S. 1 today. I am not sure I am going to vote for it. It is not because I think he is wrong, but it is because I am not sure he is right. I am not sure who is right. The President says that his intelligence community says another, and Members of the Senate say a multitude of things, as we always do.

We have to get this one right. There is a lot of talk, not by Senators, but I have been in this in the past. They say that this is all just a bunch of cynical politicians, that the whole purpose of S. 1—and I don’t believe it, but I have heard people say it, and I guess I can see their point—is about making somebody take a tough vote; that is all it is about.

Well, I don’t care about tough votes or easy votes or the politics of this. I think what the American people are looking at is that we have been in Syria, and we have been in Afghanistan and Iraq, and we have spent trillions of dollars. Why are we there? Have we accomplished why we are there? And if not, when are we going to accomplish it? And, by the way, how much more will it cost?

I think the President makes a very valid point about nation-building and about mission creep. I have listened to this debate, and I honestly don’t know, and I don’t think the American people know, and we are not. The opinions in the press and in the Senate, all of us—I have met every Member of the Senate—all have brains above a single cell organism. We can have experts come over here and brief us and tell us the pros and the cons. We haven’t done that, and that really bothers me.

I am not here to criticize Turkey or President Erdogan. I am not saying I agree with everything President Erdogan says. I get everything Turkey does, but Turkey is a NATO ally, and that means a lot to us. Turkey is supposed to be a friend. I wish we could have better relationships with Turkey.

I would like to have a trade deal with Turkey, but I also want to protect our friends the Syrian Kurds.

It is not secret and it is no understatement to say that President Erdogan, his administration, and Turkey have had some pretty harsh things to say about us. I don’t know about some of the things that Turkey might do if we pull out and the Syrian Kurds are left exposed. I know that puts us in a very difficult situation. It puts the Senate in a very difficult situation. It puts the executive branch in a very difficult situation. Well, that is why we are here.

The purpose of this amendment, which I hope the Senate will support—I hope I will be allowed to bring it up—is not to make anybody take a tough vote or an easy vote. It is not about the 2020 elections. It is not about trying to get back at the House. It is about trying to allow us to focus and, hopefully, resolve a problem coming down the pipe like on a summer night, and that is that we are going to have to face: What are we going to do if we pull out or minimize our presence in Syria, and our friends the Turks attack our friends the Syrian Kurds? What are we going to do if the Syrians go in support of the Turks?

I don’t want to see us wait until that happens and have us all running around like a bunch of sprayed roaches trying to figure it out. We need to deal with it now. We don’t need to deal with it on the publics, and we don’t need to deal with it in too much of what we are trying to make take a tough vote.

I would like to see the Senate have a briefing. I would like to bring experts over to talk to us—or those who believe we ought to remain in Syria, those who believe we ought to leave. While we are at it, let’s do the same thing about Afghanistan.

Then let’s talk to the American people straight up: Here is what we have done, here is what we are going to do, here is our decision making, and now, here is our game plan. Here is when it is going to be completed, and here is what it is going to cost.

I am going to go back to where I started. I am not naive, nor is the President. A country’s foreign policy always has involved with it interests—your own interests—but it is not interests alone. There has to be a moral component to a nation’s foreign policy, and our moral principle is that we stand by our friends. I am glad we are on a summer night, and we are going to talk about Syrian Kurds. I am going to vote for the bill. I am not sure I am going to vote for the amendment this afternoon, but I am going to vote for the bill. I just wish we would stand by our friends the Syrian Kurds.

Thank you.

I yield to the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. I recognize the Senator from Idaho.

Mr. RISCH. Thank you, Mr. President.

First, let me thank Senator KENNEDY. I think he has articulated a number of things that are important to us, and it is important that we do debate these things. When the Founding Fathers put the Constitution together, they were very clear on article I rights, legislative rights, and some on the executive branch rights. On foreign policy, I think that was a work still in progress. We have the executive branch with both branches to have a role in both crafting the foreign policy of this country and also in execution of the foreign policy of this country. In essence, that is what we are doing with S. 1.

S. 1 is a work that has been going on for a considerable period of time, and it addresses the relationships we have with a number of our friends in the Middle East. I think I heard the Senator say he did agree with S. 1 and the things that are in there, trying to help our friends the Israelis, trying to help our friends the Jordanians, and also trying to help what friends we have in Syria to help them shed the yoke of President Al-Assad, which is the Caesar bill, which is included in this. This is a conglomeration of about four different bills. It is bipartisan, not something that is common around here these days, but it is bipartisan in almost all respects, and it does do all the things we want it to do. So I appreciate hearing his support for S. 1. I want to talk for just a minute about a couple of issues he raised.

No. 1, talking about the debate that has been going on in the executive branch on certain issues. This is the way it is supposed to work. Most of the time, this is done in the Intelligence Committee and in the Foreign Relations Committee in closed hearings. Occasionally, it bubbles over, as it has recently, where there were some statements made by the intelligence community that the President didn’t necessarily subscribe to, but the intelligence community was doing its job.

I yield to the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. I recognize the Senator from Idaho.
doing there, as the Senator suggested, what we have accomplished there, and what our continuing work there should be. I think that is a work in progress today.

I think everyone agrees that no matter what, the nation-building we did after World War II in Germany and Japan and after the Korean war in South Korea was incredibly successful. We spent a lot of money there, we imported American values there, and we did so after the last few decades, we have tried to use the same model in the Middle East, and it has been very unsuccessful. Before you can be successful, people have to want what you are giving them. That has not been unanimously accepted in the Middle East, and I think the President is right that we need to examine the nation-building and, for that matter, standing up our fighting forces that again have not been particularly competent in the Middle East.

In any event, it is a good debate to have. We are in the middle of that debate right now. I think everyone agrees that, no matter what, we have to maintain a sufficient military presence in the Middle East in various places. I think the best people are better making that decision than we are, but we have to have a military presence in certain places so that when we get a threat to America, we can respond, and we will respond. I don’t think there is anything the President has said that backs us away from our commitment to respond, when necessary, to threats to the United States by terrorists. We are going to continue to respond. I think he has rightly identified that we should reexamine our nation-building efforts and expenditures in some areas, and I think he is right there.

I want to touch on, for just a minute, what the Senator said about the situation between the Turks and the Kurds, and then yield to my friend from Texas. You are absolutely right. The Kurds have been a great friend of ours for a long time. They have stood by our side. They have helped us in Syria and in other places when we have been fighting over the recent decades in the Middle East. They are good people. I met with them yesterday, and as I always do, I thanked them for their commitment to us and the sacrifices they have made. I realize they are there in their homeland and protecting their homeland. They have been magnificent fighters, and they are great people to have alongside us.

Some elements of the Kurdish people have had issues with Turkey. Turkey has been a long ally of the United States. We have a significant military presence there and a significant base there. This has been going on for a long time. They are a member of NATO. They are an official NATO ally of ours, which gives us certain responsibilities and gives us certain responsibilities.

The fact that the Kurds and the Turks are having issues with each other should very much concern us. No matter what happens, as the Senator mentioned, we have American values, and both the Turks and the Kurds have to understand that they need to respect human rights, they need to respect the rule of law, and we have to watch that this occurs. There have been conversations going on—I don’t think it is a secret to anyone—about how this is going to play out and what role the United States plays in this regard, but it is a difficult situation, a difficult situation.

At this time, I am going to oppose the amendment the Senator has proposed. I do so reluctantly because I think he is trying to speak to the fact that we need to stand by and watch that this occurs. Our relationship with the Turks, I don’t think it is a secret to anyone that it has hit a rough patch, but simply because we are in a rough patch doesn’t mean we throw the baby out with the bathwater.

We are going to have to continue to keep our commitments. We are going to have to, as the Senator suggested, make the tough decisions. It is going to be difficult. It is difficult in the situation we are in, but we can do this, we are committed to do this, and we are going to continue to work at it.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, on Tuesday of this week, the Senate Finance Committee had a very important hearing on prescription drugs, something the President knows a lot about.

In 2017, a study found that more than half of Americans regularly take some form of prescription medication. Modern medicine has made living with chronic health conditions that would have once been debilitating or fatal—like diabetes, high blood pressure, or asthma—modern medicine has made living with these conditions manageable. That is a blessing for which we are all grateful.

I know, at the same time, many of my constituents and many Americans struggle to buy prescription drugs to treat common health problems, not because they aren’t widely available but because they simply are unaffordable. For many higher cost, brand-name drugs, generic alternatives are available at a lower price. For example, I happened to take a drug called Lipitor, which previously was covered by a patent. As a result of that patent, the cost of the drug was higher because the producer of the drug had a monopoly. We grant that monopoly for a period of time in order to help us recover our research and investment dollars. Unfortunately, many of these efforts to come up with lifesaving drugs are unsuccessful. So in order to encourage innovation and life-saving drugs, we have to find a way to allow drug companies to recover their sunk costs and make a profit.

Generic drugs have really been a lifesaver for many people. That same Lipitor that I take now is off of patent and is available for a few dollars for a 30-day supply. That is just one example. One study found that 93 percent of generic prescriptions are filled at $2 or less, with the average cost being just more than a little over $6, but for many drugs, there are no low-cost alternatives, and people are increasingly struggling to cover the rising costs of their medications.

One witness from Indiana, Kathy Sego, I think, speaks for a lot of parents who have children suffering from diabetes needing insulin, and I think her story was emblematic of that problem across the country.

In her case, she is a wife, a mother of two, and a choir teacher. Her son Hunter is one of the more than 30 million Americans who suffer from diabetes, his supply of insulin to manage his blood sugar.

Kathy told us that when her son Hunter started college, he started to go to the pharmacy to pick up his insulin and began to notice that prices were going up. He discovered that it cost $1,700 a month, even with health insurance. The copay—the part they were responsible for and had been paying for Hunter, unbeknownst to him—is $1,700 a month. Kathy assured him that, unfortunately, that cost was correct; $1,700 only covers a 1-month supply.

Over the next few weeks, their family began to notice a change in their son Hunter. He was losing weight, falling behind in school, and was depressed—a far cry from what she said was his normally positive and energetic self. Unbeknownst to his parents, Hunter had only purchased one vial of insulin when he needed four, and he began rationing his supply of the drug. To try to counterbalance that, he began skipping meals—which is dangerous for a diabetic to do, let alone an incredibly active college football player like him. Fortunately, in time, his family realized what had happened and he intervened, avoiding what could have been fatal consequences, but her family still battles with the expense of this insulin.

Kathy says she worries about what happens when Hunter graduates from college, noting that his life choices are contingent upon his ability to pay for the medicine he needs to keep him alive. She wondered at our hearing: Can he afford to rent an apartment, utility bills, and repay his student loans? Hunter, she said, needs insulin to live, but should that need for insulin keep him from living? About 1.5 million Americans have type 1 diabetes like Hunter, where their body produces no insulin to deal with the blood sugar, but as I mentioned earlier, 30 million Americans, according to the Centers for Disease Control, have diabetes, and about 3 million of these 30 million are in my State of Texas. Three million Texans have diabetes for which insulin is a required treatment.
While we know it is common to see higher drug prices for new drugs that have recently completed the costly research-and-development phase, that is not the case for insulin, which has been around for nearly a century and is a type of biologic drug which is generally more affordable to produce.

I hope Kathy and Hunter’s story—which could be told millions of times by other families across the country—impels us to investigate the causes for these unreasonable costs for some of these prescription drugs. I hope we find a solution—and I am confident we will if we try hard enough—that will allow families like Kathy’s to live without the burden of wondering how to pay for their healthcare costs, particularly when it comes to prescription drugs.

At Tuesday’s hearing, I also questioned our witnesses about a phenomenon known as rebates and the way pharmacy benefit managers deal with pharmaceutical companies.

In the case of prescription drug pricing, rebates and discounts provided by manufacturers could mean the difference between a drug being covered by your insurance plan or not, and, certainly, whether the net price is after the rebate is transparent to anybody, much less to the consumer, or returned directly to the consumer. Not only does this drive up the list price and out-of-pocket cost of lifesaving drugs, but it makes it impossible for Congress or anybody to determine where each dollar goes.

I find this lack of transparency alarming. It shouldn’t take an advanced degree to figure out where your money is going when you buy prescription drugs or how to shop for the most effective drug at the right price. When it comes to prescription drugs, we need to promote transparency first and foremost, and we need to streamline and eliminate regulations and laws that allow the middlemen to unnecessarily drive up prices. We know we have the opportunity to do that in the coming months.

We shouldn’t require people suffering from chronic diseases to subsidize the healthcare costs of healthy people. There is something strangely wrong about this picture. I am glad we had the opportunity to listen to witnesses on this topic, and I thank them for taking the time to share their insights. I look forward to continuing to work with all of our colleagues on the Finance Committee and generally to identify ways to make prescription drugs more affordable and accessible to the American people.

As the Presiding Officer knows, given his background in healthcare, I am confident he can be an important part of that solution, as well.

TRIBUTE TO SUSAN PAMERLEAU

Mr. President, switching gears a bit, I want to share a quick good-news story of two outstanding Texans who blazed the trail for women in public service.

While I was in San Antonio, a couple of weeks ago, I had the chance to congratulate our new U.S. marshal for the Western District of Texas, Susan Pamerleau. Over the years, she has held many impressive titles—general in the Air Force and sheriff—and now she is a U.S. Marshal. In addition to each of those, I have always been proud to know her under a different title—as a friend.

At Susan’s ceremonial swearing-in, Chief Judge Orlando Garcia opened by noting the historical significance of her being the first female marshal ever in the Western District of Texas, which was established in 1857.

Susan’s long and impressive career began at Lackland Air Force Base in Texas, where my dad happened to have been stationed at one time, where she received her commission through officer training school. Over the course of her 32-year career in the Air Force, she rose through the ranks and retired, ultimately, as a lieutenant colonel in the Air Force major general in the year 2000.

When she returned to Texas, Susan joined USAA as a vice president and later became senior vice president. It wasn’t until 10 years later that her career changed significantly, when she was elected sheriff of Bexar County, TX, which is the 11th largest sheriff’s office in the Nation.

Susan was the first woman to hold that role as well, but she said: It was not about being the first woman. It was really about being the first man. It was really about redefining the role of what the Bexar County sheriff does.

Over the years, I have had the opportunity to work with her on a number of issues impacting my constituents and our country—like mental health and law enforcement reforms. I think she has made an enormous contribution to both of those areas.

Needless to say, I was thrilled when the President nominated Susan to be the new U.S. marshal for the Western District of Texas and when she was confirmed last fall. Her integrity, leadership, and management skills are critical to the Western District of Texas, which comprises 68 counties and more than 6 million people.

I wish, once again, to congratulate my dear friend Susan Pamerleau on becoming the U.S. marshal, and I look forward to continuing to work with her as we serve together the people of Texas.

REMEMBERING MARY LOU ROBINSON

Mr. President, finally, when you talk about women opening doors in Texas, you can’t leave out Mary Lou Robinson, who sadly passed away last weekend at the age of 92.

Her long and distinguished legal career began at the University of Texas School of Law, where she met her husband, A.J. After law school, they returned to Amarillo, TX, where they opened up the firm appropriately named Robinson & Robinson.

In 1955, she left the private practice of law when Potter County commissioners appointed her judge of the Potter County Court at Law, making her the first in a series of firsts for this remarkable woman.

Judge Robinson found her passion, and she was hooked. In the coming decades, she became an advocate for women’s rights, and she helped to promote the passage of the Texas Equal Rights Amendment, a constitutional amendment voted on by the people in 1972.

Over the course of her remarkable 63-year judicial career, Judge Robinson served as the 108th District Court judge, followed by associate and then chief justice of the 7th Court of Appeals, located in Amarillo.

In 1979, she was appointed by President Jimmy Carter to be a judge of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Texas, where she served for nearly 40 years.

Her career is impressive, not only for its length but for its quality. One attorney practicing before Judge Robinson noted: “Lawyers may disagree on a lot of things, but I will agree that she treats everyone equally and fairly.” That is high praise for a district judge.

Judge Robinson will be remembered as an inspiring and devoted judge, an early advocate for women’s rights, and a beloved member of her community.

Last summer, Senator Cruz and I introduced a bill to rename the Federal building and courthouse in Amarillo the J. Marvin Jones Federal Building and the Mary Lou Robinson United States Courthouse.

This lasting testament to her judicial career will live on for generations, and I am proud that Senator Cruz and I were able to cement this legacy for this legal luminary.

While our family sends our prayers to the family of Mary Lou Robinson, we can all be proud of her distinguished career of service, not only to her beloved community in Amarillo but to the State of Texas and to the Nation as a whole.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. I recognize the Senator from North Carolina.

CONGOBERAL RECORD—SENATE S781

Mr. BURBANK. Mr. President, I was not next in the queue. Senator Gardner was, but since I don’t see him, I am going to jump in, in great Senate fashion.

I rise today to educate my colleagues and the American people on actions that are currently being taken by the Food and Drug Administration. It deals with one specific thing that is familiar to all of us: combustible cigarettes. It revolves around a decision the FDA has made to all of us: combustible cigarettes. It deals with one specific thing that is familiar to all of us: combustible cigarettes. It revolves around a decision the FDA has made to all of us: combustible cigarettes. It deals with one specific thing that is familiar to all of us: combustible cigarettes. It revolves around a decision the FDA has made to all of us: combustible cigarettes. It deals with one specific thing that is familiar to all of us: combustible cigarettes. It revolves around a decision the FDA has made to all of us: combustible cigarettes. It deals with one specific thing that is familiar to all of us: combustible cigarettes. It revolves around a decision the FDA has made to all of us: combustible cigarettes. It deals with one specific thing that is familiar to all of us: combustible cigarettes. It revolves around a decision the FDA has made to all of us: combustible cigarettes.
Let me start and end at the same point. I am going to start with this chart. This chart displays, from 2011 to 2017, the CDC’s annual study of youth usage of tobacco products. Specifically, this one addresses the use of menthol cigarettes, where we have seen a reduction of 2.5 percent.

Somehow, as this chart displays, we have had a significant reduction in the use of menthol products for youth in this country. With this trend line, we are not talking in this case, as the Federal Government, that we have to ban this product because it is what is fueling an increase in youth usage.

Over the same period, youth usage of combustible cigarettes has dropped by 12.5 percent. By any standard we would look at, we would say that we have an education program in America that is actually having the right impact here. Between what we educate, parental guidance, and school pressures, the usage of our youth is going down.

The other thing that typically we would praise, but, no, an administration that came in primarily saying that we are here to reduce the regulation of the Federal Government, has picked one area that not only is it not reducing, but it is disregarding the trends that we see, and it is coming out with new regulations that, at the end of the day, are going to impact adults for whom we haven’t either provided the tools to stop using combustible cigarettes or who have made a conscious choice that they want to use a legal product they know up front is harmful to their health.

To successfully talk about this, I have to hit rewind and go back 10 years, because it was 10 years ago, in 2009, that the Congress of the United States took up the Tobacco Control Act. I will say that it was a controversial debate. I spent hours on this floor.

Here are some of the points I made in 2009—that H.R. 1256, which was the Tobacco Control Act, did not provide a pathway to market for new tobacco products. New tobacco products were products that technologically we could create that provided a level of satisfaction for its users but didn’t have the harmful effects of the combustion of tobacco. Innovative products—we see them in the market place today. They are there not because of the guidance of the Food and Drug Administration, with no total control for the tobacco industry. They are there because the marketplace demanded it. Consumers said: Give me a tool to switch. We have gone from gum to patches, to now electronic cigarettes.

It was believed, at the time, that because we centralized tobacco regulation within an Agency that understands how to use scientific information to make decisions, they would look at trend lines like this and would make decisions that were consistent with what the science had told us. When more available, we could determine how to put a heart valve in with it being less invasive through the use of technology. Over 10 years, we haven’t figured out how to write a foundational rule to tell companies how they need to apply to get an e-cigarette approved.

When we went into this 10 years ago, HHS claimed that the Department would need $10 billion to establish an independent Agency focused on tobacco products. We did them one better. We imposed user fees on the tobacco industry. For every piece of tobacco product that is sold, they paid to the FDA a user fee on that product. It is that user fee that is funding the FDA. In 2019, the FDA received $712 million in user fees from the industry. Let me put that in perspective. Everybody who buys a tobacco product is paying a higher price today so that this money can go to the FDA so the FDA, hopefully, will create a foundational pathway that will allow them to approve and receive applications for reduced-harm products.

It is very consistent with this trend line of money we pumped into education to reduce youth usage and to encourage adults to switch, but until it is illegal in the United States, adults ought to have the freedom to choose the products they want.

Unfortunately, 10 years later, we are in a no better position than we were 10 years ago, where the choices are combustible products or products that have yet to even have an established pathway by the FDA.

Those who are venturing out today offering e-cigarettes and alternatives are doing it with the understanding that tomorrow the FDA could walk in and say: We are going to pull this product off the marketplace because it hasn’t been approved. Yet the FDA has never created the pathway and shown an individual or a company the application process to get a product like this approved.

Ten years ago, before TCA was signed into law, 14 Agencies that regulated tobacco in the United States. It was the Treasury Department, the Transportation Department, Commerce, Justice, the Executive Office of the President, HHS, Education, Labor, and the General Services Administration. It is now consolidated into one. You would think that we would do a much better job of doing it.

I am going to share with you the conclusion, and I will come back to this a couple times today.

There is an age restriction on the purchase of tobacco products. It is 18. We can have a debate as to whether it should be 21. We can have a debate about moving the age.

But when an agency that has the sole control of tobacco cannot enforce the age requirement for it to be purchased, you have to ask yourself, by taking away options that adults have, does that in any way, shape, or form affect youth usage when the youth are illegally accessing the product today?

You see, back when 14 agencies controlled it—and being a former Governor, the Presiding Officer may remember some of this—States actually enforced because the Federal mandate was to enforce the age requirements. They did it on alcohol today, and in some places, they do it on tobacco. But when we centralized all of the authority at the FDA, the FDA apparently focused on this product and they only focused on things like this, where they can manipulate through government regulation, through onerous actions on the consumers, what they want to accomplish, which I would suggest to my colleagues to the American people is not driven by facts or science; it is driven by politics. It is driven by those who want to see this product eliminated.

I will say what I said 10 years ago: I am ready for the debate. Let’s bring it to the floor, and we can talk about it and debate it.

This is eerily similar to Canada a few years ago when they banned menthol products. How did they follow that up? This year, they legalized cannabis. Maybe that is the route we are on. We can have this debate today, but right now, that is illegal in the United States, and we put up with it with States that have legalized it. I am not sure it is a good move for adults, and I am not sure it is a good move for our youth. It certainly has the same combative concerns we have with tobacco products. But there is a difference between the two—that is legal. We have agreed that if you are over 18, you can choose to use it—with an extensive educational campaign to tell everybody why it is harmful to their health.

Also 10 years ago, I offered an amendment to create a department within HHS known as the Tobacco Harm Reduction Center, requiring public ranking of tobacco products according to the cancer risk. That amendment would have allowed for the development of new products to encourage individuals to give up traditional tobacco products and turn to less harmful products.

I remember the debate well. My colleagues who were opposed to me in the debate said: If we centralize this at FDA, the natural reaction will be that they will migrate to not only the application being understood as to how to process it, but they will be inclined to approve those products quickly because of the alternative that we know today.

Here we are 10 years later, and we have no transitional, foundational pathway for a manufacturer to know how to apply to the FDA or what standards they have to meet. It is almost as if we are going to make it up as we go along. Therefore, these products are on the marketplace, but there is no application process at the FDA. They are susceptible to millions of dollars of investment being yanked tomorrow because somebody wakes up and says: My gosh. Youth have started using e-cigarettes. The Presiding Officer knows there is a 18-year-old age requirement on e-cigarettes as well. Is the answer to that to remove all of

S782 CONGRESSIONAL RECORD—SENATE January 31, 2019
that product for every American because we can’t figure out a way to enforce an age limitation? I would suggest to my colleagues, if that is where we are headed, we are going to eliminate some products that will cause chaos in this country.

I suggest that this will not cause chaos, but this will be the wrong signal to send to adults who prefer to use this product, and we do it under the false pretense that we are doing this because of America’s youth. America’s youth are doing the right thing. They are reducing their usage of combustible products. They are not enticed by things like menthol. Yet they are the ones whom we are using to be the fig leaf of all this new government regulation that the Food and Drug Administration is proposing to do.

Within the office of tobacco control, there are 778 employees. There are close to 1,000 employees in the center for drug review. Put that in perspective—that is out there in all the applications they are going through. We have almost as many people in the tobacco control agency as we do in drug review.

Well, the one thing I can assure you about drug review is that they actually do process applications. It is long. It is laborious. We would like to speed that up. Under the latest PDUFA reauthorization, the user fee for drugs, there is a 304-day average to process an application. The modification review currently take? It takes 360 days—56 days longer than that of a new drug application. We would like to speed that up. Under the latest PDUFA reauthorization, the user fee for drugs, there is a 304-day average to process an application. The modification review currently take? It takes 360 days—56 days longer than that of a new drug application.

Let me repeat what I said earlier. The FDA has yet to issue a single foundational rule as called for in July of 2017. The proposed version of one SE rule is currently under review at the OMB.

If you are now the single agency in charge of the regulation of tobacco and you are looking at how to reduce the harm of the product, wouldn’t your focus first be on how you approve technological products that meet the threshold of reduced risk? If you saw an increase in youth usage, would you not look at a period of time, like 7 years, and ask yourself, is this an anomaly?

We will have a report next month from CDC of their annual tobacco survey. There must be something alarming in it relative to youth usage of e-cigarettes. I don’t want to. I think that menthol took a spike up and they say 11 percent of our youth are using it. I will question the science of their survey, with the trend that has consistently built over the last 7 years.

But I would also make this point: If there is an age limitation on e-cigarettes, just as there is on combustibles, you are not smart to first go in and find an enforcement mechanism for age if, in fact, our concern is that our youth are using the product.

In essence, what they have done with this alcohol rule is this: We don’t want to enforce the age thing. That is hard. What is easy for us to do is to do something that is political. It doesn’t change much, but we can go out and say “Look at what we did. We eliminated access to this product.”

The majority of the people who use this product are adults. The tax revenues at the State, local, and Federal levels are huge.

As a matter of fact, one of the settlement agreements that we made prior to the Tobacco Control Act was the Master Settlement Agreement. That was before the Presiding Office was Governor and before some in this room might have been born. It was in 1998, and it was a significant agreement. They agreed not only to defray Medicaid costs at the State level; they agreed to an annual payment. That annual payment was more than $200 billion in manufacturer funds. They agreed to defray the cost of healthcare to States through Medicaid resulting from the use of tobacco products and to develop cessation programs to get Americans to quit smoking.

Let me suggest to you that it is not the industry that is fighting this; it is the industry that is fueling this. They are funding it. They are the ones funding the education programs. They are actually the entities that are supplementing Medicaid funding in States.

Well, let me say to Commissioner Gottlieb and to those bright folks over at CTP. When you do this, you are eliminating a portion of that liability that is calculated based upon the sale of products in the marketplace, and you are reducing the shared cost of Medicaid. For many States that have diverted that money to other things, you are reducing economic development. I think one State was building sidewalks with tobacco money in one large city.

I could be critical of how they have done it and what they have used it for, but I know that it is not enough in math to know that if you reduce the amount of sales and if the payment is figured based on sales, then you reduce the take States and cities are going to get from taxes or from the settlement. If you go to my colleagues, concentrate on this number—2.5 percent was the last number the CDC came out and said that of our youth, this is the percentage that use menthol products.

We should not quit until that number is zero. If you want to make that number zero for youth under 18 today for all tobacco products, I have the answer: enforce the law. Hold retailers
accountable. Do the same raids on tobacco that you do with alcohol. We probably will never get to zero, but we might do better than 2.5 percent of menthol or 8.5 percent of overall tobacco usage.

I want to summarize because I know there are other colleagues who wish to speak. I assure my colleagues, and I assure Commissioner Gottlieb and all the individuals who work at the CFP at the Food and Drug Administration, I am going to talk about everything that is going on here everywhere.

These speeches are going to get longer and longer and they will get more and more detailed because I want my colleagues who aren’t here to understand the debate we went through, the decisions we made, and the assumptions that were made for consolidating these Agencies into one Agency versus multiple Agencies, and what they said would happen. I can give my own report card, and I am giving it to you. They have done zero. All of these matters should be watched very closely by what the FDA was going to set up, transitional, foundational rules don’t exist.

It is 10 years later. It is 2 years after the current Commissioner got in and said: We are going to do this. We are going to do this and do this. Rather than produce things which adults can take advantage of—tools to get off of combustible cigarettes—what is the action all of a sudden they take? To everybody’s amazement, they said: We are going to ban menthol from the marketplace.

I mentioned Canada earlier. They banned menthol and, 3 years later, they approved cannabis as a legal product. I am not accusing the administration of having that pathway, though it does raise suspicion because it is not the administration of reduced regulation and onerous government when you see what the FDA is proposing to a legal consumer product, but I will state that that was banned here very early. A long time ago that they were beginning to review products that were derived from cannabis, oils, and other things that they thought they could safely approve for use in the United States.

Well, Mr. Commissioner, you are only fueling my fears that you are following the roadmap Canada followed; that this is all a bait-and-switch situation. Not only is it not valid to suggest we are doing this because of our youth, you are doing it because you believe that the Food and Drug Administration can overreach and not be slapped and that somewhere down the road you may come to the same conclusion Canada did; rather than enforce cannabis and illegal drugs, let’s just approve them. Let’s make them legal. Boy, that is a sad day. It is shocking to me as one who has been engaged in this debate for now 25 years.

We are extremely worried about the combustible impact of cigarettes and we should be—but States don’t have any concerns about the combustible nature of cannabis. There are no filters on it. There are no regulations on the paper that is used, even though it is legal in some States. As a matter of fact, we have less research on cannabis in this country than any legal product that exists, including bandaid.

There is more research and development of approval for bandaid that goes into bandaid that goes into cannabis in the States where it is legal for either recreational or medical use.

So I would state to Commissioner Gottlieb, in the insane world you have created here and that you have created down this road. No. 1, expect Congress to weigh in but, No. 2, understand that if you begin to loosen up the legal use of cannabis, then we are going to hold you to the same standards you display for everyone else, everything that you hold a drug manufacturer to, that you hold a drug device manufacturer to, and, quite honestly, that you hold the tobacco industry to. Don’t think you are going to slide this by and there are not going to be regulations or that we are not going through this. I am going to continue letting States do what they are doing.

If you are worried about somebody burning a product and inhaling it into their lungs, there better be as much concern to it relates to marijuana use. Why is there no effort—given that this is legal from a recreational and medical standpoint—from the FDA to study this and put the science out?

It only suggests to me that science is not important. Yet this is the institution that is the gold standard for the use of science. There is a scientific reason for why it takes 304 days to get a new drug approved. There is no scientific reason that it takes 360 days to approve as acceptable changing the paper on a combustible cigarette.

I am not creating this pathway, the FDA did. It started with the U.S. Congress providing this much authority to one Agency. That they believed could do everything. Because they are not funded by the U.S. Congress for this piece—they are funded by the industry—do you know what? They think Congress has no say in it. So do you know who funds 75 percent of new drug applications that are filed, reviewed, and approved? The drug industry. Seventy-three percent of applications they review and approve for the medical device industry are funded by the medical device industry.

With regard to generic drugs, which we all want more of because they drive down the cost of drugs in America, all of a sudden the FDA has a backlog that is years-long for approving generic applications. They said, if only we had a user fee agreement for generic drugs, and that user fee agreement is over 60 percent of the cost of approving a generic drug. What has happened? The backlog is every bit as big today as it was when the user fee was created. So I am standing in the way of a user fee agreement for over-the-counter drugs, it is because I figured this out.

They get funded by the industry. Their actual work goes down. The American people pay the tax for the user fees that are sent to the FDA, while the price of drugs, devices, cigarettes, and over-the-counter drugs goes up. When Congress stands up and says we are going to talk about this, then we control 25 percent of their budget for any given center—and they say: We are going to go talk to the people who pay 75 percent of our budget, not to you.

The last thing I will share is that 25 years ago it wasn’t like this. Twenty-five years ago, we appropriated everybody’s budget in the administration. One hundred percent of the money for the FDA was appropriated by Congress. When I, as a Member of the U.S. Senate, picked up the phone and called the FDA, they didn’t want to answer my question over the phone. They wanted to come to my office that day and answer it. They wanted to actually solve the problem.

I just went through a time period of time where I gave FDA 2 weeks to respond to letters and, in some cases, it took a month to get a response.

They don’t think we play a role in this. Yet we set legislation priorities for the country. I would suggest to my colleagues that this is an isolated example, that is true, but it is an example of a much bigger problem within the Food and Drug Administration and this Commissioner: that Congress is in-significant to them. They can be called up to provide oversight in front of a committee, and you can say whatever because we have no clarity and no transparency inside the system. So they can tell me the review time has gone down 47 days since last year. I don’t know whether it is accurate. I can only tell you this. I don’t see it in the numbers of third parties that do reviews. I see actions such as this with no science to substantiate it, and I have to question the science they use across the landscape of products they review.

The Food and Drug Administration regulates 25 cents of every dollar of the U.S. economy. This ought to be something that not just my colleagues but the American people should be concerned with.

If you believe my argument is half accurate and this is ill-advised, for God’s sake, pick up the phone and call the White House switchboard and tell the President, who came in to reduce regulation, that there is an Agency that is not listening.

Not only is there an Agency that is not listening, the President has a Commissioner that went on Twitter, and then he was a tweet that said the Presi-dent’s numbers are going down, and the Commissioner “liked” the tweet. Maybe I will say that a few more times so the President will see it or hear it, but maybe somebody is listening who will help him.

I am not interested in a single individual’s political goal. This has to be an individual political goal because
there is no science to substantiate what they are doing, and the losers are the localities in taxes and States in settlement payments but, more importantly, adults who choose to be parents. We have to eliminate it. It is no longer a choice you have.

That is not the America I signed up for, but I did sign up to come here and fight for things I thought weren’t in the best long-term interests of the country. On the top of my list right now. You will hear me often.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. FISCHER). The Senator from Iowa.

(The remarks of Ms. Ernst pertaining to the introduction of S. 285 are printed in today’s RECORD under “Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.”)

Ms. ERNST. 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. SANDERS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the question call be rescinded.

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

(The remarks of Mr. Sanders pertaining to the introduction of S. 309 are printed in today’s RECORD under “Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.”)

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

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

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the cloture vote on the McConnell amendment occur at 3 p.m. today, and the filing deadline for second-degree amendments apply as if the vote occurred at the originally scheduled time of 3:30 p.m.

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

Mr. THUNE. 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.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the question call be rescinded.

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

(The remarks of Ms. Collins pertaining to the introduction of S. 296 are printed in today’s RECORD under “Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.”)

Ms. COLLINS. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

TRANSPORTATION AND SAFETY

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I rise to discuss challenges that influence nearly every component of our day-to-day lives and the opportunity to address these challenges in the 116th Congress.

No matter who you are, where you live, or your level of income, every one of us is affected by our Nation’s transportation system. I believe, as most Nebraskans do, that a core responsibility of the Federal Government is to provide sufficient and sustainable transportation and infrastructure to all of our citizens. Our transportation system is critical to our national security, to our economy, and to our public safety. Here in the Senate, I have worked hard to remove the unnecessary obstacles to the safe and efficient flow of goods and people throughout our country and around the world, and I plan to continue that work as we begin this Congress.

This is a priority that is of particular importance to my State of Nebraska. Agriculture is the economic engine of our State’s economy. According to the U.S. Department of Commerce, Nebraska is the fifth largest agricultural exporting State. To continue moving our products from the heartland to the coasts and beyond, we need an efficient, an effective, and a safe transportation system. We rely on the connection of our roads and highways, railroads, ports, and ocean carriers to bring goods and services to the world market. We use trucks to haul livestock across the country. Our railroads and waterways move vast quantities of grain across the prairie and to the coasts, and our ports and ocean vessels move these commodities around the world.

For Nebraska to continue benefiting from domestic and international trade, it is vital that we build and maintain our infrastructure, reduce unnecessary regulatory burdens, and promote safety across the surface transportation network. We must also recognize that connections across all of these modes—truck, rail, waterway, ocean, and air—must function smoothly for the system to work.

In the Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee, I am proud to, once again, chair the Subcommittee on Surface Transportation and Merchant Marine Infrastructure, Safety and Security, which oversees the important surface transportation issues. This will be my fifth year as chairman, and I am looking forward to continuing the effective accomplishments that my colleagues and I have made.

Specifically, in 2015, we worked across party lines to pass the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act, more commonly known as the FAST Act. This was the first long-term highway bill that had been passed by Congress in over a decade, and it included several positive reforms to our surface transportation system. It recognized the importance of freight movement as part of the broader infrastructure debate by including a new freight for- mula program and a specific grant program. It gave key State and local officials the flexibility they needed to develop strategic investments in their communities.

Together, we have improved the flow of commercial traffic and increased the safety of America’s roads, but there is still much work to be done. With the 116th Congress underway, we have much to do on transportation policy. A key note is the ongoing approach to extending the FAST Act authorization in September of 2020. The transportation and safety subcommittee, which oversees the Department of Transportation and a number of modal administrations, will be hard at work on our part of that FAST Act reauthorization. Administrations under the jurisdiction of the subcommittee include the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, the Federal Railroad Administration, and the Federal Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Each of these modal administrations will be closely examined by the subcommittee.

We will be holding hearings on Federal trucking policy and will be providing oversight for the FMCSA. The trucking industry is critical to our economy because it moves the most freight by volume and value across this country. As such, we will be examining a number of trucking issues, including hours of service requirements, the Compliance, Safety, Accountability Program, and the very wide scope of trucking regulations. Moving forward, we will work together to find safe, practical solutions to these issues.

Additionally, I must carefully consider policies to support our port facilities and the connections they make between truck and rail networks to ocean shipping. It may surprise my colleagues that a Senator from a triple landlocked State like Nebraska is advocating the support of our ports and ocean shipping industry. Yet, as I noted earlier, Nebraska is the fifth largest agriculture exporting State in the Nation, and whether it is beef or grain or equipment, we depend on our ports to ensure our quality products reach around the world.

There are currently a wide variety of issues facing this key portion of our transportation system. Ocean carriers are using even bigger vessels, which has greatly increased the amount of freight moving through the ports and is affecting critical connections to other transportation modes.

Port operations are becoming increasingly complex, and stakeholders are examining ways to support freight movement by better utilizing data, such as GE Portal at the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach.

Ports are taking advantage of new types of infrastructure, like inland
ports, while also addressing new challenges such as a shortage of chassis to move the containers.

State and local governments, industry, labor, and the Commissioners at the Federal Maritime Commission are reviewing these and other important issues concerning the rail commodity system. We need to hear from all of these stakeholders to better understand these challenges and these opportunities before us.

Additionally, last year, the Federal Railroad Administration oversaw one of the biggest changes to our railroad network in recent history—the implementation of positive train control, or PTC.

There are 41 railroads that are required by Congress to install and to use PTC on their systems. I was glad to see the statement from the FRA that all 41 railroads met the deadline to submit documentation that they are either utilizing PTC or that they have completed their plans to receive an extension, as required by the Positive Train Control Enforcement and Implementation Act of 2015. This, however, was the first of two major deadlines for PTC implementation.

Railroads that receive an extension must complete their PTC systems no later than December 31, 2020. Congress must continue its oversight of PTC implementation, especially as railroads work to achieve that interoperability across the network.

The Transportation and Safety Subcommittee will be looking at PTC but also at regulations and railroad investments more broadly, both at the Federal Railroad Administration and at the Surface Transportation Board.

Late in the 115th Congress, the Senate confirmed Patrick Fuchs and Martin Oberman to be members of the STB, and I look forward to working with the Board and its new members on rail commerce issues.

The Transportation and Safety Subcommittee will also examine pipeline safety issues as we prepare for a reauthorization of the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration. For families, consumers, workers, and businesses, the safety and security of our pipeline network must remain a top priority.

America’s pipelines move vital energy to homes and businesses in Nebraska and throughout our Nation. Congress must continue its robust oversight of pipeline issues.

In 2016, we worked in a bipartisan manner to pass a bill I introduced—what ultimately became known as the PIPES Act—to reauthorize PHMSA through fiscal year 2018.

The Transportation and Safety Subcommittee will be working to reauthorize PHMSA with an eye toward improving the efficiency and the effectiveness of the Agency’s pipeline oversight and continuing ensuring the Agency has what it needs to complete its pending rulemakings.

As Congress begins its work on these surface transportation issues, I look forward to working with the administration on policies that cut red tape and improve the movement of people and freight across our system.

During the last Congress, I was very pleased to twice host Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao in Nebraska, and I look forward to continuing this work with the Secretary and the Modal Administrators. I also look forward to working with Senator Duckworth, the new ranking member of the Transportation and Safety Subcommittee, and the 16 members of the subcommittee so we can find bipartisan solutions for our surface transportation system.

We have a very unique opportunity to work together to improve the daily lives of all Americans. This is so much more than just drawing a few lines on the map. It means making decisions that will help parents get their children to school using safe and reliable roads. It means ensuring our commercial carriers, railroads, ports, ocean carriers, and all those in between can ship products made in Nebraska to the rest of the country and all over the world. It means connecting American communities.

During my chairmanship, I will encourage strategic, targeted, and long-term investments that improve safety and more efficiently facilitate commerce. By working together, we can deliver solutions that will allow American families, communities, and businesses to thrive for generations to come.

Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

AMENDMENT NO. 65

Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, I come to speak about the pending amendment we are going to vote on in about 25 minutes. It is an amendment that says it is the case with the withdrawal from Syria in the pace and scale that is currently proposed or that the White House has announced they are going to undertake.

What I will say here today is what I said about it initially; that is, that I think it is a bad idea. I said it then, and I said it to the President in a subsequent meeting, and I think it is important to restate it here as we begin to vote, since I believe this issue is going to be covered in the press more as a political issue than as a foreign policy one.

It is unfortunate that a lot of these issues are wrapped up as political decisions. These are not votes on political decisions. These are votes on the conduct of American foreign policy, which oftentimes have no partisan lines but rather are ideological, in some cases, or just simply a different way to view an issue.

I share the White House’s and the President’s desire that as quickly as possible—to get out from, and it cannot be a place where they are being followed, where they are being attacked, and where they are being wiped out by Americans or coalition forces. It has to be a safe haven.

My No. 1 concern about this decision that has been made is that it could lead to the reestablishment of safe havens inside of Syria from which ISIS and al-Qaida could reconstitute themselves, conduct external plotting, and ultimately attack the United States.

This is focused on two primary objectives, or just simply a different way to view an issue.

In Idlib, there is virtually no pressure on the Taliban—but the Taliban allowed them to have a safe haven in Afghanistan, and from that safe haven, they were able to plot terrorist attacks against America and ultimately strike us here in the homeland. It was possible because they had a place that allowed them to do this.

It is, in fact, the key to any terrorist organization that would like to conduct external attacks and that would like to attack America. They have to have a place to operate from, and it cannot be a place where they are being followed, where they are being attacked, and where they are being wiped out by Americans or coalition forces. It has to be a safe haven for them. A safe haven.

We already face this risk. In Northwest Syria today, there is very little sustained pressure on ISIS elements. In Idlib, there is virtually no pressure on al-Qaida. Now, imagine with even less coalition pressure, being put upon them, they can become and how quickly they can establish a place from which they can plot against us.

To understand why ISIS needs to plot against us, and conduct specified attacks against Europe and the United States—this is a group that needs to prove it is still alive, and it is still strong. If they can’t prove it, they...
can’t recruit people, and they can’t raise money.

They are also in competition with other terrorist groups. In fact, ISIS is a spinoff of al-Qaeda. These groups actually compete with one another for members and resources. Both of them have a vested interest in attacking us abroad, not just in fulfillment of some ideological aims but also as a means of survival because if these groups are able to conduct or inspire these kinds of attacks, it gives them credibility, they have more fighters and fighters, and it allows them to raise money for more attacks.

Some people will tell you: Well, let the others who are in the region take care of them—Turkey or Iran or the regime or the Russians. The problem is, none of these groups have shown any interest in fighting ISIS, not even a limited interest.

The Turks are largely interested in a buffer zone in the northern part of Syria, which is a region which the Kurds do not dominate because of their own internal politics. I am not claiming the Turks are fans of ISIS. I am saying ISIS is not their No. 1 priority.

Their No. 1 priority is defeating Kurdish forces and gaining control of a buffer zone in the northern part of Syria. That is what they are going to prioritize above anything and everywhere else. They are not a reliable partner, nor do they have the capability to be a reliable partner in sustaining pressure on ISIS.

Interestingly enough, if you look at what Turkey will need—even if they wanted to be a sustained partner against ISIS—it is logistical support from the United States of America. In essence, they can’t even do what they are promising to do unless we are there with them to do it, but they don’t want us to be there. That tells you they really just want us to leave so they can create this zone in the northern part of Syria.

The regime only cares about ISIS if they are in population areas or if is ISIS is threatening critical infrastructure. If ISIS is taking ahold of an oil facility somewhere, they will care. If ISIS is in the middle of a big city, they will care. All of these other vast spaces, they don’t have the resources, and frankly they don’t care, as long as they don’t pose a threat to the regime, they don’t pose a threat to population centers they want to control, and they don’t pose a threat to critical infrastructure like oil. If they are not there, they are not going to spend their limited resources.

All things being equal, they probably want to defeat them, but they don’t have the wherewithal to sustain pressure on them. They have limited resources, and they are going to invest those resources in controlling population centers and in controlling critical infrastructure.

So here is the answer: If the United States and the anti-ISIS coalition are not in Syria and operating until ISIS is completely wiped out, there will be no sustained pressure on ISIS or on al-Qaeda, and they will both grow back stronger, and they will have the capability to plot against the homeland and American interests around the world. That is something we cannot allow to happen. We don’t want that to happen.

Some may say: Well, we can target them. We just don’t have to have 1,500 or 1,800 special operators on the ground. We don’t need to do that. We can do it through the air and so forth. ISIS is becoming an insurgency. An insurgency is much different than a group with a flag that controls buildings and territory. You can find those people, and you can strike them. An insurgency is people who blend into the population.

By day, they are a baker or an accountant or a merchant, but in the evenings and at night, they are an ISIS fighter planting bombs and killing people. Insurgencies are very difficult to fight and almost impossible, too, to fight with simply airpower, which is why the situation in Syria has been so positive. Two thousand American servicemen and special operators, alongside thousands of Syrian Democratic Forces and Kurds, who are primarily doing the ground fighting with our logistical support and air support—have eroded ISIS’s control of territory in the country, but they have not eliminated it, and there is enough of it left to breed itself. In fact, it is in the process of doing so already. They are clearly capable of killing American servicemen, as they did a few days ago, and since that time, there have been a series of other IED attacks inside of Syria, some of which could have killed Americans.

This is a group who has openly talked about their desire to possess chemical weapons, which they could use at any moment, potentially, to harm the Democratic Forces and Kurds in that area—and, by the way, putting directly in danger our remaining service men and women alongside them. This remains a dangerous group capable of conducting attacks not just in Syria but potentially—especially if they have a safe haven abroad—here in the United States.

That is not to even mention a group which doesn’t get talked about enough anymore—al-Qaeda. Al-Qaeda still exists, and it is directly and indirectly helping ISIS in which they are completely uncontested. No one is going after them. They completely dominate the area, and they do whatever they want from there. And I promise you they are not there starting a car wash; they are there working to expand their brand and reach, to resurrect the al-Qaeda brand around the world. What is the fastest way to do that? By conducting an attack against the United States and our interests. We should be worried about that.

The first reason why I am against this policy and why I support this amendment is that this policy directly undermines one of the two pillars of our strategy and our policy in this region, and that is counterterrorism. The second is the spread of Iranian influence. Let there be no doubt that this withdrawal as currently structured is a win—perceptually at a minimum but I believe it is really a win for Iran. Let’s begin in Southern Syria, the areas that border Israel and Jordan. Our withdrawal means Iran and their pro-Iranian forces that include Hezbollah militias will now have even more operating space from which to target Israel and will now be able to set up a more reliable ground route by which they can send weaponry into Lebanon to support Hezbollah so that one day they can attack Israel from the air with rockets, precision-guided munitions, and the like.

We see it already, for example, in Natanz, where the United States still maintains a presence very near a huge refugee camp. We can already see the pro-Iran, pro-regime forces beginning to encroach closer and closer upon the American position, to the point where we may have to leave simply because we no longer have a defensive posture we can sustain. But what the withdrawal has done is it has allowed Iran and the pro-regime forces to go to our allies, to go to the groups on the ground whom we have been working with to fight ISIS and say to them “The Americans are unreliable. The Americans are leaving, and if you want to fight with simply airpower, as we did a few days ago, and since that time, there have been a series of other IED attacks inside of Syria, some of which could have killed Americans.

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parliamentary body to force America to pick a date. Tell us when you are leaving, a date certain.

People may say: What is wrong with this? Get out of Syria. Get out of Iraq. Get out of Afghanistan. Why are we fighting our other people's wars?

We are not. These are not other people's wars; these are ours. These people who are going to operate in these safe havens and Iran—we are their target. They want to strike at us. And if we are in Afghanistan and we are not in Iraq and we are not in Syria, then from where exactly are we going to conduct operations against terrorism? From where exactly are we going to be postured to defend ourselves if Iran decides to strike our other military facilities in the region? The answer is, we won't have anywhere to do that from. We won't. Not to mention what it says to the region.

Understand this: The Iranians and our enemies in the region have been telling a long story. Syria is under the rule of the Russians echo this—"The Americans are unreliable. They always abandon their friends. You can't count on them." or "America is a declining power." That is the other argument they use now: "America is a great power in decline, and every year that goes by, you will see that they can't back up their words, and that is why you can't count on them. America is weakened." I don't believe that is true. In fact, I don't think that is not true. But halfway around the world, they do, and when we take actions that prove it, makes it true in the minds of a lot of people and a lot of countries, and it actually is dangerous because it could invoke someone to take a reckless and irresponsible action on the basis of miscalculation. Someone may actually believe "America is now weak; let's attack them," and then we will be in a war.

The best way to prevent a war is to make sure those who want to fight you know they have no chance of winning. If you give them any belief that they have a chance to win because you have withdrawn and, as a result, reinforced the narrative being used against you, I believe you will have increased the chance of war.

This is being used against us right now. Iran is openly parroting this. They are holding this up as an example of an Iranian win. They are saying: This proves our strategy has been working. The Americans are leaving Syria. They are going to have to leave Iraq. They are going to leave Afghanistan with their tail between their legs. We are winning, and they are losing.

It reinforces a narrative, by the way, that is also used against us by the Chinese and other parts of the world.

This is a very dangerous situation. That is why this is a bad idea. This is about a lot more than just pulling out and not wasting any more money in these other places. There is no one in the world who wishes that more than I do. I wish the money, I wish the lives, I wish all of this investment had not to be spent. I openly wonder, how much more could we be doing if we didn't have this threat? But here is the problem: Whether or not we want it to exist, the Iranian threat and the threat of terrorism exist.

We cannot deal with the world the way we want it to be; we have to deal with the world the way it is. We didn't create the terror threat, but it is there. We can ignore ISIS, we can ignore al Qaeda, and we can ignore Iran, but they will not ignore us. We can't give up on Afghanistan. We can't give up on Syria. They are saying: We can give up on Afghanistan, we can give up on Syria, we can give up on Iraq, but we're not going to give up on Lebanon and increasingly in Yemen—and God forbid, in the future, in Bahrain—pose an existential threat to all of our allies in this region—none more so than the State of Israel. That is why I support this amendment. That is why I hope all of my colleagues will support this amendment.

It is important that the legislative branch and the Senate, which has a constitutional role to play in the setting of American foreign policy—let them come to us to confirm people, and they come to us to fund these things—that we play our rightful role in the setting of American foreign policy. It is important that the Senate be on the right side of this issue so that we can hope to influence future actions and policies before they are taken and we can help change them once they have been taken in places headed in the wrong direction.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, the McConnell amendment expresses the sense of the Senate regarding the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Syria and Afghanistan, an action I have long supported. Many Senators, including several of the cosponsors of the amendment, have supported the exact opposite position and would prefer to send more U.S. troops to both countries.

I believe that our military and diplomatic presence in Syria and Afghanistan should be determined by strategy and not by Presidential whims. I believe that our strategy should be developed with the thoughtful input of experts, both in executive agencies and in Congress. I believe that strategy should be consulted and coordinated with allies and partners and that it should be debated thoroughly in Congress. I believe that our commitments should not be open-ended and should have realistic and achievable goals that bring a sense of security and stability to the world. As the new Congress convened, amidst a government shutdown, the majority sought to bring S. 1, this so-called Middle East security bill, to the floor. Now, he has brought a hastily drafted amendment to the table, one that on its face seems to rebuke the President's impulsive announcement earlier this month that he was precipitously withdrawing troops from Syria and Afghanistan.

I support bringing our troops home from Syria and Afghanistan, and the manner and pace in which that occurs should be the subject of a full debate here in the Senate. We should have a debate about the scope of authorities under current authorizations for the use of military force, AUMFs, and whether new AUMFs are warranted. This amendment may be designed to put Members on the record opposing the President's announcement, but in Congress, we should have more meaningful debates that influence policy and practice rather than fuel headlines.

I hope the majority leader will soon schedule a debate on this issue.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the vote scheduled for 3 p.m. occur now.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

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 Senate amendment No. 65 to Calendar No. 1, S. 1, a bill 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 2013, and to halt the wholesale slaughter of the Syrian people, and for other purposes, as amended by the McConnell amendment, Mr. McConnell, John Thune, Thom Tillis, John Cornyn, Mike Crapo, Roy Blunt, Josh Hawley, Rick Scott, Deb Fischer, David Perdue, Mike Rounds, John Barrasso, Johnny Isakson, Cory Gardner, Dan Sullivan, Steve Daines, Todd Young.

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 amendment No. 65, offered by the Senator from Kentucky, Mr. McCONNELL, to S. 1, a bill 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, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.
The clerk will call the roll. The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER), the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN), the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE), and the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Alaska (Mr. ALEXANDER) would have voted "yea," and the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BRUNSEN) would have voted "yea." The Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) would have voted "yea," and the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN) would have voted "yea."

Mr. SCHUMER. I announce that the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) and the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) are necessarily absent.

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 68, nays 23, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 13 Leg.]

YEAS—68

Barrasso                 Feinsteina                 Reed
Bennet                   Fischer                  Risch
Blacksburg                Gardner                Roberts
Blumenthal                Graham                   Romney
Boozman                  Grassley                  Rosen
Brass                  Henderson                     Rounds
Burk                     Hawley                       Rhode
Cantwell                  Inhofe                Scott (FL)
Capito                     Inhofe                Scott (NC)
Coats                      Johnson                  Shaheen
Cassidy                   Jones                        Shelby
Collins                  Kaine                            Sinema
Cooms                      King                             Stabenow
Correa                      Lankford                Tester
Cortez Masto                Manchin                    Thune
Cotton                     McConnell                  Tillis
Cramer                    McSally                     Tester
Crapo                        Menendez                 Toomey
Daines                     Markowski                  Warner
Duckworth                 Murray                      Whitehouse
Enzi                          Peters                   Wicker
Ernst                          Portman                    Young

NAYS—23

Baldwin                    Kennedy                     Schatz
Booker                   Klain and Schrader           Schumer
Cardin                      Leahy                      Smith
Cruz                           Lee                           Udall
Gillibrand                 Markley                      Van Hollen
Harriss                     Merkley                      Warren
Henshaw                       Murphy                      Wyden

NOT VOTING—9

Alexander                  Darbin                     Paul
Blunt                         Isaksen                   Perdue
Brown                      Moran                        Sullivan

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BRAUN). On this vote, the yeas are 68, the nays are 23.

Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn having voted in the affirmative, the motion is agreed to.

The clerk will report the bill by title.

The bill 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.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

AMENDMENT NO. 96 TO AMENDMENT NO. 65

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I call up Menendez amendment No. 96.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The bill clerk reads as follows:

The Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) proposed amendment No. 96 to amendment No. 65.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To clarify that the amendment shall not be construed as a declaration of war or an authorization of the use of military force)

At the end of the amendment, add the following:

(c) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed as a declaration of war or an authorization of the use of military force.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Idaho.

Mr. RISCH. I would like to ask Senator MENENDEZ, is it your understanding that your amendment does not affect any existing legal authorities governing the use of military force?

Mr. MENENDEZ. Yes, that is my understanding. My amendment should not be construed to affect in any way any existing authorities governing the use of military force. It only clarifies that the McConnell amendment is not an authorization for the use of military force or a declaration of war.

Mr. RISCH. I thank Senator MENENDEZ. Based on our understanding of your amendment, I will be supporting it.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, the Senate just invoked cloture on the majority leader's amendment, and I now rise to urge support for my second-degree amendment, which clarifies my understanding of our legal authorities governing the use of military force alone cannot defeat ISIS, al-Qaida, or other nonstate actors; and that military force alone will not provide enduring, sustainable peace and security against our adversaries.

More importantly, when we do send our sons and daughters into combat, we should do so only after careful consideration and consultation with clear objectives and strategy—a strategy that requires investments into diplomatic efforts in coordination with our allies and partners.

I appeal to my colleagues to make it crystal clear that the McConnell amendment cautioned against a precipitous withdrawal of U.S. troops in no way constitutes Senate support for their permanent presence for an undefined mission. As a legal matter, my amendment makes clear one critical point: Nothing in the McConnell amendment can be construed as an authorization for the use of military force. Authorizing military force is simply not part of the debate on either the McConnell amendment or S. 1.

At the end of the day, I would like to see all of our troops back home and off the battlefield. I believe we must continue to have comprehensive strategies to achieve that outcome.

So, in conclusion, I believe the majority leader's amendment sends an important message to the President—that while he is the Commander in Chief, the legislative branch will continue to exercise the due diligence and oversight of his actions regarding our security and interests abroad. It also sends a message that the United States will not abandon our allies and our partners.

I particularly worry about the Kurds in this regard, who have been some of the most significant fighters on the ground in Syria and who are also in pursuit of our interests there. We cannot send a global message that once we have finished using you for our purposes, we will leave you to die on the battlefield. That sends a message across the globe: Don't fight, and don't join the United States because when it finishes with you, it will leave you to die on the battlefield.

And if we want to make it clear to the American people, however, that we are not in the business of authorizing open-ended conflicts or of keeping our troops on the battlefield forever. Our safety
Mr. KING. Mr. President, I rise to discuss for a few moments reflections upon the hearing we had this week in the Intelligence Committee on worldwide threats. This is an annual hearing and is in public, at least the first part. Then there is a closed session afterward with the heads of our intelligence Agencies—the CIA, the FBI, the NSA, the Defense Intelligence Agency, and, of course, with the Director of National Intelligence.

This is an important hearing because it basically outlines to the American people the threats we face and the seriousness of those threats. It is an opportunity for those of us on the committee and for Members of the Senate in general to understand the nature of the threats that intelligence is, and what the information is that we have to help us make good policy decisions.

Good intelligence is crucial to making good decisions. We live in an incredibly complex world, and my work on the Armed Services Committees over the past 6 years has educated me as to just how complex and difficult a lot of these issues are. I remember a long discussion about the Middle East at one of the Intelligence Committee meetings, and one of the members on the committee said that this is a really hard, complicated subject. The witness that day, who was from the CIA, said: “Welcome to the Middle East.”

There are very difficult issues, but in order to make rational, thoughtful, important, and very results-oriented decisions based upon the information from these hearings, we have to know the facts. We have to understand what the implications are and what the likely results are but also, more fundamentally, just what is going on, on the ground. Whether you look back 50 years, 100 years, or 150 years, often our worst foreign policy misadventures have been due to one of two things—either bad intelligence or intelligence that was somehow skewed in order to meet the desires of the policymakers. If we don’t have good intelligence, we can’t make good decisions.

A lot of attention has been paid to the people who were testifying at that hearing—as I mentioned, the heads of the FBI and the CIA and the Directors of National Intelligence, Defense Intelligence, and the National Security Agency. Yet those individuals were speaking on behalf of thousands of other people who are scattered around the world, who often risk their lives to gain the information they were sharing with us that day. It was not Dan Coats’ opinion or Gina Haspel’s opinion or Paul Nakasone’s opinion. They were distilling and presenting to us the intelligence and the information that had been developed by their good people over the past month, years to inform us and to inform the President of the best information available so we can make the best decisions.

After the hearing, what disturbed me was the reaction of the President of the United States. Instead of absorbing and listening to this information, he dismissed it. He not only dismissed the information, but he dismissed the messengers and said they had to go back to school or that they were being naïve. Now, I don’t want to be heard as having said that the intelligence community always gets it right. I know, in my having sat through hearings on Afghanistan and Syria and on many of the other difficult subjects we face, that there are occasions when Dan Coats does not have a direct line to the Almighty in terms of the facts. They are not always right. Yet, if one is going to dismiss their findings, it should be based upon some additional source, an audit of facts or information from some other source.

There were two things that bothered me about the President’s reaction. One was he essentially dismissed the facts in a whole series of countries—Iran and ISIS. Those were the two we talked about. With regard to North Korea and Russia, basically, he said: I don’t believe any of it. The problem with that is, it undermines the confidence you have in the decision-making authority at the highest level if facts don’t matter. The information that is supplied is not by Dan Coats, not by Gina Haspel, not by Paul Nakasone—exactly the distilled wisdom of the thousands of people whose job it is, whose profession it is, to report the truth. At the beginning of the hearing, Dan Coats gave the best synopsis I have ever heard of the mission of the intelligence Agencies, of the mission of our intelligence community. It was very simple—to seek the truth and to speak the truth. That is exactly what they did at that hearing. They sought the truth through the auspices of these very professional, very thorough Agencies that are scattered throughout the world. Then they spoke the truth by telling us what they learned.

The second problem I have with the President’s reaction is a little more subtle, and this goes to the heart of the relationship between the intelligence community and policymakers. The subtle message that was being sent was: Don’t tell the boss things he doesn’t want to hear. Don’t give it to us unvarnished. Style the information; ameliorate the information in order to meet what is perceived to be the desires of the boss. Whether the boss is this President, a past President, or a future President, that is disastrous. The intelligence community has to deal in facts and information, not policy, but if the message is sent down through the ranks of “don’t give me an assessment that disagrees with where I started,” that will start to happen.

Indeed, it is human nature. All of us want to be in the good graces of the boss. All of us want to give our superiors information they want to get. I was in law school over 50 years ago and had a friend who had been a captain in the Vietnam War. He told the story of being on the ground in Vietnam. There was a skirmish in which a half a dozen Viet Cong were killed. He filed his report. His report went to the division. At that point, half a dozen became 15. It went to headquarters where 15 became 50. It then went to Washington where 50 became 150. That is because Washington wanted to see higher counts. That was the perception that corrupted the process, not because people were being corrupt in the sense of being evil or of doing wrong. They were doing what is human nature, which is “I want to please the person above me in the chain of command.”

If the President of the United States is not subtly telling the intelligence community what to hear, what not to hear, that will inescapably affect the quality of the product he receives, which, indeed, will also inescapably affect the quality of decisions he makes.

Again, I am not saying the intelligence community is always right. I certainly believe the President or any other policymaker, including Members of Congress who receive this information, need to review it critically—ask questions, probe and prod—and try to be sure the information is correct, but to dismiss it out of hand in a tweet, it seems to me, is dangerous. It is dangerous because it undermines the Executive’s authority to make good decisions based upon the facts, and it is dangerous because it is essential for skewing the information itself in the future. Either one of those things is a danger to national security.

If the President has facts that are different than those that are presented by the intelligence community, he should at least present them and say: This isn’t consistent with what I learned at “such and such” a conference or what I am hearing from the State Department or what I am hearing from Homeland Security. Yet to simply say they are naïve, that they don’t know what they are doing, and they should go back to school denigrates the work of thousands of loyal, patriotic Americans who are doing their level best to produce information upon which good decisions can be made.

I stand today not to say the intelligence community always gets it right but to say to the intelligence community should at least get an honest hearing and that the information they present is important to this country. It is important to the President, and it is important to the Congress. The day we
Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to express my opposition to the amendment before the Senate right now with respect to the disposition of American forces in Syria.

First, for my colleagues, let me stipulate that President Trump's Syria policy has been an absolute mess. It has been ad hoc. It has been a dumpster fire on a daily basis. That is something Republicans and Democrats can agree on, and I assume that is the reason we are having this debate right now.

There is bipartisan consternation over a policy in Syria that seems to change daily. It often changes based upon who the last person was to walk into the Oval Office or catch the President's ear.

There is a solution here, and Erdogan—President Erdogan—has what is now, potentially, unlimited green-lighting the continued end around on congressional authorization that this President and many other Presidents would like to continue.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

AMENDMENT NO. 65

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Let me also stipulate that I was one who did not support sending American troops into Syria in the first place. I have never believed that there is a military solution, led by the United States, to the host of problems that ravage that country. But once you have made that commitment, if you are going to undo it, you have to do it in some orderly fashion. To simply decide on a moment's notice, without any discussion with our allies or partners, that we are moving troops out is the wrong way to undo a commitment that I would argue was wrong in the first place.

You have to have a plan in place for the security of those you are leaving behind—both the Kurdish forces that you have pushed to bring the fight to ISIS, as well as all of the civilians who could be caught in the crossfire between an advancing Turkish force and a defensively oriented Kurdish force.

This is not why I am on the floor today—to try to, once again, rehash all of the ways that Trump's policy in Syria has gone wrong. I want to talk about why this amendment is not the right way for us to proceed as a means of correcting Trump's backward policies and how it could, frankly, get us more deeply mired into a series of conflicts in the Middle East, which are not supported—or will they be supported—by the American people.

First, we should be debating an authorization of military force for American forces in Syria, not an amendment that restricts an illegal use of military force.

The President does not have congressional authorization to use U.S. troops to fight ISIS anywhere else. He claims he does because he has taken the 2001 AUMF and suggested that because some elements of al-Qaeda eventually became elements of ISIS, that authorization continues. There is no one who voted then for that authorization some 17 years ago who thought that it would now be used as a means to fight a very different terrorist organization.

We should be having a debate about what America's authorization of military force so that it is updated for the enemies we are actually fighting, instead of conceding that the President has what is now, potentially, unlimited ability to fight anyone, anywhere—without the vote of any found the way to any kind of affiliation to a terrorist group named 17 years ago. We are not doing that.

Instead, through this amendment, in some way, shape, or form, we are ratifying the President's extra-constitutional uses of military force overseas, green-lighting the continued end around on congressional authorization that this President and many other Presidents would like to continue.

Second, the language of this bill suggests that our mission inside Syria is not just to fight ISIS. The language of this bill suggests that our troops are in Syria to fight Iran as well. Over and over again, this amendment is peppered with references to the rationale for our participation in Syria being not just to fight ISIS but also to counter Iranian influence.

In fact, the amendment lists a series of conditions that we believe need to be filled before troops are to be withdrawn. Among those conditions is a strategy to "stop Iran from dominating the region." That is an interesting debate for us to have. What should be the role of the United States to stop Iran from dominating the region?

I agree with my Republican colleagues that it is not in the security interests of the United States, nor our allies, for Iran to continue to gain a bigger foothold in the region, but there is also a constitutional authorization for U.S. forces to be in Syria to counter Iran or to fight Iran or to try to be a bulwark against Iranian aggression. No matter what kind of hoops you jump through to try to contort the 2001 AUMF to counter ISIS, you cannot get it to cover Iran.

This resolution—I don't know that it suggests, but it essentially admits—it asserts—that our troops are inside Syria today not just to fight ISIS but to stop Iran from gaining a bigger foothold there and, in fact, makes a condition of our troops' withdrawal be a strategy to continue to press back against the Iranians. There is no AUMF for that.

Let me tell you my real worry. Putting a bipartisan stamp of approval today on an amendment that suggests our troops are inside Syria, in part, to counter Iran will gratefully empower those in the administration who are rooting for actual war with Iran. If Democrats and Republicans say here, today, that our mission inside Syria is ultimately to fight Iran, then doesn't that potentially put some imprudential congressional support for a bigger conflagration with Iran that some in the administration may be trying to achieve?

Third, this amendment leaves the impression that there is an American-led military solution to all of the vexing problems inside Syria. There is none. There is none. If we really want to have a debate about the future of American policy in Syria, then we need to come to the conclusion that, ultimately, if we want to be a player in the long-term disposition of Syria for the betterment of the Syrian people, then American diplomats, American refugee programs, and American economic development aid are going to be much more dispositive than 2,000 American troops.

Let me give you an example. In Northern Syria, where the Kurds exist and where American troops are for the time being, we have a problem. As I outlined before, the problem is a relatively simple one. We have pushed the Kurds to become more and more influential in the military and governance matters of that region. That was important for us because the Kurds were likely fighting force to be able to oust ISIS, but we knew ahead of time that this was going to create a problem with the Kurds, who see the YPG—the Kurdish military—as a terrorist group. We don't agree with them, but we knew ahead of time that the Turks would not stand for the long-term empowerment of the YPG in those portions of Syria.

We have now reached the point at which the rubber hits the road—at which Erdogan has said: We are not going to stand for that. We are going to bring our troops in, creating a potential flashpoint there.

There is a solution here, and Erdogan outlined it in an op-ed he wrote for a major American newspaper. He said: Well, listen, we understand the Kurds are going to have to be influential, but it has to be Kurds we support, not Kurds we believe to be affiliated with terrorist groups. That is a really tricky needle to thread, and I am not sure how the Erdogan administration can do it the way you do that, frankly, not with tanks or with American marines but with diplomats and with experienced
foreign policy hands—people who know how to work out a complicated political arrangement in which the Kurds continue to be able to run that region but the Turks decide to hold back and not press forward militarily. That is a diplomatic and political quagmire that cannot be solved by the American military.

This amendment seems to suggest that we can solve all of our problems—or many of our problems—if we just keep 2,000 troops there.

Fourth, the back end of this amendment lays out a series of criteria that have to be fulfilled before the troops can be removed. I mentioned one of them—that there has to be a strategy to combat Iranian influence. The final of these criteria is that ISIS has to have been substantially defeated in the region and a certification has to be made to that effect.

Well, let me ask my colleagues this—it is a legitimate question, not a rhetorical one. I know the answer, and maybe someone can provide it to me. When was the last time this Congress tied the Executive hands in that way? When was the last time this Congress actually laid out the conditions by which the Executive cannot withdraw troops from a place unless x, y, and z criteria are met? That seems to be a very curious exercise of our foreign policy oversight responsibility.

I am someone who has suggested for a long time that we have largely abdicated that responsibility. I would love for us to be debating foreign policy and exercising our oversight more often, but the idea that we would, as a legislative body, tell the President that he cannot withdraw troops from a place unless x, y, and z criteria are met seems to be dangerous and restrictive because there are all sorts of conditions that you can imagine that aren’t listed in this amendment by which a President may feel it is in our best interest to keep the troops there.

The Constitution doesn’t vest in this Congress the power to undeclare war. It vests in us the power to declare war. To me, I worry that by restricting the aperture by which the President can make an argument to bring troops home, we ultimately will end up having them be in harm’s way for longer than is necessary.

Maybe this isn’t unprecedented. Maybe there are other times where we have done it. It does seem to be fairly unprecedented for the legislature to tie the Executive’s hands and tell him or her that he has to keep troops in a place for a certain period of time. I wanted to come down to the floor and express my reservations about this amendment. Again, I wish we were having a debate on an AUMF. I wish this weren’t the way in which we were exercising our constitutional prerogative on foreign policy. I am deeply worried—deeply worried—about language in this amendment that echoes those in the administration who are jonesing for a fight with Iran. I do not believe that however capable and brave our troops are in Syria, they ultimately are the answer. If we want to have a debate on Syria policy, let’s talk about all the other ways that we need to engage in Syria in order to bring stability to that place. I do worry about how we tie this President’s hands because if they tell him or her that he has to keep troops home and get them out of harm’s way.

Trump has completely botched policy in Syria, but that shouldn’t go—even Trump’s most ferocious opponents—without comment. That shouldn’t require Democrats to be against everything that he is for. He is pulling our troops out in a way that I oppose, but I worry about the long-term implications of this Congress asking for a fight in Syria that is unauthorized and then tying the President’s hands when it comes to getting troops out of harm’s way in places in far-off lands.

I oppose the amendment and encourage my colleagues to do the same.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

LILLY LEDBETTER AND PAYCHECK FAIRNESS ACT

Mr. JONES. Mr. President, I rise to talk about the issues of fairness, of equality, and of basic dignity.

In the greatest Nation on Earth and the leader of the free world, women are paid 80 cents for every dollar paid to men—80 cents for every dollar. That disparity is starker yet for women of color. Black women are paid 61 cents on the dollar. Latina women are paid just 53 cents on the dollar. Alabama, my home State, has the fourth biggest gender wage gap of any State in the country. That is just inexusable.

Those cents add up to real money, about $10,000 on average for every woman working a full-time year-round job. That is a total of about $900 million lost each year for American women. In the last 10 years, a total of $9 billion. That is real money, and that is increasing.

This gap persists regardless of education status and across different jobs, opportunities, and industries. It persists despite laudable efforts here in Congress over the past 50 years to start chipping away at this problem.

Most importantly, these lost wages impact women’s ability to pay their rent or mortgages, to save for their children’s college tuition, or to pay off existing debts. This is about life. This disparity can have lifelong consequences for the quality of life of women and their families.

Fortunately, there are steps we can take that have already had tremendous support.

I want to bring this home a little bit because we were looking at some statistics recently. If you factor in the fact that women are making so much less—a total of $900 million; think about this—the deficit is not just a matter of discrimination. It is a matter of economics. According to a 2015 Center for American Progress report, 42 percent of mothers were the sole or primary breadwinners for their families in 2015, bringing in at least—at least—half of their family’s incomes. Black and Latina mothers are more likely to be the breadwinners than White mothers. In fact, 70.7 percent of Black mothers were the sole or primary breadwinners in 2015, compared with 37.4 percent of White mothers.

Not all of those women are going to be the subject of pay discrimination. We know that. But the fact that there is likely to be a huge percentage. If there is $900 million, that is a pretty big percentage. By equalizing the pay for men and women—equal pay for equal work, which we all talk about but which in theory and in practice just doesn’t happen—we can raise the standard of living for families across this country, and we can raise the standard of living for families in a State like Alabama, where it is desperately needed.

These disparities, as I said, can have lifelong consequences for the quality of life of women and their families. Fortunately, there are steps that have already been taken.

Yesterday, I was proud to join my colleague Senator MURRAY and a host of others—in fact, I think it is almost all Democrats in the Senate, all Democrats in the House, and one Republican in the House—to reintroduce the Paycheck Fairness Act, a modest, commonsense solution to the problem of pay inequity which persists despite the existence of Federal and State equal pay laws.

Introduction of the Paycheck Fairness Act also just so happened to fall on the day after the 10th anniversary of the signing of the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act. The group who introduced this bill yesterday was joined here in Washington by Ms. Ledbetter herself.

Lilly Ledbetter is a great friend of mine and a native Alabamian. She was born in Jacksonville, AL, about an hour and a half hour from where I grew up, just outside of Birmingham, in Fairfield. She married her husband Charles after graduating from high school, and they had two children, Vicky and Phillip.

After almost 20 years working at the Goodyear Tire and Rubber plant in Gadsden, AL, just as she was nearing retirement, Ms. Ledbetter learned she was making thousands of dollars a year less than the men in her same position. She decided to take some action. She sued to try to get her backpay and to try to end that discrimination. The case went all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Unfortunately, the Court found that her claims were time-barred because she hadn’t filed a lawsuit 180 days from the day of her first paycheck 20 years earlier, even though she was totally unaware of the discrimination that existed for that 20-year period.

Because of her fight—which, again, she took all the way to the Supreme
Court of the United States—Congress ultimately passed in 2009 the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, which restarts the 180-day clock every time a discriminatory paycheck is issued.

Now, for the 12th time, Congress has introduced the Paycheck Fairness Act, which requires robust protection against sex-based pay discrimination. This vital legislation has been introduced in every single congressional session since 1997. It is absolutely inexcusable that versions of this very common-sense legislation had to be introduced 12 times and that it has yet to become law.

The Paycheck Fairness Act would require employers to prove that disparities in pay are job-related and necessary and not based on sex. It would make it illegal to retaliate against workers for discussing their wages.

It doesn’t require employers to make wages public, unlike all of us who work for the government. It doesn’t require that we prove sex discrimination, it just simply makes it illegal to retaliate against workers who simply discuss how much money they are making.

It would amend the Equal Pay Act of 1963 so that wronged workers can participate in class-action lawsuits against an employer who is engaging in systemic—systemic—pay discrimination. It would also prohibit employers from relying on salary history in determining future pay so that pay discrimination doesn’t follow women from job to job. Finally, this legislation would help businesses to facilitate equal pay practices.

Earlier this month, a historic number of women were sworn in to the 116th Congress—a historic number. Women are increasingly the primary breadwinner or the cobreadwinner in their families. Statistics are showing that every year those numbers increase. They cannot afford to get shortchanged.

The Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2009 was an essential step forward in the fight for equal pay. I am proud, as we commemorate the 10th anniversary of the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, to once again be a cosponsor of the Paycheck Fairness Act, which will continue the fight started by my friend Ms. Ledbetter more than 20 years ago and provide employees and employees—employees and employers—with new tools to battle pay gaps and pay discrimination.

Yesterday, Ms. Ledbetter came by to visit the office, as she always does. She comes by to see me. We were talking about this. My wife Louise was there, and we were having a discussion about how she was doing and how the bill 10 years ago affected her and so many others, and she made a really interesting statement.

She said: You know, I really don’t want to be here, Senator.

Actually, she called me Doug. That is what she does, and she should.

She said: I don’t want to be here. I shouldn’t have to come up to the Congress of the United States every year simply to advocate for equal pay for women who are doing the same job as the men. I would prefer to be home, back in Alabama, playing with the family and the grandkids. I don’t need to be here.

It really makes me: Why are we doing this every year? What could be the possible reason?

Then, this morning, I was doing a media call with some folks back in Alabama, and I was asked about this. And there was one woman in one of our media and in our newspapers. As is it always with all of the comments online, which these days I just refuse to read because they get so crazy, there were so many that talked about the fact that this is just fake news—that women really aren’t treated differently and that their pay is not below. I couldn’t believe it. Every statistic shows that.

My response to that is, also, this: If that is the case, then no one should be afraid of their boss. If their boss is treating their women employees as fair as their men, they shouldn’t worry about this. They should encourage it, because we know there will be some out there that are not doing it.

So if it works, all the better. Let’s pass this bill. Let’s make sure we have in law the opportunity for women to get those equal wages.

I have a daughter who is getting into the workforce after getting a Ph.D. She deserves the same pay as the Ph.D.s with similar experience wherever she ends up in colleges or universities.

I have two granddaughters, Ever and Ollie, whom I want to grow up in a world where they don’t have to worry about this, where they don’t have to come to Congress in 30 years or 40 years—just like Ms. Lilly Ledbetter has to do each year—to advocate for women and their rights, to make sure their families are taken care of in the same manner as their male counterparts’ families.

It is the least we can do for the women in our country who work so hard, who represent the backbone of the American way with their families, who raise their children, who work hard and do all of those things we need to be proud of. It is the least we can do to simply say: The Congress of the United States acknowledges you, we appreciate you, and we want to make sure you are treated the same way.

I would urge all of my colleagues—particularly my colleagues on the other side of the aisle—to get behind this legislation, and let’s get this passed this year so that we don’t have to worry about it again.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

Mr. SASS. Mr. President, this place fascinated me as a world’s greatest deliberative body, but there would be deceiving ourselves if we ignored the biggest debate that has been happening in America over the last 36 hours.

A publicly elected official—Governor of one of the 50 States—has been defending a practice that is morally repugnant. The Governor of Virginia has been defending a practice that is repugnant to civilized people across the entire world.

Here is just one of the ugly nuggets from Ralph Northam, the Governor of Virginia: “If the mother is in labor . . . the infant would be delivered, the infant would be kept comfortable, the infant’s life that would be kept comfortable (if that’s what the mother and the family desired) and then a discussion would ensue between the physician and the mother.”

Let’s be very clear about what we are talking about. We are talking about fourth-trimester abortion or what anyone in the normal world calls infanticide. That is what we are talking about, and the Governor of Virginia has been defending this all day yesterday and again today, going out and trying desperately to double down and again say he wants to defend this practice, which is infanticide.

Let’s be clear about what we are talking about. We are talking about a public official in America out there who is not doing it. We are not talking some euphemism. We are not talking about a clump of cells. We are talking about a little baby girl who has been born and is on a table in a hospital or a medical facility, and we are talking about a public official who had about whether you could kill that little baby. We are talking about the most vulnerable among us, and we have a public official in America out there again and again defending this practice. This is infanticide that we are talking about.

This should be so far beyond any political consideration. We are talking about a little baby—a baby with dignity, an image bearer. We are talking about a tiny life that has done nothing wrong to warrant being left to die cold and alone on a table.

Everyone in the Senate ought to be able to say unequivocally that killing that little baby is wrong. This doesn’t take any political courage, and if you can’t say that, if there is a Member in this body who can’t say that, there may be lots of work you can do in the world, but you shouldn’t be here. You should get the heck out of any calling in public life where you pretend to care about the most vulnerable among us. There should be no politics here that are right versus left or Republican versus Democrat. This is the most basic thing you could be talking about. We are talking about a little baby born today, and we have a public official in America defending the idea: Well, you could have a debate about killing her.

That is why today I am starting a dual-track legislative process to make sure this body has a clear-eyed look at the issue before us, has a clear-eyed look at this atrocity, and to make sure the 320 million men and women who are actually our bosses—to be sure
they have a clear-eyed look at what we stand for. Do we stand with those little, vulnerable babies in desperate need of care and comfort and support, medical treatment, food, or do we stand with the comments of the Governor of Virginia over the last 2 days?

Tonight, I am beginning what is known as the rule XIV process. That is an expedited procedure for floor consideration of my legislation, the Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act.

In addition, I want to announce that on Monday night, I am going to be sure that every Senator has the opportunity to come to the floor and say whom we stand for and what we stand against. So I want to announce that in addition to the rule XIV process that I am going to initiate in a moment, I also want Senators to be aware that on Monday evening, I am going to be asking unanimous consent for Senators to come to the floor and be against infanticide. This shouldn’t be complicated.

MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—S. 311

Mr. SASSER. Mr. President, I understand there is a bill at the desk, and I ask for its first reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bill by title for the first time.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 311) to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit a health care practitioner from failing to exercise the proper degree of care in the case of a child who survives an abortion or attempted abortion.

Mr. SASSER. Mr. President, I now ask for a second reading and in order to place the bill on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard. The bill will be read for the second time on the next legislative day.

Mr. SASSER. Thank you. I look forward to the debate in this body on Monday evening.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

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 at their own request.

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

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

VOTE EXPLANATION

• Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, today I made the decision to return to Illinois because of the challenges faced by the region’s residents due to the extreme cold. As a result, I was necessarily absent from this afternoon’s cloture vote on McConnell amendment No. 65 to the Strengthening America’s Security in the Middle East Act of 2019 S. 1.

On vote No. 1 present, I would have voted nay on the motion to invoke cloture.

HONORING PRIVATE FIRST CLASS FLOYD K. LINDSTROM

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, I wish to pay tribute to the bravery and service of PFC Floyd K. Lindstrom, a Colorado Springs World War II veteran who has earned our Nation’s highest military decoration, the Medal of Honor. I also want to recognize the significance of February 3, 2019, which marks the 75th anniversary of his death. He was killed in action at the battle of Anzio.

It is my pleasure to commend the efforts of the VA Eastern Colorado Health Care System and Colorado’s veterans community, which worked to bring a Medal of Honor for display at the Lindstrom Colorado Springs Community-Based Outpatient Clinic.

Much has been said about the battle that compelled Lindstrom to act above and beyond the call of duty where he earned his place in the Hall of Heroes. According to the citation, Lindstrom acted with “conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity” in defeating a German counterattack on a hill near Mignano, Italy, November 11, 1943. When the enemy counterattacked, Lindstrom and his platoon were forced to fall back to a defensive position. Unable to eradicate the enemy nest from this position, Lindstrom fearlessly picked up his heavy machine gun and ran up the hillside to gain a new position, only 10 yards away from the enemy machinegun; yet again, Lindstrom was unable to reach the gunners who were hiding behind a large rock. Lindstrom charged uphill once more facing a steady stream of fire and killed both gunners with his pistol. In this moment, Lindstrom embodied the true spirit of self-sacrifice.

Every day, men and women in uniform like Lindstrom heroically serve on the front lines of our Nation’s defense. I stand with Coloradans today to honor his sacrifice and his memory.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO MARILYN MADDox

• Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, this week I have the honor of recognizing Marilyn Maddox of Lewis and Clark County. This week marks Marilyn’s 100th birthday. She is being honored this week at the Montana State Capitol, not only for her birthday, but also for 80 years of service to the Montana Federation of Republican Women. Marilyn was born in Chicago on January 31, 1919, and grew up in Ohio. She attended Ohio State University where she performed as a professional dancer and concert violinist. She joined the National Federation of Republican Women in 1939 and still has her original membership card.

While in Ohio, she married Thomas Maddox to whom she would be married for 71 years. Tom, was a journalist with the Associated Press, and they lived in several Midwestern cities before Tom received a transfer out West to Helena, MT. They packed up their 1961 Plymoutstation wagon with two young daughters and two dogs and headed for Montana. Like many folks who find themselves in Montana, the Maddoxes fell in love with Big Sky Country.

Marilyn is an avid outdoors woman and loves hunting and fishing. She also worked for the Montana Stockgrowers Association for many years. Marilyn has 2 daughters, 6 grandchildren, 14 great-grandchildren, 6 great-great-grandchildren, and a Shih-tzu named Tiny Wagnung.

I congratulate Marilyn on reaching this milestone and thank her for her many years of service to the people of Montana and the Helena community.

RECOGNIZING CARROLL BRADFORD, INC.

• Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, it is my privilege to honor a Florida small business that exemplifies what it means to provide quality services and give back to the community when it matters the most. As chairman of the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, each week I recognize a small business that exemplifies the value of hard work and the unique American entrepreneurial spirit. This week, it is my pleasure to recognize Carroll Bradford, Inc., of Orlando, FL, as the Senate Small Business of the Week.

Carroll Bradford, Inc., is a full-service construction and landscaping company that was founded in 2010 by Stephen Barnett and Jon Menke, who were both born and raised in central Florida. Stephen and Jon are related by marriage and were driven to follow in the footsteps of their grandfathers, who were both successful small business owners in the 1940s. The company’s name combines the names of each founder’s grandfather: Stephen’s grandfather, Carroll Barlow; and Jon’s grandfather, G.L. Bradford.

Carroll Bradford started in the Baldwin Park community in Orlando and now has expanded to Jacksonville. Through hard work and dedication, Stephen and Jon have built a reputation of providing quality services and landscaping services, being honest with their customers, and giving back to the community.

In its first 8 years, Carroll Bradford has grown exponentially, leading the company to open an app to respond to the expanding base of customers. A testament to this growth is the company’s partnership with the Orlando Magic...
basketball team, for which Carroll Bradford proudly serves as the Magic’s "Official Builder." As a result of its exceptional work, Carroll Bradford has won numerous awards and accolades, including an A+ rating from the Better Business Bureau and recognition from the Orlando Business Journal as a "Fast 50" business in 2017.

Carroll Bradford not only constructs many of the buildings and homes that form the Orlando and Jacksonville communities, it is also dedicated to serving the people who live there. Carroll Bradford supports its community in a variety of ways, including sponsoring the Coaches and Friends Toy Drive Challenge golf tournament each December, providing meals at Orlando's Ronald McDonald House, and hosting an annual Arnold Palmer Hospital trick-or-treat event. In March of this year, Carroll Bradford will sponsor the 2019 Arnie's March Against Children and for the Arnold Palmer Hospital for Children. Additionally, the family at Carroll Bradford established the CB Foundation, which provides financial assistance to families in need.

Carroll Bradford Inc. is an outstanding example of what it means for a small business to be more than just a workplace for a community. The team at Carroll Bradford combines a desire to provide a useful service for Floridians, while remaining committed to enhancing the community through service. I would like to congratulate Stephen, Jon, and all of the employees at Carroll Bradford, Inc., on being named the Senate Small Business of the Week. I wish you the best of luck as you continue to grow your business and serve your community.

VERMONT STATE OF THE UNION ESSAY FINALISTS

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I ask to have printed in the RECORD some of the finalist essays written by Vermont High School students as part of the ninth annual State of the Union essay contest conducted by my office.

The essays follow, in alphabetical order according to the finalists' names.

ISABELLE DESROCHES, BURLINGTON HIGH SCHOOL, FRESHMAN, FINALIST

Civility in local politics is a topic of increasing importance. As we attempt to compromise on enormous national issues such as immigration, health care, and foreign policy, intense polarization, intense polarizing language, and unending political rhetoric has seeped into local elections through oversimplified yard signs, tempestuous town meetings, and neighborhood altercations that craft rifts in our communities. Hopefully, we can shift these themes before courtesy in both national and local politics dies, and my generation is left sans civility in our system.

We seem to be coming upon an age of wildly strong convictions. Although history classes dive into both pros and cons of political circumstances (such as the eras of Andrew Jackson or Lincoln), citizens and politicians are more resistant than ever to accept the yin/yang relationship that can be found in any political situation. Anyone who follows news is chronically frustrated by this double standard. What we must come to accept as a nation is that none of the pressing issues that face us today can be solved without a common language of civility.

Rollo May, an existential psychologist, wrote about conviction in The Courage to Create. "The relationship between commitment and doubt is by no means an antagonistic one. Commitment is healthiest when it is not without doubt, but in spite of doubt,” he wrote. May understands what we must come to embrace and apply to our politics: our convictions are strongest when we can cast doubt upon our own assertions. A position without doubt causes ignorance and paralyzation of thought. It is courageous to doubt yourself and keep an open mind. We learn this in school, yet students are often hard-pressed to find admirable examples of this in our lives and on the national stage. As politics become increasingly heated, we can agree that it is more important than ever to preserve integrity and traditional decorum in local elections as well; we must initiate in the strong roots of our society—our tight-knit communities. Our government must set a precedent of positive influence and etiquette so that progress and compromise can finally begin. We must work to create a climate of dialogue instead of hostile debate, both in communities and gradually on a national scale. Civility in politics is the foundation of the progress we need to make in the coming years. Actively working towards an attitude of politics in a bipartisan fashion, and incorporate doubt in our convictions and empathy in our approach is the only way we can ensure the survival of our American political system as it was intended.

LIVIA GREENBERG, STRATTON MOUNTAIN SCHOOL, JUNIOR, FINALIST

The chest closes as the throat tightens like a python strangling its prey, the skin burning as it breaks out in angry hives and rashes, forcing one to claw at their body as a lack of oxygen tightens like a python strangling its prey, the skin burning as it breaks out in angry hives and rashes, forcing one to claw at their body as a lack of oxygen as it breaks out. This is an allergic reaction—one that can be experienced by the 15 million Americans with food allergies, one of whom sent to the hospital due to a reaction every three minutes. The device used to stop reactions, called an EpiPen, can be made for thirty dollars; however, the lifesaving instrument retails for 600 dollars. The exorbitant price of the EpiPen is a result of dominance over the healthcare market, allowing companies to raise prices exponentially. Unfortunately, the EpiPen is not the only example of why monopoly capitalism is an immoral system that abuses the consumers who are in need of medical help. Multiple monolithic companies are forcing those with medical needs to pay prodigious amounts for necessities, a practice that must be broken apart with government intervention.

Shattering medical monopolies needs to be one of the country’s priorities, and the most feasible solution to do so is to create a new act that would outlaw inflexible patents and bolster smaller companies financially. The federal government currently uses three anti-trust acts as a guideline for what is a legal or illegal trust, but because none of the acts address copyright, colossal companies have avoided punishment by patenting products or drugs in a manner that makes an alternative product illegal to sell. Even remotely similar products have been banned by the FDA and are not allowed to be sold. By creating a law that prohibits excluding unaffordable patents, cheaper products would be available in the healthcare market. With a government loan, small-scale companies can develop the alternative competition, which would drive the companies that currently have a monopoly into losing the price war that will kill their product. In addition to reducing the cost of medical necessities, the consumers would have more freedom to choose which product they trust in case of an emergency and better access to medication essentials.

While both an ethical and economic issue, trusts are a problem that can be solved with strong government action that keeps the wellbeing of the American citizens at the forefront of concern. No one in the United States should die because of an inability to afford medication due to corporate greed. Creating a new anti-trust act will allow for more companies to develop and sell vital medications at a more affordable price, and will stop companies from nailing in innocent people’s coffins.

SETH HARTE, BURLINGTON HIGH SCHOOL, FRESHMAN, FINALIST

I’m the kid that dreams of writing movies but is reluctant because I’ve heard too many stories of writers that fail. I love soccer and want to play in the MLS but know how few make it. I want to be an attorney someday but all I hear is how expensive it is to go to law school. All of this noise makes me feel like there is no way to succeed. But can’t I try? I am starting to believe that we close the door before we can open it because defeat feels inevitable. Our society does not see the beauty in failing so we instead we just quit. I believe this is because of our history, our grading systems, and social media.

We learn from an elementary school age that we should never fail and this philosophy is exhibited repeatedly throughout our schooling and into adulthood. We are taught that to mess up is the worst thing we can do because we have survived so long with a
mindset that believes we will succeed. Although believing in ourselves is good it makes it hard for us to fail with dignity and the knowing that messing up is okay. According to MedBroadcast, one of the main reasons for suicide is because of failure. We just can’t admit that the word failure means that we have been defeated or we did something wrong. The reality is that if we tried we didn’t fail. I believe that children should not be punished for that. Psychology Today said that one of the leading reasons for stress for students was the need to get A’s. I believe that Vermont should lean toward proficiency-based learning because it gets away from the letter grade and lets kids learn at their own pace.

Social media has taken the 21st-century teens by a storm. According to a 2015 study, the Washington Post said that teens consume nine hours a day of social media. As a teenager myself, I consider examples of people showing off their success which is nice; however, it makes a lot of people feel bad about themselves. We should work towards a goal of producing more positive content.

Our views of failure are false and missed interpreted, however, if you can treat failure as not what we’ve been taught all our lives but treat it as a way to improve as a human race and individuals we will grow tremendously and know that one failure will not determine your life, getting straight A’s are not needed to succeed and that there is more behind what looks like that perfect photo. If I can go through life believing this I know I will become that pro soccer player, that attorney or that writer.

ALEXIS JARLONSKI, ST. JORNSHURY ACADEMY, SENIOR, FINALIST

Aldous Huxley, the author of “Brave New World,” seems to have predicted the Trumpian era of disillusion and fear of immigrants. However, the basic idea of welcoming immigrants is central to our way of life; our diversity makes us stronger. Unfortunately, these values are being threatened. Current immigration policy is shifting to ward exclusion of immigrant populations and has awakened an anti-immigrant sentiment that does not align with the historical importance of immigration in the U.S. These concepts are essential to America’s identity of inclusivity, and they need to be protected as we have gone under such a dramatic shift in power and ideals. Trump continually spews blatant falsehoods which undermine that character of immigrant communities, in order to secure his campaign promise of a wall. It has been apparent that our president will continue to use hateful rhetorical devices toward immigrant populations simply for his own benefit.

When in fact, his beliefs and promises do not align with that of the American people. As demonstrated in Huxley’s novel, when we isolate those we deem as the other, we are constricting our growth as a nation.

A prime example of an attempt to dehumanize and marginalize people through the news is Trump’s commentary on the Migrants’ passage through Mexico. Trump has continued to dehumanize and marginalize outsiders and justify our hostility toward them. The media typically presents the migrants through an over- head image of a crowd, thus neglecting their humanity. “The Caravan” is an example not to view people as a house. According to our president, they are rapists, drug dealers, killers, deceitful, job stealing terrorists coming in by the thousands. This information is simply false, and aimed to incite fear among Americans. Unfortunately, today, our President’s hateful rhetoric toward outsiders has reframed our former charitable nature toward immigrant populations. The image of the migrant people by must be must look at their faces to see their individual humanity, rather than a single entity.

We must remember the pillars by which our Nation was founded on, those of which make it great. The fundamental notion of inviting immigrants into our communities and providing them with equal opportunities to thrive is integral to our lifestyle. We have promised ourselves as Nation to provide stability to outsiders. We are an entire nation of cultures and thoughts; these values are what offer us strength.

During Donald Trump’s presidential campaign Americans were fascinated by his explosive personality. Unfortunately, over the past two years, we have learned that was not merely a campaign tactic. His continual attacks on American democracy have activated catalysts for change. We will no longer stand by, entertained, uninformed. We must encourage activism and open discussion to promote understanding, we must evaluate our media consumption and make educated decisions, and we must actively seek the truth, in a world that is overwhelming us with inflamed rhetoric. Only then, will we escape this self-inflicted Brave New World.

SIMON ROSENBAUM, VERMONT COMMONS SCHOOL, FRESHMAN, FINALIST

When I was in eighth grade, a paraeducator made Mein Kampf required reading for students who she did not believe were working hard enough. I later learned that she only engaged in that behavior around Jewish students.

To this day, she works in a Vermont middle school after a school investigation didn’t find any evidence”. Anti-Semitism incidents are far more commonplace in schools today then most educators like to admit. According to a study for The Washington Post, in 2018 a study reported that 69% of young Jews in America said that they had “personally experienced discrimination because of their faith”. This is up from 39% in 2013 from the same study.

We can solve the issue of anti-Semitism in our schools by a variety of actions. We should begin by instituting diversity experts as consultants on three month pilot periods in every Vermont school to observe systematic and ignorance based anti-semitism.

The consultants would then make recommendations in the changing of diversity education to the school board. If the board were to refuse the recommendations by the consultant, the consultant could then appeal to the State Board of Education. Another course of action we should be taking is to create a zero-tolerance policy on anti-Semitism both inside and outside of schools. If kids are shown the right examples while seeing the wrong ones punished, then the precedent will be set that no one will tolerate anti-semitism.

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making the community green and resili-  
silient, and recycling and composting.  
By 2050 Vermont should be using 90% of  
clean energy sources. I’m part of The  
Youth Lobby For Climate Change. We  
organize an annual rally at the State  
House that gets young people involved  
early in the conversation about the  
future. We talk about what we’re doing  
right now, our future as a state, and what  
will help our communities.  
In 2016 electricity made up 28% of  
emission in our environment. Solar  
power and other renewable energy  
resources to create new products, cost-  
the state of our union? It’s one where  
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Thomas Jefferson wrote: ‘‘No  
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The time for prayers is over. We  
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It is the year 2060. You and your grandchildren are watching the charred Earth slowly recede from view within your space capsule. "What happened?" they ask. You breathe a deep sigh fraught with regret and anger as you reluctantly tell the story of the Earth's demise. "It all began in the 1970s..."

When Exxon researchers learned that the burning of fossil fuels influences climate, they hid their findings from the public. Other fossil fuel companies were complicit in denying the existence of the greenhouse effect for decades. Today, the oil and coal industries are still the main drivers of carbon emissions, and $20 billion in annual U.S. government subsidies perpetuates this environmental debt.

"Our hunger for oil and coal was insatiable. We ate and ate, but it poisoned us. We loved our cars and our plastics, but they killed us..."

The use of fossil fuels for transportation, electricity, and plastic production releases carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, trapping heat. Rising global temperatures and more severe and frequent natural disasters have already devastated human lives. In as few as twelve years, rising sea levels and droughts will lead to severe food shortages, heightened political instability, and widespread poverty. A recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report found that limiting global temperature increase to 1.5°C, the target of the Paris Agreement, will still cause $54 trillion in damage.

"Back in Vermont, I was a teenager when I first noticed the unbearable summer heat that made breathing difficult and forgot what a white Christmas felt like. These were merely inconveniences, but that all change in a few years. The searing wildfires and crippling hurricanes that made headlines in California and the Carolinas soon became commonplace. Entire cities vanished from the map because they were submerged underwater. Could we have avoided this?"

The efforts of individuals—taking shorter showers, using public transit, going vegetarian—can only do so much, but it's large companies that wield influence over our government and society. A carbon tax is an effective method of keeping them in check. It's a regenerative economic measure that could fund renewable energy research and implementation.

However, ordinary citizens still must help avoid catastrophe. In the end, our politicians and business leaders have a say in our nation's energy infrastructure, but it is our duty to convince them to adopt necessary changes. We must ask: Is your government subsidizing fossil fuels? Is it losing your hard-earned money to corporate power. We must elect officials who will champion a carbon tax, and we must fulfill our end of the deal in giving up fossil fuels for renewable energy sources. So, what story will we tell our grandchildren? A lament of despair and regret, or a tale of teamwork and hope? The decisions we make today will provide the answer. Breaking our fossil fuel addiction and investing in renewable energy is the only way to avoid Earth's demise.

The time for action was forty years ago, but the next best time is now.

TRIBUTE TO HARDY MCCOLLUM
- Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize Judge Hardy McCollum, judge and chairman of the Tuscaloosa County Commission, who retired earlier this month after 42 years of honorable service. Judge McCollum will be long remembered for his remarkable career and his dedication to the rule of law.

A native of Tuscaloosa, Hardy grew up selling peanuts, popcorn, and programs at Denny Stadium, which is now known as Bryant-Denny Stadium. Following graduation from Tuscaloosa High School, Hardy married his high school sweetheart, Juanita. They both went on to earn their degrees from the University of Alabama.

Following college, Hardy began working in Tuscaloosa and serving as an active member of the U.S. Junior Chamber of Commerce, commonly known as the Jaycees. He has always told people that his first political experience was campaigning for me in the 1970 Alabama State Senate race.

In his first run for office in 1976, Hardy was elected to the position of probate judge. Following his initial election, he was reelected six more 6-year terms, serving in the esteemed role from 1977 to 2019, a total of 42 years.

During his time as probate judge and chairman of the Tuscaloosa County Commission, Hardy also served as president of the Association of County Commissions of Alabama, the National Association of Counties Transportation Steering Committee, and the National College of Probate Judges. Additionally, he held the role of chairman of the West Alabama Planning and Development Council, the Governor's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped, and the University of Alabama Commerce and Business Administration Executive Society.

Outside of his professional career, Hardy has volunteered over the years with the Boys and Girls Club of America, Boy Scouts of America, and United Way. He also served as chairman of the Heart Association and the Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind Foundation.

Another noteworthy accomplishment in Hardy's career is that he has been the longest serving probate judge in the State of Alabama, and at the time of his first election in 1976, he was the youngest probate judge in the State. His dedication and service have been immensely valued in the State and will be greatly missed.

It is with great pleasure that I join Hardy's family and friends in recognizing his accomplishments. Our State and community have been fortunate to have a leader like Hardy McCollum, and I wish Hardy the very best as he transitions into the next chapter of his life.

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE
At 10:05 a.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 bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 790. An act to provide for a pay increase in 2019 for certain civilian employees of the Federal Government, and for other purposes.

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-176. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Three Rivers, Southeast Arkan-
resco Navigation Project; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-177. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled “2012 and 2014 Regional Partnership Grants to Increase the Well-Being of and to Improve the Perman-
te. The following bills and joint resolu-
tions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous con-
sent, and referred as indicated:

By Ms. ERNST (for herself, Mr. G RASS-LEY, Mr. S ASSE, Mrs. F ISCHER, Mr. O'DOE, Mr. F OXFORD, Mr. D ECKER, Mr. H EAN, Mr. T REPP, Mr. B ECKER, Mr. A NTHONY, Mr. E INZELSTEIN, Mr. H EINZELSTEIN, Mr. B ECKER, Mr. A NTHONY, Mr. E INZELSTEIN, Mr. H EAN, Mr. T REPP, Mr. B ECKER, Mr. O'DOE, Mr. F OXFORD, Mr. D ECKER, Mr. H EAN,

By Mr. TOOMEY (for himself, Mr. WARN-
ne, Mr. S ASSE, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. MORAN, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. JOHN-
son, Mr. KING, Mr. SCHATZ, Mrs. SHA-
ne, and Mr. SCHATZ):

S. 286. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for the cov-
er, and the added amount; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BARRASSO (for himself and Mr. STrADBERRY):

S. 286. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for the cov-
er, and the added amount; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. SMITH (for herself, Ms. MUR-
nes, and Mr. UDALL):

S. 288. A bill to amend the Indian Civil Rights Act of 1968 to extend the jurisdiction of tribal courts over crimes involving sexual violence, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

By Mr. GARDNER (for himself, Mr. RICH, Ms. MURRAY, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. GILLIBRAND, Ms. CANTWELL, Ms. WARREN, Ms. CORTZ, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. MENENDEZ, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. HARRIS, Ms. ROSEN, Mrs. SHA-
ne, Mr. KING, Mr. CARPER, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. BEN-
een, Mr. COONS, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. REED, Mr. KAIN, Ms. HASSAN, MR. MARKY, MR. MURPHY, MR. MENENDEZ, MS. CORTEZ MASTO, MR. JANUARY, MR. CARDIN, MR. BOOKER, MR. WHIT-
HOUSE, MR. MEERLEY, MR. VAN HOL-
EN, MR. CASEY, MR. HROWN, MS. GILLIBRAND, MR. CANTWELL, MR. WAR-
REN, MS. STABENOW, MS. BALDWIN, MR. BROWN, MS. SMITH, MR. WARNER, MR. PETERS, MR. JONES, AND MR. SCHATZ):

S. 292. A bill to limit the separation of families at or near points of entry; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CASSIDY:

S. 293. A bill to enhance border security to reduce drug trafficking and related money laundering; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. UDALL (for himself, Mr. HEIN-
rich, Ms. HASSAN, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, and Ms. SMITH):

S. 294. A bill to establish a business incu-
ators program within the Department of the Interior to promote economic development
in Indian reservation communities; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself and Mr. HOEVEN):

S. 292. A bill to establish the Rural Export Center, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. CARDIN):

S. 296. A bill to amend XVIII of the Social Security Act to ensure more timely access to home health services for Medicare beneficiaries under the Medicare program; to the Committee on Finance.

S. 297. A bill to amend title 28, United States Code, to modify the amount in controversy requirement and remove the complete diversity requirement; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. DUCKWORTH (for herself and Mr. DURBIN):

S. 298. A bill to establish the Springfield Race Riot National Historic Monument in the State of Illinois, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. CASEY):

S. 299. A bill to amend title VII of the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize programs that support interprofessional geriatric education and training to develop a geriatric-capable workforce, improving health outcomes for growing and diverse aging American population and their families, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. CORNYN (for himself and Mr. HENRICH):

S. 301. A bill to require the Secretary of Energy to carry out a program relating to physical security and cybersecurity for pipelines and liquefied natural gas facilities; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. PORTMAN:

S. 301. A bill to enforce work authorization requirements for immigrants; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BURR (for himself, Mr. BENNET, Mrs. CAPITO, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. HARRIS, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. GRAHAM, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. KING, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. TESTER, Mr. HEINRICH, and Mr. ALEXANDER):

S. 301. A bill to permanently reauthorize the Land and Water Conservation Fund; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. CORNYN (for himself, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. TILLIS, Ms. HARRIS, Ms. COLLINS, and Ms. ROSEN):

S. 302. A bill to reform the Gear Up program; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself, Mr. PORTMAN, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. JONES, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. MANCHIN, and Ms. HARRIS):

S. 304. A bill to reauthorize section 360H of the Public Health Service Act to continue to encourage the expansion, maintenance, and the establishment of approved graduate medical residency programs at qualified teaching health centers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself, Mr. MANCHIN, Mrs. HARRIS, and Mr. MORAN):

S. 305. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to recognize Indian tribal governments for purposes of determining underweight that whether a child has special needs; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself, Mr. MARKY, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. BOOKER, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. KING, and Mr. LEAHY):

S. 306. A bill to ensure enforcement and protect competition through adjusting premerger filing fees, increasing antitrust enforcement resources, and improving the capability of antitrust enforcers; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself, Mr. MARKY, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Mr. BOOKER):

S. 307. A bill to amend the Clayton Act to modify the standard for unlawful acquisition, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. FEINSTEIN (for herself and Mr. HARRIS):

S. 308. A bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior to convey certain Federal lands in San Bernardino County, California, to the San Bernardino Valley Water Conservation District, and to accept in return certain non-Federal lands, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. SANDERS:

S. 309. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reinstate estate and generation-skipping transfer tax purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. LEARY, Mr. CARPER, Mr. WHITTINGHAME, Mr. UDALL, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. COONS, Mr. MARKY, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, and Mrs. FEINSTEIN):

S. 310. A bill to amend the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act to authorize the Act; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. Sasse (for himself, Mr. BARRASSO, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. BRAUN, Mr. BURR, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. COTTON, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. DAINES, Mr. ENZI, Ms. ERNST, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. GRAMM, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. HAWLEY, Mr. HOEVEN, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. MIKULSKI, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. RISCH, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. ROMNYK, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina, Mr. THURMOND, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. WICKER, and Mr. YOUNG):

S. 311. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit a health care practitioner from failing to exercise the proper degree of care in the case of a child who survives and abortion or attempted abortion; read the first time.

By Mr. MERKLEY (for himself, Mr. WARREN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. MARKY, Mr. WYDRN, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. BALDWIN, Ms. HARRIS, Ms. WARREN, and Mrs. FEINSTEIN):

S. 312. A bill to prevent a nuclear arms race resulting from weakened international restrictions on the proliferation of intermediate- and shorter-range missiles, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. INHOFE (for himself, Mr. KING, and Mr. ROBERTS):

S. 313. A bill to amend the American History and Civics Education program under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to require inclusion of programs that educate students about the history and principles of the Constitution of the United States and the Bill of Rights; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. WARNER:

S. 314. A bill to improve the processing and oversight by the Federal Government of security clearances and background investigations and for other purposes; to the Select Committee on Intelligence.

By Ms. HASSAN (for herself and Mr. PORTMAN):

S. 315. A bill to authorize cyber hunt and incident response teams at the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. DURBIN, and Mr. CRUZ):

S. Res. 35. A resolution supporting democratic principles and standards in Bolivia and throughout Latin America; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. CORNYN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. MARKY, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BROWN, Mr. TOOMY, and Mr. RUBIO):

S. Res. 36. A resolution supporting the observation of National Trafficking and Modern Slavery Prevention Month during the period beginning on January 1, 2019, and ending on February 1, 2019, to raise awareness of, and opposition to, human trafficking and modern slavery; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. TESTER (for himself, Mr. DAINES, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. UDALL, Ms. WARNER, Mr. BENNET, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. HEINRICH, Ms. HARRIS, Mr. MORAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. CHAMBER, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. THUNE, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Ms. SINEMA, Ms. STABENOW, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. SULLIVAN, and Mr. PETERS):

S. Res. 37. A resolution designating the week beginning February 3, 2019, as ‘‘National Tribal Colleges and Universities Week’’; considered and agreed to.

By Mrs. MURRAY (for herself, Ms. COLINS, Mr. BLUNT, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Ms. ISAKSON, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. CORNYN, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. CASEY, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. KING, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. CANTWELL, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. STABENOW, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. HARRIS, Mr. PETERS, Mr. COONS, and Ms. DUCKWORTH):

S. Res. 38. A resolution designating the week of February 4 through 8, 2019, as ‘‘National School Counseling Week’’; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. MORAN (for himself, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. BENNIT, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. CARPER, Mr. CASSIDY, Ms. COLINS, Ms. COONS, Mr. COTTON, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. DAINES, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. ENZI, Ms. ERNST, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. HOEVEN, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. JONES, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. KING, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. MERRKLEY, Mr. PAUL, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. RISCH, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. SCHUMER,
ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 29
At the request of Mr. WARNER, the names of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT), the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS), the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) and the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) were added as cosponsors of S. 29, a bill to establish the Office of Critical Technologies and Security, and for other purposes.

S. 80
At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Ms. MCSALLY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 80, a bill to repeal the annual fee on health insurance providers enacted by the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

S. 104
At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the names of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE), the Senator from Indiana (Mr. YOUNG), the Senator from Nebraska (Ms. FISCHER) and the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER) were added as cosponsors of S. 104, a bill to amend title 31, United States Code, to provide for automatic continuing resolutions.

S. 105
At the request of Mrs. BLACKBURN, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 105, a bill to amend title X of the Public Health Service Act to prohibit family planning grants from being awarded to any entity that performs abortions, and for other purposes.

S. 130
At the request of Mr. SASSE, the name of the Senator from Utah (Mr. ROMNEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 130, a bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit a health care practitioner from refusing to provide the proper degree of care in the case of a child who survives an abortion or attempted abortion.

S. 131
At the request of Mr. CASSIDY, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Ms. ENNIST) was added as a cosponsor of S. 131, a bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to prohibit Federal Medicaid funding for the administrative costs of providing health benefits to individuals who are unauthorized immigrants.

S. 135
At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CRAMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 135, a bill to prioritize the allocation of H-2B visas for States with low unemployment rates.

S. 153
At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES) was added as a cosponsor of S. 153, a bill to promote veteran involvement in STEM education, computer science, and scientific research, and for other purposes.

S. 162
At the request of Mr. SMITH, the names of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) were added as cosponsors of S. 162, a bill to provide back pay to low-wage contractor employees, and for other purposes.

S. 169
At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the names of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) were added as cosponsors of S. 169, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide an exemption from gross income for civil damages as recompense for trafficking in persons.

S. 172
At the request of Mr. CRUZ, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 172, a bill to delay the reimposition of the annual fee on health insurance providers until after 2021.

S. 177
At the request of Mr. ROBERTS, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. KENNEDY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 177, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and the Small Business Act to expand the availability of employee stock ownership plans in S corporations, and for other purposes.

S. 190
At the request of Mr. LEE, the names of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY) and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE) were added as cosponsors of S. 190, a bill to amend the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 to prohibit assistance to non-profits, foreign non-governmental organizations, and quasi-autonomous non-governmental organizations that promote or perform abortions.

S. 246
At the request of Mr. MURPHY, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 246, a bill to block the implementation of certain presidential actions that restrict individuals from certain countries from entering the United States.

S. 292
At the request of Mr. VAN HOLLEN, the names of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY), the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET), the Senator from New York (Ms. GILLIBRAND) and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) were added as cosponsors of S. 292, a bill to provide for a pay increase in 2019 for certain civilian employees of the Federal Government, and for other purposes.

S. 272
At the request of Ms. WASHINGTON (Ms. FEINSTEIN), the names of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) were added as cosponsors of S. 272, a bill to establish the policy of the United States regarding the no-first-use of nuclear weapons.

S. 274
At the request of Mr. ENZI, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 274, a bill to establish the policy of the United States with religious or moral convictions are allowed to continue to provide services for children.

S. 280
At the request of Ms. HARRIS, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Ms. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 280, a bill to reauthorize the Historically Black Colleges and Universities Historic Preservation program.

S.J. RES. 3
At the request of Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, the names of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE), the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO), the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS), the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. SASSER), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH) and the Senator from Tennessee (Ms. BLACKBURN) were added as cosponsors of S.J. Res. 3, a joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States relative to balancing the budget.

S.J. RES. 4
At the request of Mr. KAINES, the names of the Senator from California (Mr. LEE), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) were added as cosponsors of S.J. Res. 4, a joint resolution requiring the advice and consent of the Senate or an Act of Congress to suspend, terminate, or withdraw the United States from the North Atlantic Treaty and authorizing related litigation, and for other purposes.

S. Res. 20
At the request of Mr. LEE, the names of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY) and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 20, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that the Protecting Life in Global Health Assistance Act of 2019.

S. Res. 30
At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the names of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 30, a resolution condemning efforts to undermine democracy in Hungary and urging President Trump to defend the universal human rights and democratic norms under attack by the Orban government.

AMENDMENT NO. 45
At the request of Mr. McCONNELL, the names of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON), the Senator from South
Dakota (Mr. Rounds), the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. Alexander), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. Roberts) and the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. Enzi) were added as co-sponsors of amendment No. 65 proposed to S. 1, a bill to make improvements to certain defense and homeland provisions and to authorize the appropriation of funds to Israel, to reactivate the United States-Jordan Defense Cooperation Act of 2015, and to halt the wholesale slaughter of the Syrian people, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 77

At the request of Mr. Peters, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. Stabenow) was added as a co-sponsor of amendment No. 77 intended to be proposed to S. 1, a bill to make improvements to certain defense and homeland provisions and to authorize the appropriation of funds to Israel, to reactivate the United States-Jordan Defense Cooperation Act of 2015, and to halt the wholesale slaughter of the Syrian people, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Ms. Ernst (for herself, Mr. Grassley, Mr. Sasse, Mrs. Fischer, Mr. Tillis, Mr. Thune, Mr. Cotton, Mrs. Hyde-Smith, Mr. Moran, Mr. Cassidy, Mr. Inhofe, Mrs. Blackburn, Mr. Scott, Senator South Carolina, Mr. Cruz, Mr. Roberts, Mr. Perdue, and Mr. Cramer):

S. 285. A bill to require U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement to take into custody certain aliens who have been charged in the United States with a crime that resulted in the death or serious bodily injury of another person, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Ms. Ernst. Thank you, Mr. President.

Today I rise on the 3-year anniversary of the tragic death of a constituent of mine, Sarah Root. On January 31, 2016, the same day as her college graduation, Sarah was killed in nearby Omaha, NE, by an illegal immigrant named Edwin Mejia. He was drag racing with a blood alcohol level more than three times the legal limit.

Despite requests by local law enforcement, Immigration and Customs Enforcement failed to detain Mejia because of a nonsensical policy that allows ICE to use discretion when determining whether to detain an illegal immigrant. He posted bond, he was released, and 3 years later remains a fugitive. It has been 3 years, and he is still a fugitive, denying Sarah's loved ones any sense of closure or justice.

As a mom, I can't fathom the grief her family and friends continue to feel after such a devastating loss. My own daughter is approaching the age at which Sarah was killed.

Just 21 years old, Sarah was bright, she was gifted, she was full of life and ready to take on the world. What a talented young lady.

She had just graduated from Bellevue University with a 4.0 GPA. She was dedicated to her community, and she wanted to pursue a career in criminal justice. She was focused on the future ahead of her, but her opportunity to make her mark on the world was taken away from her. Her life was tragically cut short. Yet even in death, Sarah touched the lives of others. Sarah saved six different individuals through her organ donation.

Sadly, what happened to Sarah Root is not an isolated incident.

We have seen this story play out time and again in the 3 years since Sarah’s killing—innocent lives taken by criminals who entered the United States illegally through a porous border. Crimes committed by those here illegally are truly among the most heartbreaking and senseless, and that is because these crimes are completely preventable, as the victims should not be in the United States in the first place.

Although nothing can bring Sarah back to her family, we can ensure that ICE never makes this same mistake again. That is why today and, again, join with my colleagues from Iowa and Nebraska, including the Presiding Officer; thank you again for joining in this legislation. We are introducing Sarah's Law again in honor of Sarah Root.

Sarah’s Law would require that ICE take custody of a person who is in the country illegally and who is charged with a crime that seriously injures another person. Sarah’s Law would also require better victim notification and amend the law to require that the Federal Government take custody of anyone who enters the United States legally but violated the terms of their immigration status or had their visa revoked and is later charged with a crime that resulted in the death or harm of another person.

President Trump implemented parts of Sarah’s Law through an Executive order in 2017, and I commend him for that. It included directing the Secretary of Homeland Security to prioritize the removal of criminals who are here illegally. The Executive order also establishes an office to implement notification requirements of Sarah’s Law.

Despite provisions of Sarah’s Law being put into place by President Trump’s order, it is critical that the Senate take up this legislation in order to codify these enforcement priorities so that any future administration cannot remove these provisions. No family should ever have to endure such a tragedy, especially one that could have been prevented. The fact remains that Sarah’s killer would not have been in our country if it weren’t for our country’s broken immigration system.

Sarah’s Law is commonsense reform. It recognizes the simple fact that all criminals should be held accountable for their actions. How much more commonsense can this be, folks? Hold criminals accountable. We should not allow them simply to slip back into the shadows.

I recognize that the immigration debate has been a political football. We see that every day here in Washington, DC, but the security of our borders and enforcement of our immigration laws is not a game. We must honor the lives of these innocent victims and do better. We must work to stop future crimes.

I look forward to continuing to work with my colleagues to fulfill the promise I made to Sarah’s loving parents, Michelle Root and Scott Root. I will do everything I can to ensure that not one more parent has to go through what the Roots have faced—the loss of their daughter and the promise of justice.

Madam President, I thank you for joining me on this legislation. It means a lot to this family and many others.

By Mrs. Feinstein (for herself, Mr. Leahy, Mrs. Murray, Mr. Wyden, Ms. Harris, Ms. Rosen, Mrs. Shaheen, Mr. King, Mr. Carper, Mr. Durbin, Mr. Sanders, Ms. Benner, Mr. Coons, Mr. Blumenthal, Ms. Klobuchar, Mr. Reed, Mr. Kaine, Ms. Hassan, Mr. Markey, Mr. Murphy, Mr. Menendez, Ms. Cortez Masto, Mr. Heinrich, Mr. Cardin, Mr. Booker, Mr. Whitehouse, Mr. Merkley, Mr. Van Hollen, Mr. Casey, Ms. Hirono, Mrs. Gillibrand, Ms. Cantwell, Ms. Warren, Ms. Stabenow, Ms. Baldwin, Mr. Brown, Ms. Smith, Mr. Warner, Mr. Peters, Mr. Jones, and Mr. Schatz):

S. 292. A bill to limit the separation of families at or near ports of entry; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mrs. Feinstein. Mr. President, I rise today to reintroduce legislation that will finally put an end to the separation of families at our southern border. I have believed from the outset that the administration was wrong to pursue a zero tolerance policy of family separation, which is cruel and detrimental to children and parents alike.

The President claimed to end this policy in June by executive order, but we have learned the practice of separating families continues today. In fact, the separations may have been broader in scope than we previously knew.

Last year, the American people were rightly horrified when thousands of children, including babies and toddlers, were taken from their parents, to be separated for weeks and months. Dozens of these children spent days and weeks in cages with nothing but thin mats and aluminum blankets.

I look forward to working with my colleagues to fulfill the promise I made to Sarah’s loving parents, Michelle Root and Scott Root. I will do everything I can to ensure that not one more parent has to go through what the Roots have faced—the loss of their daughter and the promise of justice.
said, “enough is enough.” Average Americans spoke out, marched, and called their members of Congress pleading for us to stand up to the President and demand he reverse his policy. But we still may not know the full scope of the harm that was caused. We still do not know just how many families were torn apart as a result of the zero tolerance policy.

Litigation has identified over 2,700 children who were separated from their parents by DHS, including nearly 100 children under the age of 5. However, in January the Inspector General for Health and Human Services found that “this number does not represent the full scope of family separations.” Indeed thousands—thousands—more children may have been separated from their parents in 2017, before the start of the accounting period required by the court.

We have also learned in recent weeks that this crisis is not over. Families are still being separated from one another.

In June, the Trump administration issued an executive order that ended the “zero tolerance” family separation policy. Despite that order, the practice of family separation did not end.

Instead, the Inspector General for Health and Human Services reported that separations are ongoing with little oversight or accountability. In fact, at least 118 children were separated from their parents between June 2018, when the executive order was issued, and early November.

These family separations could not have happened if Republicans had joined me and all Senate Democrats to pass the Keep Families Together Act last Congress. The Keep Families Together Act prohibits Border Patrol from separating children from their parents or legal guardians, without good cause.

Good cause is defined with a focus on the best interest of the child, and cannot be based on the parent’s migration or crossing of the border. No separation can be made without consulting a child welfare specialist, and all presumptions are made in favor of family unity, including unity of siblings.

The Keep Families Together Act includes vital oversight mechanisms that will ensure that every child separated under the zero tolerance policy is accounted for. These include a requirement that DHS publish transparent guidance on separations, as well as annual reporting requirements and a requirement for a GAO report on criminal prosecution of asylum seekers.

These are basic protections for children that must be continued. Parents who try to protect their children from violence and poverty abroad, should not be punished by having those children ripped from their arms. Children should not be subjected to severe trauma in the interest of deterring migration.

Instead, families should be kept together and given a fair chance to present their cases for asylum. The Keep Families Together Act will provide these fundamental necessities and protect children from further harm. We have a fresh start in a new Congress. It is time to make these vital protections a reality.

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. CARDIN):

S. 296. A bill to amend XVIII of the Social Security Act to ensure more timely access to home health services for Medicare beneficiaries under the Medicare program; to the Committee on Finance.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I rise to introduce legislation with my colleague Senator Casev that would reauthorize the only federally funded programs that are specifically designed to develop a health provider workforce to care for our older Americans. The Geriatrics Workforce Improvement Act would reauthorize the Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program and also restate the Geriatrics Academic Career Award Program.

The number of Americans aged 65 and older is growing rapidly. In my State of Maine, we are aging an age milestone faster than are other States. By 2020, the number of Maine seniors is projected to exceed the number of Maine children. This is 15 years ahead of the nationally projected date of 2035, at which point the number of Americans aged 65 and older will outnumber those under the age of 18 for the first time in our Nation’s history.

The United States is facing a critical shortage of geriatric health professionals and direct service workers to support our aging population. Today, we need 20,000 geriatricians. However, fewer than 7,300 of our Nation’s nearly 1 million physicians are board certified as geriatricians. By 2030, we will need 30,000 geriatricians and even more geriatric health professionals and direct service workers. To achieve this goal, we will need to train 1,600 geriatric specialists per year over the next 12 years.

For the State of Maine, with an aging population of more than a quarter million Mainers over the age of 65 and with only 40 geriatricians, there is an acute need to quickly train more geriatric health professionals and direct service workers to meet the growing demand. The University of New England College of Osteopathic Medicine has joined the University of Maine this year in proposing the “Aging Maine Transformation Collaborative.” I was pleased to lend my support to this collaboration earlier this year. If funded, AgingME would become the State’s first Geriatric Workforce Enhancement Program and would bring with it much needed assistance to communities and families throughout our State.

Nationally, our bill would reauthorize this workforce enhancement program at $45 million per year over the next 5 years and would restate the Geriatrics Academic Career Award Program at $6 million per year. Together, these programs would train the current workforce and family caregivers while simultaneously developing a cadre of emerging leaders in geriatric education in a variety of disciplines. By doing both, we will ensure Americans will be cared for, for decades to come, by a healthcare workforce that will be specifically trained to meet their unique and complex healthcare challenges. This training of using the most efficient and effective methods for older adults will result in improved care while reducing unnecessary costs.

I am pleased to say that our legislation is supported by the leading organizations in gerontology and geriatrics, including the Eldercare Workforce Alliance, the American Geriatrics Society, the Alzheimer’s Impact Movement, and the National Association of Geriatric Education Centers.

I ask unanimous consent that these levels of support be printed in the RECORD.

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


Hon. Susan Collins, Chair, Special Committee on Aging, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

Hon. Bob Casey, Ranking Member, Special Committee on Aging, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

Dear Senator Susan Collins and Senator Bob Casey:

On behalf of the Eldercare Workforce Alliance (EWA), we are writing to express our support of the Geriatrics Workforce Improvement Act.

EWA is a coalition of 32 national consumer, health care professional, direct-care worker and family caregiver organizations. The number of Americans over age 65 is expected to reach 70 million by 2030, representing a 71% increase from today’s 41 million older adults. Today’s health care workforce is inadequate to meet the needs of older Americans, many of whom have multiple chronic physical and mental health conditions and cognitive decline. Without a national commitment to expand training and educational opportunities, the workforce will be even more constrained in its ability to care for the elderly population as the baby boom generation ages.

This bipartisan bill supports two critical objectives. First, it would formally establish funding for the Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program (GWE). Second, it would reestablish the Geriatric Academic Career Awards (GACAs), previously funded programs for developing clinician-educators. By supporting the GWE and the GACAs, the Geriatrics Workforce Improvement Act would:

- Foster education and engagement with family caregivers by training providers who can assess and address their care needs and preferences.
- Promote interdisciplinary team-based care by transforming clinical training environments to integrate geriatrics and primary care delivery systems.
- Improve the quality of care delivered to older adults by providing education to family and caregivers on critical care challenges like Alzheimer’s disease and related dementias.
- Reach underserved and rural communities by training clinicians-educators prepared to train the geriatrics workforce of today and tomorrow.
This investment protects our most vulnerable elders and invests in our country’s future. We ask that you continue your support for the programs at this crucial time, and thank you for your leadership on this issue.

Sincerely,

NANCY LUNDBERG, MPA, EWA Co-Convenor.

MICHELE J. SAUNDERS, DMD, MS, MPH, EWA Co-Convenor.

AMERICAN GERIATRICS SOCIETY,

Hon. SUSAN COLLINS, Chair, Special Committee on Aging, U.S. Senate Washington, DC.

Hon. BOB CASEY, Ranking Member, Special Committee on Aging, U.S. Senate Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR SUSAN COLLINS AND SENATOR BOB CASEY: The American Geriatrics Society (AGS), an organization devoted to improving the health, independence and quality of life of older adults, supports the Geriatrics Workforce Improvement Act. The AGS is thankful for your ongoing support of the geriatrics workforce training programs and for your efforts to improve care of older Americans.

The Geriatrics Workforce Improvement Act would authorize the Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program (GWEP) and the Geriatrics Academic Career Awards (GACAs) program under Title VII of the Public Health Service Act. The AGS believes that both programs must be authorized and funded if all Americans are to have access to high-quality, person-centered care as we grow older.

The GWEP is currently the only federal program designed to increase the number of providers, in a variety of disciplines, with the skills and training to care for older adults. The GWEPs educate and engage the broader frontline workforce including family caregivers and focus on opportunities to improve the quality of care delivered to older adults, particularly in underserved and rural areas. The GACA program is an essential complement to the GWEP program. GACAs ensure we can equip early career clinician educators to become leaders in geriatrics education and research.

The introduction of this important legislation follows announcements of related funding opportunities from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) in November 2018. Authorization of the GWEPs and GACAs as outlined in the Geriatrics Workforce Improvement Act will help ensure that HRSA receives the funding necessary to carry these critically important workforce training programs forward.

At a time when our nation is facing a severe shortage of both geriatrics healthcare providers and faculty with the expertise to train these providers, the AGS believes the number of educational and training opportunities in geriatrics and gerontology should be expanded, not reduced. Thank you for your leadership on this issue.

Sincerely,

Laurie Jacobs, MD, AGSF, President.

Laurie E. Lundberg, MPA, Chief Executive Officer.

ALZHEIMER’S IMPACT MOVEMENT,

Hon. SUSAN COLLINS,
Chairman, Senate Committee on Aging, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

Hon. BOB CASEY,
Ranking Member, Senate Committee on Aging, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRWOMAN COLLINS AND RANKING MEMBER CASEY: On behalf of the Alzheimer’s Association and the Alzheimer’s Impact Movement (AIM), including our nationwide networks of advocates, thank you for your continued leadership on issues and legislation important to Americans living with Alzheimer’s and other dementias, and to their caregivers. The Alzheimer’s Association and AIM are pleased to support the Geriatrics Workforce Improvement Act.

More than 3.4 million Americans are living with Alzheimer’s and, without significant action, nearly 14 million Americans will have Alzheimer’s by 2050. Today, another person develops the disease every 65 seconds; by 2050, someone in the United States will develop the disease every 33 seconds. This exponential growth will cause Alzheimer’s costs to increase from an estimated $277 billion in 2018 to $1.1 trillion in 2050 (in 2018 dollars). These mounting costs threaten to bankrupt families, businesses and our health care system. Unfortunately, our work is only growing more urgent.

The Geriatrics Workforce Improvement Act would develop a workforce capable of providing complex, high-quality care that improves health outcomes and reduces costs for a growing aging population. It would reauthorize the Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program (GWEP), and reinstate the Geriatrics Academic Career Awards (GACAs) Program, a previously funded program for developing clinician-educators, two critical objectives to ensure communities have access to adequate numbers of health professionals and other critical supports, improving care for all of us as we age. By supporting the GWEP and GACAs the Geriatrics Workforce Improvement Act would, foster education and engagement with family caregivers by training providers who can assess and address care needs and preferences, with an emphasis on underserved and rural communities by ensuring clinician-educators are prepared to train the geriatrics workforce of today and tomorrow, and improve the quality of care for older adults by providing education to families and caregivers on critical care challenges.

The Alzheimer’s Association and AIM deeply appreciate your continued leadership on behalf of all Americans living with Alzheimer’s and other dementias. We look forward to continuing to work with you and your colleagues to improve care and support for individuals and families affected by Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias. If you have any questions about this or any other legislation, please contact Rachel Conant, Senior Director of Federal Affairs.

Sincerely,

Robert Egge, Chief Public Policy Officer, Executive Vice President, Government Affairs, Alzheimer’s Association.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF GERIATRIC EDUCATION CENTERS,

Hon. SUSAN COLLINS,
Chair, Special Committee on Aging, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

Hon. BOB CASEY,
Ranking Member, Special Committee on Aging, U.S. Senate Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRWOMAN COLLINS AND RANKING MEMBER CASEY: On behalf of the HRSA Title VII and Title VIII funded Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Programs (GWEPs) across the country, thank you for your past support of geriatric education and for introducing the Geriatrics Workforce Improvement Act. The National Association for Geriatric Education (NAGE) is pleased to offer our support for the Geriatrics Workforce Improvement Act, which would authorize the GWEP and once again make the Geriatrics Academic Career Award program (GACA) a part of the effort to prepare the geriatrics workforce for the aging of our population. We and the growing numbers of older adults, caregivers, and clinicians caring for elders will urge Congress to move quickly to pass your bill and provide the resources to address our nation’s growing demand for geriatric care.

We appreciate the many discussions that your staff facilitated with NAGE, as well as with the Eldercare Workforce Alliance, the American Geriatrics Society, and The Gerontological Society of America during the process of developing this legislation. This authorization and related funding are needed for the development of a healthcare workforce specifically trained to care for older adults, particularly in underserved and rural areas.

Likewise, the funds you have authorized for the GACA program complement the GWEP, and support faculty that will teach and lead geriatrics programs. The bill will also assist in ensuring that rural and underserved areas will have geriatrics education programs.

NAGE is a non-profit membership organization representing GWEP sites, Centers on Aging, and Geriatric Education Centers that provide education and training to health professionals in the areas of geriatrics and gerontology. Our mission is to help America’s healthcare workforce be better prepared to render age-appropriate care to today’s older Americans and those of tomorrow.

Thank you for your continued support for geriatric education programs.

Sincerely,

CATHERINE CARRICO, PhD, President NAGE/
NAGEC, Associate Director, Wyoming Geriatric Workforce Enhancement Program, Wyoming Center on Aging, Clinical Assistant Professor, College of Health Sciences, University of Wyoming.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I urge all of my colleagues to support this bipartisan bill that would ensure geriatric education for our current workforce while it would also provide resources to bolster academic careers in geriatrics and help to attract the best and the brightest into this field. Together, these programs would develop exactly the kind of highly qualified workforce that we need to care for Americans as our Nation grows older.

I thank the Presiding Officer.

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself, Mr. TESTER, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. JONES, Mr. BINGaman, Mr. MANCHIN, and Ms. HARRIS):

S. 304. A bill to reauthorize section 340H of the Public Health Service Act.
In the face of nationwide physician shortages, our legislation would provide a solution for communities today and a path forward to train the physicians of tomorrow. I urge all of my colleagues to join in support of this important legislation. The Training the Next Generation of Primary Care Doctors Act of 2019.

Mr. President, I ask to include these letters into the RECORD.

Mr. PRESIDENT: With no objection so ordered.


In the face of nationwide physician shortages, our legislation would provide a solution for communities today and a path forward to train the physicians of tomorrow. I urge all of my colleagues to join in support of this important legislation. The Training the Next Generation of Primary Care Doctors Act of 2019.

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Mr. President, I ask to include these letters into the RECORD.

Mr. PRESIDENT: With no objection so ordered.
Physician maldistribution, and helps address the need to attract and retain physicians in rural areas and medically underserved communities. In the 2016-2017 academic year, nearly half residents received fewer health care services in primary care settings and 83% of residents trained in medically underserved communities.

However, reauthorizing the THCGME program at its current level funding, for the next five years, would lead to a reduction of approximately 30% residency slots from the currently funded 737 residency positions.

We respectfully ask the committee to consider legislation by Senators Susan Collins (R–ME), Doug Jones (D–AL), Shelley Moore Capito (R–WV), and John Tester (D–MT) the “Training the Next Generation of Primary Care Doctors Act of 2019.” In addition to reauthorizing the THCGME program for the next five years, this bill also provides funding and a pathway for growth in the number of residents trained in underserved rural and urban communities. This represents a much-needed expansion to address the physician shortages in our country.

We would also like to briefly highlight the broader role osteopathic physicians have in reducing our nation’s physician shortage. Since 2010, the number of DOs has increased by 54% today, more than 65% of all DOs are under the age of 45, and if current enrollment trends continue, DOs are projected to represent more than 20% of practicing physicians by 2030. Because of the whole-person approach to patient care that is inherent in osteopathic medicine, the increasing share of DOs in the physician workforce, and the number of DOs in primary care specialties, we have a unique and important perspective on the needs of our nation’s health care workforce and would welcome the opportunity to contribute to your work on this issue.

We appreciate your bipartisan effort to address the shortage in our country’s health care workforce, and we stand ready to assist in your efforts.

Sincerely,

American Academy of Family Physicians.
American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians.
American College of Osteopathic Internists.
American College of Osteopathic Obstetricians and Gynecologists.
American College of Osteopathic Neuroligists and Psychiatrists.
American College of Osteopathic Pediatricians.
American Osteopathic Association.

AMERICAN ACADEMY OF FAMILY PHYSICIANS

Hon. Susan Collins, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.
Hon. Shelley Moore Capito, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.
Hon. Jon Tester, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.
Hon. Doug Jones, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATORS COLLINS, CAPITO, TESTER, AND JONES: On behalf of the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP), which represents 131,400 family physicians and medical students across the country, I write to support your legislation to reauthorize the Teaching Health Center Graduate Medical Education (THCGME) program. Thank you for your commitment to this important initiative.

The AAFP is pleased to support the Training the Next Generation of Primary Care Doctors Act of 2019 which updates the THCGME program for five years, authorizes adequate and sustainable funding for existing residency programs, and supports expansion into rural and underserved areas. In addition, the legislation maintains the program’s strong transparency and accountability requirements.

The THCGME program directly addresses three major health care workforce challenges: the serious shortage of primary care physicians, geographic maldistribution of medical training, and the need to increase health care access for medically underserved populations. Recognizing the importance of supplying well-trained primary care physicians into communities that need them most, we look forward to working with you to update and expand the THCGME program early this year.

Again, we are pleased to support this important legislation. For more information, please contact Sonya Clay, Government Relations Representative.

Sincerely,

Michael L. Munger, MD, AAFP Board Chair.

AMERICAN ACADEMY OF FAMILY PHYSICIANS, AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES OF OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE, AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF TEACHING HEALTH CENTERS, THE AMERICAN COLLEGE OF OBSTRICIANS OF GYNECOLOGISTS, AMERICAN OSTEOPATHIC ASSOCIATION, COUNCIL OF ACADEMIC FAMILY MEDICINE, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS.

[January 29, 2019]


Our organizations applaud the introduction of the Training the Next Generation of Primary Care Doctors Act of 2019 and urge the Senate to quickly pass this important legislation. We support Senators Susan Collins (R–ME), Doug Jones (D–AL), Shelley Moore Capito (R–WV), Jon Tester (D–MT), and John Boozman (R–AR) for their commitment to ensuring that our nation’s health care system is strong and robust primary care workforce. Furthermore, we thank Senate HELP Committee Chairman Lamar Alexander (R–TN) and Ranking Member Patty Murray (D–WA) for their leadership in introducing the Community and Public Health Programs Extension Act, which will extend for five years federal funding for the Teaching Health Center Graduate Medical Education (THCGME) Program, community health centers, the National Health Service Corps, and other federal health programs. These programs are set to expire at the end of the fiscal year.

The THCGME Program, established in 2010 and reauthorized in 2015 and 2018 has been, by any measure, an overwhelming success. In the 2017–2018 academic year, the program supported 732 residents in 57 primary care residency programs, across 24 states. Since 2011, the program has supported the training of over 630 new primary care physicians who have graduated and entered the workforce. Importantly, physicians trained in teaching health center programs are more likely to practice in underserved areas. This pathway to medical education provides access to care for the country’s most vulnerable patient populations.

The value of primary care is well documented. In fact, individuals who have a continuous relationship with a primary care physician are more likely to be healthier and have better access to needed health care resources. Research shows that our nation faces a primary care physician workforce shortage. The THCGME Program has proven its ability to efficiently increase the number of primary care physicians trained.

This highly successful and impactful program is set to expire on September 30, 2019. Unless Congress takes action to reauthorize and fund it, the legislation introduced today will not only reauthorize the program, but also authorize enhanced funding and a pathway to increasing the number of residents trained. Most important, the legislation will continue to build the primary care physician pipeline necessary to reduce costs, improve patient care, and support underserved rural and urban communities.

We are extremely pleased that members of both parties are working together to extend this vital program that brings health care to medically underserved communities across the nation. Our organizations strongly support Training the Next Generation of Primary Care Doctors Act of 2019 and call on the House of Representatives and Senate to ensure that the THCGME Program is reauthorized and appropriately financed by September 30.

American Academy of Family Physicians.
American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine.

Hon. Susan Collins, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.
Hon. Shelley Moore Capito, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.
Hon. John Boozman, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.
Hon. Jon Tester, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.
Hon. Doug Jones, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATORS COLLINS, CAPITO, TESTER, AND BOOZMAN: On behalf of the American Academy of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM), thank you for your unceasing bipartisan commitment and leadership in championing the Health Resources and Services Administration’s Teaching Health Center Graduate Medical Education (THCGME) Program by introducing the Training the Next Generation of Primary Care Doctors Act of 2019. We offer our strong support of this legislation.

AACOM represents the 35 accredited colleges of osteopathic medicine in the United States. These colleges are accredited to deliver instruction at 55 teaching locations in 32 states. In the current academic year, these colleges are educating more than 30,000 medical students. Six of the colleges are public and 29 are private institutions. ACOM was founded in 1898 to support and assist the nation’s osteopathic medical schools, and to serve as a unifying voice for osteopathic medical education.

The association and the osteopathic medical education community to improve the health of the public.

With your introduction of the Training the Next Generation of Primary Care Doctors Act of 2019, the osteopathic medical education community commends your bipartisan efforts to support this critical program. This pathway to primary care physicians will provide access to care for the country’s most vulnerable patient populations.
and providing enhanced funding and a pathway for growth in the number of residents trained.

Established in 2010 and reauthorized in 2015 and 2019, the Program has been a notable success. In the 2017-2018 academic year, the program supported training of 732 residents in 57 primary care residency programs. Since 2011, this program has supported the training of over 630 new primary care physicians and dentists that have graduated and entered the workforce. Importantly, physicians trained in THC programs are more likely to practice in underserved communities, increasing access to care for the country’s most vulnerable patient populations.

As you know, the continuation of this program is vital to addressing primary care physician workforce shortages and delivering health care services to vulnerable patients in need. It has encouraged greater connections and services between traditionally underserved areas and the emerging physician workforce by creating opportunities for medical students to carry out their required training where their services are most needed. The THCOME Program has been highly effective in transitioning residents into medically underserved areas, with more than 80 percent remaining in primary care practice and over half remaining in high-need communities.

On behalf of the nation’s osteopathic medical schools and the students they train, thank you for your steadfast leadership, and I look forward to working with you to further our collaboration in helping physicians provide primary care to the patients they serve. We look forward to working together on this important legislation.

Respectfully,

STEPHEN C. SHANNON, DO, MPH,
President and CEO.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself and Ms. HARRIS):

S. 309. A bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior to convey certain Federal lands in San Bernardino County, California, to the San Bernardino Valley Water Conservation District, and to accept in return certain non-Federal lands, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I am pleased to reintroduce the “Santa Ana River Wash Plan Land Exchange Act.” This legislation would help implement a consensus-driven regional land management plan by directing the Bureau of Land Management to exchange land with the San Bernardino Valley Water Conservation District in San Bernardino, California.

Before I continue, I would like to thank Senators LISA MURKOWSKI and MARIA CANTWELL, as well as their staffs, for their hard work to move this bill through Congress. With the assistance of this legislation, this bill passed out of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee in August 2018 and was included in a bipartisan public lands package.

I thank Senator MURKOWSKI for introducing this bipartisan lands package bill this Congress and including this legislation in it. I look forward to working once again with Senator MURKOWSKI, as well as the newly designated Ranking Member, Senator MANCHIN, to maintain our momentum and pass this bill as quickly as possible.

I also would like to express my gratitude to Representative PAUL COOK and his staff for their continuing work and collaboration on this legislation. Lastly, I welcome working with Representative COOK and Representative AGUILAR who are cosponsoring companion legislation in the House of Representatives. Lastly, I thank Senator HARRIS for cosponsoring this legislation.

This bill is an excellent example of how smart, sustainable, land planning can be accomplished through inter-agency cooperation. Federal and State agencies, private industry, and municipalities representing mining, flood control, water supply, wildfire conservation, and other interests all came to the table to develop a land management plan that accounts for the array of land uses.

The land exchange facilitated by this bill is broadly supported, including by: County of San Bernardino, City of Redlands, City of Highland, San Bernardino County Water Conservation District, San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District, East Valley Water District, Endangered Habitats League, CEMEX Construction Materials Pacific, Robertson’s Ready Mix, Inland Action.

This diverse group of entities formed the “Wash Committee” in 1993 to address mining and land management in the upper Santa Ana River wash area. I applaud the Committee, along with federal, state and local stakeholders, for working together to develop a strategy for comprehensive land management planning for the area.

This group has shown that through cooperation, it is possible to both protect the environment and support local business and community interests. The land exchange between the San Bernardino Water Conservation District and the Bureau of Land Management will consolidate open space for conservation purposes and optimize the efficiency of mining operations and water conservation efforts.

The exchange will also set aside new land for conservation purposes near land already managed by BLM.

This bill will lead to increased habitat protection, groundwater recharge, and public access while allowing for the continued use of land and mineral resources.

I look forward to working with my colleagues to pass the “Santa Ana River Wash Plan Land Exchange Act” as soon as possible.

Thank you Mr. President, I yield the floor.

By Mr. SANDERS:

S. 309. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reinstate estate and generation-skipping taxes, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, all across our country—in Vermont, in Illinois, in California—all across this country, people are asking a very simple question. That question is, How does it happen that in the midst of the extraordinary wealth that exists in our country, there are 40 million Americans who continue to live near poverty. We don’t talk about poverty very much here in the Senate, but we have 40 million Americans living in poverty. Many of them are struggling to adequately feed their kids. Many of them are forced to go, despite working, to emergency food shelters just to stay alive.

Despite the United States having a GDP—gross domestic product—of more than $20 trillion, we in this country embarrassingly continue to have the highest rate of childhood poverty of any major country in the world. This includes 29 percent of African-American children who live in poverty.

How does it happen that in a so-called booming economy—and we hear from President Trump every other day about how the economy is booming—the bottom 40 percent of our population does not have $400 in cash in order to address a financial emergency? Think about that. The bottom 40 percent—almost half of Americans—don’t have $400 in their pocket, in the bank to address a financial emergency. Maybe the car breaks down, maybe the kid gets sick, maybe one loses one’s job, maybe one undergoes a divorce; something happens, and 40 percent of Americans cannot produce $400 in the bank to address that crisis.

In other words, today—and we saw this in the recent government shutdown; today in America, many, many millions of families live paycheck to paycheck in order to survive. That should not be happening in the wealthiest country on Earth, and it is time we begin to talk about that. It is not good enough to talk about a so-called booming economy, forgetting about tens of millions of families who are not seeing that booming economy but, in fact, are living under incredible financial stress.

How does it happen that, in the so-called booming economy, tens of millions of American workers today are working for wages that are so low they cannot afford the escalating cost of housing? Some of them are spending 50 percent of their limited incomes on housing. For many of these people, there is no health insurance available; the idea of a vacation for the family is something not even to be thought about; and the idea of being able to send one’s kids to college is something that is also not on the table. By the
way, many of these individuals are working two or three jobs, 50, 60, 70 hours a week, just to survive.

This, again, is the wealthiest country in the history of the world. Yet 30 million Americans today, as we speak, have zero health insurance—no health insurance at all; 41 million people are underinsured—which means their deductibles and their copayments are so high that even though they have insurance, they still can’t afford to go to the doctor, and one out of five Americans today cannot afford the prescription drugs their doctors prescribe.

In my view—a view I have held for a very, very long time, and it is a view shared by people not only in this country in wide numbers, but all over the world—healthcare is a human right, not a privilege. Whether you are rich or whether you are poor, you have the right to go to a doctor when you get sick, and you have the right to know that if you end up in a hospital, you are not going bankrupt or suffer from financial distress.

We are an aging population—no great secret there. We are an aging population. In this Congress, instead of dealing with government shutdowns precipitated by the President, we should be talking about how we respond to the reality of an aging population. Yet what we don’t talk about is that about half of older Americans—half of older Americans, those 55 and older—have no retirement savings and no idea about how they will retire with dignity.

Think about what that means. Somebody is 60 years of age, they are coming to the end of their work-life, and they have no money—or virtually no money—in the bank. Maybe all they are going to get is Social Security. They turn on the TV, and they hear folks around here talking about cutting Social Security. Talk about why people in this country are angry and why they are stressed out.

Here is the bottom line. We are the wealthiest country on Earth. In fact, we are the wealthiest country in the history of the world, but despite that wealth, a significant percentage of our population—our children, our elderly people, our working men and women—struggle each and every day to keep their heads above water economically. Not only are they struggling, I think the pain they are feeling has to do with the worry about the future for their kids because they know, as many of us know, that unless we make some bold changes in our economy, the younger generation today will have a lower standard of living than their parents.

Imagine that—a so-called booming economy, yet we are looking at a situation where the younger generation may well have a lower standard of living than their parents.

I want to also say a word about another reality that currently exists. While so many of our people are struggling, while so many of our children are living in poverty, while 20 percent of folks on Social Security are trying to live on less than $13,000 a year, there is another pervasive reality in America today: that is, the people on top—the very wealthiest people in this country—have never had it better, and the worry, the very rich—I am not just talking about the rich; I am talking about the very, very rich—is growing wider.

Here is the simple truth, a truth that we virtually do not talk about here in the Senate, a truth that is not heard in the corporate media; that is, the United States of America today has the most unequal distribution of wealth and income of almost any major country on Earth, and that level of inequality is worse today than at any time since the 1920s, the so-called Gilded Age of American society.

Today, if you can believe it, the three wealthiest people in this country—three—own more wealth than the bottom half of America, 160 million people. Today, the top one-tenth of 1 percent—not 1 percent—own about as much wealth as the bottom 90 percent. Today, and since the Wall Street crash in 2008, about 46 percent of all new income goes to the top 1 percent. Roughly speaking, half of all new income goes to the bottom 99 percent, and half goes to the top 1 percent, and our great task here in the U.S. Senate is to keep the government open while Trump tries to shut it down. Maybe, just maybe, we should be talking about those issues. Maybe, just maybe, we should be talking about an economy that works for all of us, not just the people on top.

Today, the top 25 hedge fund managers on Wall Street—25 hedge fund managers—own nearly double the income of all 140,000 kindergarten teachers in America.

All of the psychologists tell us is that the most important years of a human being’s development are 0 to 4. Those are the most impressionable years in terms of how we develop intellectually and emotionally, and our childcare workers, our kindergarten teachers play a very important role. Does anybody think it makes sense that the hedge fund managers on Wall Street who, today, earn nearly double what 140,000 of our kindergarten teachers make? By the way, public teachers in America are falling further and further behind other occupations.

Having stated that, I want to make the fact that the middle class is struggling and the fact that the people on top are doing phenomenally well—I think it is fair to ask what the views are of the Republican leadership here in the Senate—Republicans control the Senate—and the views of the Republican President, President Trump, is proposing to address these massive levels of injustice and inequality. Three people own more wealth than the bottom half of America. What does the President and what does Leader McConnell have to say about that? The sad truth is that the Republican leadership today wants to make an embarrassingly bad situation even worse.

After passing a $1 trillion tax giveaway for the top 1 percent and large corporations last year, Republican leadership is coming back and saying: Hey, we only gave 83 percent of the tax benefits to the 1 percent. That is not good enough. That is not good enough. We have to do even better. Our billionaires and corporate sponsors.

This time, the Republican leadership and the President want a tax break of hundreds of billions of dollars that would go exclusively to the wealthiest of the wealthy. I am not talking about the wealthy; I am talking about the wealthiest of the wealthy—the top one-tenth of 1 percent, the wealthiest 1,700 families in America.

We have 127 million families in our country—a population of some 320 million people. As I have indicated, many of these families are struggling. Many of these families are angry. Today, many of these families are wondering how they are going to pay their rent, pay their mortgage, keep their lights on. Yet the legislation to repeal the estate tax that Senator McConnell and President Trump are proposing would benefit less than 1 percent of them—99.9 percent would see no tax reduction from the legislation.

Can anyone actually imagine bringing forward a piece of legislation that does not help the bottom 99.9 percent? Can you imagine that? The middle class are struggling. The gap between the rich and the poor is growing wider. There are 30 million people without health insurance. Our infrastructure is crumbling. And they come forward with a piece of legislation that is designed to protect and benefit the top one-tenth of 1 percent. The legislation would be of no benefit to 99.9 percent of the people of this country.

I think it is clear that when the people of this country look at Congress and say “Those folks in Washington are not representing me. They are representing their wealthy campaign contributors. They are representing the billionaire class,” there can be no clearer example of that reality than this proposed legislation.

Once again, with all of the economic problems, all of the inequality we face, imagine legislation that comes forward from the Republican leadership and the President that benefits the top one-tenth of 1 percent—the 1,700 wealthiest families in this country.

It is no secret that our infrastructure—our roads and our bridges, water systems, airports, wastewater plants—is crumbling. And all over this country, there are major infrastructural problems. But I hear over and over again: We don’t have the
funding to rebuild our crumbling infra-
structure and put millions of Ameri-
cans to work at good-paying jobs re-
building that infrastructure. We just
don’t have the money.

Our schoolteachers are underpaid, but we have the money to provide
attractive salaries in order to get the
best and the brightest to do the most
important work in this country; that
is, teaching our young people.

Today, we have veterans—people who
put their lives on the line—sleeping on
the streets; but we don’t have the
money to house them.

Families in America cannot afford
childcare, and public schools are under-
FUNDED.

We don’t have the money to address
those crises, but somehow we do have
hundreds of billions of dollars available
to provide tax breaks for the top one-
tenth of 1 percent.

We apparently have enough money to
provide the Walton family—the wealthiest family in America, the folks
who own Walmart, the people who pay
their own employees starvation wages—by repealing the estate tax, as
Senator MCCONNELL and President
Trump would like to do. We have
enough money to provide the Walton
family, the wealthiest family in Amer-
ica, with a tax break of up to $63 bil-
lion. Veterans sleep out on the street,
teachers are underpaid, and 30 million
Americans have no health insurance.
We can’t address those issues, but we
do have legislation that would provide
up to $63 billion in tax breaks for one
family.

We have, apparently, enough money available to provide the Koch brot-
thers—a family who spent some $400 mil-
lion during the midterm election to help elect Republican candidates; the
Koch brothers, one of the wealthiest,
most politically active families in Amer-
ica—we have enough money to provide
them with up to a $39 billion tax break.

Under this legislation, we can pro-
vide a tax break of up to $27 billion to the Mars candy bar family and up to a
$13.4 billion tax break to the Cox cable
family.

In other words, at a time of massive
needs in this country, we don’t have
enough money available to protect
working families and the middle class,
but we certainly have more money than
to address those issues, but we
do have legislation that would provide
up to $63 billion in tax breaks for one
family.

That is why this week I will be intro-
ducing legislation for an estate tax bill
that would do exactly the opposite of
what my Republican colleagues
propose to do. Let me briefly explain what is in the legislation I am offering.

Under my bill, anyone who inher-
herits an estate in America of $3.5 mil-
lion or less, that person will not pay
one penny in estate taxes. They will
get to keep that inheritance tax-free.
That population includes 99.8 percent of the American people. The legislation
I am proposing raises estate taxes by a
penny on 99.8 percent of the Ameri-
can population.

If you are in the top two-tenths of 1
percent of the population—the popu-
lation that inherits over $3.5 million—
your taxes will, in fact, be going up,
and they should be going up.

My legislation establishes a 45-per-
cent tax on the value of an estate be-
tween $3.5 million and $10 million, a 50-
percent tax on the value of an estate be-
tween $10 million and $50 million, a
65-percent tax on the value of an estate
in excess of $50 million, and a 77-per-
cent tax on the value of an estate above $1 billion. In other words, this
bill begins to create a progressive tax
system in America, which is based on
ability to pay.

I know some may think otherwise,
but the truth is, this is not a radical
idea. From 1941 through 1976, the top
estate tax rate was, in fact, 77 percent
on estate values above $50 million.
Back to 1976, the top estate tax rate
was 77 percent.

This bill would also close tax loop-
holes that have allowed billionaire
families, such as the Waltons, to pass
fortunes from one generation to the
next without paying their fair share of
taxes.

Under this legislation, the families of
all 588 billionaires in our country, who
have a combined net worth of over $3
trillion, would pay up to $2.2 trillion in estate taxes.

Let me make a confession here. This
idea, this approach, was not developed by BERNIE SANDERS. It is not a new
idea. More than a century ago, a good
Republican President named Teddy
Roosevelt fought for the creation of a
progressive estate tax to reduce the
enormous concentration of wealth that
existed during the Gilded Age.

What is really quite remarkable is
that what Teddy Roosevelt talked
about over 100 years ago during the
Gilded Age of the 1920s, when little
children were working in factories and
fields and the wealthiest people were
enjoying incredible wealth and lux-
ury—the idea Teddy Roosevelt pro-
posed then is as relevant today as it
was back then. Let me quote what
Teddy Roosevelt said more than 100
years ago:

The absence of effective state, and, espe-
cially, national restraint upon unfair money-
getting has tended to create a small class of
enormously wealthy and economically pow-
erful men, whose chief object is to hold and
increase their power. The prime need is to change the conditions which enable these
men to accumulate power. Therefore, I be-
lieve in a graduated inheritance tax on big
fortunes, properly safeguarded against eva-
sion and increasing rapidly in amount with
the size of the estate.

That was Teddy Roosevelt over 100
years ago. What Roosevelt said then is
absolutely true for today.

From a moral and an economic per-
spective, our Nation will not thrive
when so few people have so much
wealth and power and so many people
have so little wealth and power. This
wealth and income inequality is not only a threat and what we do not have
wealth inequality, to invest in the mid-
class family, working families of our
country, and to preserve our democ-
rapy is to enact a progressive estate
tax on the inherited wealth of multi-
millionaires and billionaires. That is
exactly what I will be proposing.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 35—SUPPORT-
ING DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES AND STANDARDS IN BOL-
IVIA AND THROUGHOUT LATIN AMERICA

Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr.
DURBIN, and Mr. CRUZ) submitted the
following resolution; which was re-
ferred to the Committee on Foreign
Relations:

S. Res. 35

Whereas the nation of Bolivia proclamed
independence from Spain on August 6, 1825,
with Simón Bolívar as its president; and
Whereas, between the years 1964 and 1981,
Bolivia endured more than a cen-
tury of fragile governance and instability,
with more than 150 changes of leadership
since it gained independence and at least six
military coups between 1952 and 1981 alone;

Whereas, between October 6 and 7, 1970, and
again on July 21, 1978, Bolivia experienced a
succession of military coups resulting in
three different governments over each re-
spective period;

Whereas a transition to civilian democracy
occurred in 1982, after the ruling military
junta handed power over to a civilian gov-
ernment, which managed to maintain con-
trol despite major economic upheavals and
painful market reforms;

Whereas peasant President Gonzalo San-
chez de Lozada and his successor Carlos Mesa
government resigned in the face of destabilizing pro-
tests in 2003 and 2005, respectively; and

Whereas, elected President Evo Morales was his first term as president, becoming Bolivia’s first
indigenous citizen elected to the office;
Whereas Bolivia’s historically marginalized indigenous peoples represent approximately 41 percent of the country’s population, according to the 2012 Bolivian census;

Whereas, in 2006, the people of Bolivia elected a constituent assembly to write a new constitution recognizing greater political and economic gains for Bolivia’s indigenous population, while key opposition parties boycotted the constituent assembly election;

Whereas, in 2008, a recall referendum on President Morales was rejected by 67 percent of voters in Bolivia;

Whereas, in 2009, Bolivia’s elected a constituent assembly to write a new constitution that included a limit of two five-year presidential terms;

Whereas, in 2009, President Morales won re-election to a second term with more than 60 percent of the vote;

Whereas, in 2013, President Morales’ loyalists in Bolivia’s Legislative Assembly approved legislation allowing him to run for a third consecutive term; President Morales’ political allies in the Bolivian Constitutional Tribunal affirmed, ruling that the two-term limits in Bolivia’s constitution did not apply because President Morales’ first term was under the old constitution;

Whereas, in 2013, President Morales expelled the United States Agency for International Development for trying to “conspire against Bolivia;

Whereas, in 2014, President Morales won his third term as president, with 60 percent of the vote;

Whereas, in 2015, the Government of Bolivia called a national referendum to modify the constitution in order to allow for an additional term for Morales;

Whereas, that same year, more than half of voters in Bolivia rejected the proposed lifting of presidential term limits that would have allowed President Morales to run for a fourth term and serve at least 20 years in office;

Whereas, after the referendum, the Morales Administration increased its troubling rhetoric in social media and advanced a narrative suggesting a plot to prevent President Morales from staying in power;

Whereas, in 2017, President Morales’ loyalists in Bolivia’s Constitutional Tribunal lifted constitutional term limits arguing that they violated the candidates’ human rights, citing the American Convention of Human Rights, adopted at San José November 22, 1969, the main human rights treaty in the Americas, as the legal foundation for its decision;

Whereas the Convention states that political rights can only be limited under very specific circumstances, a provision which, when drafted in 1969, was intended to prevent abusive governments from arbitrarily barring opposition candidates and not to impede constitutional reelection limits designed to reduce corruption and abuse of power given Latin America’s long history of violent and prolonged dictatorship;

Whereas the Bolivian Constitutional Tribunal’s ruling rendered Bolivia one of very few countries in the Western Hemisphere that does not place limits on presidential reelection;

Whereas the Secretary General of the Organization of American States said the cited rule “does not mean the right to perpetual power . . . Besides, presidential re-election was rejected by popular will in a referendum in 2016.”;

Whereas, in March 2018, a report commissioned by the Organization of American States specifically related to this issue stated that—

(1) “There is no specific and distinct human right to re-election.”

(2) “There is a reasonable limit to the right to be elected because they prevent an unlimited exercise of power in the hands of the President.”

(3) “The limits on a president’s re-election do not therefore unduly restrict his/her human and political rights.”

Whereas the Morales era has seen many social and economic gains, but also a weakening and undermining of key democratic institutions in order to favor the ruling party: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the important transitions to democracy and the regular peaceful transfers of power through elections that have taken place in the majority of Latin American and Caribbean countries in recent decades;

(2) recognizes the historic significance of Bolivia’s 2005 election;

(3) expresses concern for efforts to circumvent presidential term limits in the Bolivian constitution;

(4) supports presidential term limits prevalent in Latin America as reasonable checks against a history of coups, corruption, and abuses of power;

(5) expresses the belief that the 2016 referendum vote to maintain presidential term limits reflected the legitimate will of the majority of voters in Bolivia;

(6) agrees with the Organization of American States’ Secretary General’s interpretation of the American Convention of Human Rights as not applicable to presidential term limits;

(7) calls on the Government of Bolivia to respect, and where necessary restore, the independence of key electoral and governing bodies and administer the October 2019 election in adherence with international democratic norms and its own constitutional limits on presidential terms; and

(8) calls on Latin American democracies to continue to support democratic norms and standards among member states.

SENATE RESOLUTION 36—SUPPORTING THE OBSERVATION OF NATIONAL TRAFFICKING AND MODERN SLAVERY PREVENTION MONTH DURING THE PERIOD BEGINNING ON JANUARY 1, 2019, AND ENDING ON FEBRUARY 1, 2019, TO RAISE AWARENESS OF AND OPPOSITION TO HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND MODERN SLAVERY

MRS. FEINSTEIN (for herself, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. CORNYN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. MARKEY, Mrs. SHAHRN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BROWN, Mr. TOOMEY, and Mr. RUBIO) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. Res. 36

Whereas the United States abolished the transatlantic slave trade in 1808 and abolished chattel slavery and prohibited involuntary servitude in 1865;

Whereas, because the people of the United States remain committed to protecting individual freedom, there is a national imperatively to eliminate human trafficking and modern slavery, which is commonly considered to mean—

(1) the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of an individual by force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of subjecting that individual to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery;

(2) the inducement of a commercial sex act by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the individual induced to perform that act is younger than 18 years of age;

Whereas the Department of Justice has reported that human trafficking and modern slavery has been reported and investigated in more than 100 of the 50 States and the District of Columbia;

Whereas, since 2007, the National Human Trafficking Hotline has assisted approximately 800,000 persons and has reported that the top 3 countries of origin of modern slavery trafficked in Boliva are Brazil, Colombia, and Honduras;

Whereas, because the people of the United States combat child labor and forced labor in global supply chains, the Department of Labor has identified 148 goods from 76 countries that are made by child labor and forced labor;

Whereas the Department of State has reported that the top 3 countries of origin of human trafficking victims in fiscal year 2017 were the United States, Mexico, and Honduras;

Whereas forced labor and human trafficking generates revenues of approximately $150,000,000,000 annually worldwide and there are an estimated 40,000,000 victims of human trafficking across the globe;

Whereas, to combat human trafficking and modern slavery in the United States and globally, the people of the United States, the Federal Government, and State and local governments must be—

(1) aware of the realities of human trafficking and modern slavery; and

(2) dedicated to stopping the horrific enterprise of human trafficking and modern slavery;

Whereas the United States should hold accountable all individuals, groups, organizations, and countries that support, advance, or commit acts of human trafficking and modern slavery;

Whereas, through education, the United States must also work to end human trafficking and modern slavery in the United States and around the world;

Whereas victims of human trafficking deserve a trauma-informed approach that integrates the pursuit of social services designed to help them escape, and recover from, the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual trauma they endured;

Whereas combating human trafficking requires a whole-of-government effort that rests on a unified and coordinated response among Federal, State, and local agencies and that places equal value on the identification and stabilization of victims, as well as the investigation and prosecution of traffickers;

Whereas laws to prosecute perpetrators of human trafficking and to assist and protect victims of human trafficking and modern slavery have been enacted in the United States, including—

(1) the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7101 et seq.);
(2) title XII of the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013 (Public Law 113–4; 127 Stat. 136); and
(3) the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act of 2015 (Public Law 114–22; 129 Stat. 227);

(4) sections 910 and 914(e) of the Trade Facilitation and Trade Enforcement Act of 2015 (Public Law 114–123); and
(5) sections 1299 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 (22 U.S.C. 7114); 

Whereas the United States abolished the transatlantic slave trade in 1808 and abolished chattel slavery and prohibited involuntary servitude in 1865;
Whereas the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act of 2015 (Public Law 114–22, 129 Stat. 227) established the United States Advisory Council on Human Trafficking to provide a formal platform for survivors of human trafficking, Federal, State, and local governments, and interested groups to observe National Human Trafficking Awareness Day; and
Whereas the Department of Defense, the General Services Administration, and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration issued a final rule (80 Fed. Reg. 4997) to implement Executive Order 13627, entitled “Strengthening Protections Against Trafficking in Persons in Federal Contracts”, that clarifies the policy of the United States on combating trafficking in persons as outlined in the Federal Acquisition Regulation by strengthening the prohibition on contractors from charging employee recruitment fees; and
Whereas, although such laws and regulations are currently in force, it is essential to increase public awareness, particularly among individuals who are most likely to come in contact with victims of human trafficking and modern slavery, regarding conditions and dynamics of human trafficking and modern slavery precisely because traffickers use techniques that are designed to prevent victims from self-reporting and evade law enforcement; and
Whereas January 1 is the anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation; and
Whereas February 1 is—

(1) observing National Trafficking and Modern Slavery Prevention Month during the period beginning on January 1, 2019, and ending on February 1, 2019, to recognize the vital role that the people of the United States have in ending human trafficking and modern slavery; and
(2) marking the observation of National Trafficking and Modern Slavery Prevention Month with appropriate programs and activities; and

Resolved, That the Senate—
(1) designates the week beginning February 3, 2019, as “National Tribal Colleges and Universities Week” and—
Last Congress, then-Judiciary Chairman Chuck Grassley and I authored the Trafficking Victims Protection Act, which was complemented by Senators Cornyn’s and Klobuchar’s Abolish Human Trafficking Act. Both of these bills update our trafficking laws to better aid victims.

Bipartisan members of Congress worked together to address this critical issue, and I am proud that both bills were signed into law last month.

Finally, in introducing today’s resolution, I would like to thank Senators Grassley, Leahy, Cornyn, Klobuchar, Isakson, Markey, Shaheen, Blumenthal, Brown, Toomey, and Rubio for cosponsoring the resolution. Thank you very much, Mr. President. I yield the floor.

SENATE RESOLUTION 37—DESIGNATING THE WEEK BEGINNING FEBRUARY 3, 2019, AS “NATIONAL TRIBAL COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES WEEK”

Mr. TESTER (for himself, Mr. Daines, Mr. Hoeven, Mr. Udall, Ms. Warren, Mr. Bennett, Ms. Smith, Ms. Baldwin, Mr. Heinrich, Ms. Harris, Mr. Moran, Ms. Klobuchar, Mrs. Murray, Mr. Barrasso, Mr. Rounds, Mr. Cramer, Mr. Sanders, Mr. Thune, Mrs. Feinstein, Ms. Sinema, Ms. Stabenow, Mr. Cantwell, Mr. Sullivan, and Mr. Peters) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

SENATE RESOLUTION 38—DESIGNATING THE WEEK OF FEBRUARY 4 THROUGH 8, 2019, AS “NATIONAL SCHOOL COUNSELING WEEK”

Mr. MURRAY (for herself, Ms. Collins, Mr. Blunt, Mrs. Feinstein, Mr. Isakson, Mr. Murphy, Mr. Cornyn, Ms. Hassan, Mr. Casey, Ms. Cortez Masto, Mr. Wyden, Mr. Sanders, Mr. King, Mr. Blumenthal, Mr. Durbin, Ms. Cantwell, Ms. Klobuchar, Ms. Stabenow, Ms. Baldwin, Mr. Merkley, Ms. Hirono, Ms. Harris, Mr. Peters, Ms. Coons, and Ms. Duckworth) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

SENATE RESOLUTION 39—DESIGNATING THE WEEK OF FEBRUARY 4 THROUGH 8, 2019, AS “NATIONAL SCHOOL COUNSELING WEEK”
Whereas school counselors have long advocated for equal opportunities for all students;
Whereas school counselors help develop well-rounded students by guiding students through academic, social and emotional, and career development;
Whereas personal and social growth results in increased graduation rates;
Whereas school counselors play a vital role in ensuring that students are ready for both college and careers;
Whereas school counselors play a vital role in making students aware of opportunities for financial aid and college scholarships;
Whereas school counselors assist with and coordinate efforts to foster a positive school climate, resulting in a safer learning environment for all students;
Whereas school counselors have been instrumental in helping students, teachers, and parents deal with personal trauma as well as tragedies in their communities and the United States;
Whereas students face myriad challenges every day, including peer pressure, bullying, mental health issues, the deployment of family members to serve in conflicts overseas, and social change;
Whereas a school counselor is one of the few professionals in a school building who is trained in both education and social and emotional development;
Whereas the roles and responsibilities of school counselors are often misunderstood;
Whereas the national average ratio of students to school counselors is 464 to 1, almost twice the 250 to 1 ratio recommended by the American School Counselor Association, the National Association for College Admission Counseling, and other organizations; and
Whereas the National School Counseling Week will increase awareness of the important and necessary role school counselors play in the lives of students and the United States:

Whereas the American Farm Bureau Federation is to “enhance and strengthen the lives of rural Americans and to build strong, prosperous agricultural communities”;
Whereas the American Farm Bureau Federation fulfills its mission:
Whereas the mission of the American Farm Bureau Federation is to “enhance and strengthen the lives of rural Americans and to build strong, prosperous agricultural communities”;
Whereas the American Farm Bureau Federation represents the interests of farmers with respect to the consideration and enactment of all major legislation impacting farmers since the founding of the American Farm Bureau Federation; and
Whereas American Farm Bureau Federation plays a vital role in promoting the well-being of the people of the United States—

(1) by analyzing the problems faced by farm and ranch families;
(2) by formulating action to achieve the goals of farm and ranch families: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—
(1) designates the week of February 4 through 8, 2019, as “National School Counseling Week”; and
(2) encourages the people of the United States to observe National School Counseling Week with appropriate ceremonies and activities that promote awareness of the role school counselors play in schools and the community at large in preparing students for fulfilling lives as contributing members of society.

SENATE RESOLUTION 39—RECOGNIZING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE AMERICAN FARM BUREAU FEDERATION AND CELEBRATING THE LONG HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN FARM BUREAU FEDERATION REPRESENTING THE FARMERS OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. MORAN (for himself, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. ALEXANDER, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BARKER, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. CARPER, Mr. CASSIDY, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. COTTON, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. Daines, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. ENZI, Ms. ERNST, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. GARDNERS, Mr. GLEASON, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. GRILLO, Mr. IHOFE, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. JONES, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. KING, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. MERKLEY, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. PAUL, Mr. PERRINO, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. RISCH, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. SCHUMER, Ms. SMITH, Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina, Mr. THUNE, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. WARNER, Mr. WICKER, and Ms. STA-BENOW) submitted the following resolution, which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 39

Whereas, on November 12, 1919, a group of farmers met in Chicago, Illinois, to found the American Farm Bureau Federation, with the goal of “making the business of farming more profitable and the community a better place to live”; Whereas James Howard, the first president of the American Farm Bureau Federation, said in 1920, “What’s good for the farmers is good for America”;
Whereas, with State farm bureaus in all 50 States and Puerto Rico, 2,800 county farm bureaus, and 6,000,000 member families, the American Farm Bureau Federation is one of the largest farmer organizations in the United States;
Whereas the mission of the American Farm Bureau Federation is to “enhance and strengthen the lives of rural Americans and to build strong, prosperous agricultural communities”;
Whereas the American Farm Bureau Federation fulfills its mission:

(1) by representing farm and ranch families united for the purpose of formulating action to improve the rural United States;
(2) by supporting educational improvement, economic opportunity, and social advancement; and
(3) by promoting the well-being of the people of the United States;
Whereas the American Farm Bureau Federation has represented the interests of farmers with respect to the consideration and enactment of all major legislation impacting farmers since the founding of the American Farm Bureau Federation; and
Whereas the American Farm Bureau Federation plays a vital role in promoting the well-being of the people of the United States—

(1) by analyzing the problems faced by farm and ranch families;
(2) by formulating action to achieve the goals of farm and ranch families: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—
(1) commemorates the 100th anniversary of the American Farm Bureau Federation;
(2) recognizes the American Farm Bureau Federation for 100 years of promoting farming and ranch interests for the benefit of the people of the United States; and
(3) applauds the American Farm Bureau Federation for its past, present, and future efforts to advocate for farm interests that are critical to the United States.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 89. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 90. Mr. RISCH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 65 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for himself, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. ROYH, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. RURO, Mr. SASS, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. SHELY, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. CORNT, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mr. WICKER, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. YOUNG, and Mr. BOOZMAN) to the bill S. 1, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 91. Mr. RISCH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 92. Mr. MERKLEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 65 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for himself, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. ROYH, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. RURO, Mr. SASS, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. SHELY, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. CORNT, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mr. WICKER, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. YOUNG, and Mr. BOOZMAN) to the bill S. 1, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 93. Mr. PETERS (for himself and Ms. STABENOW) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 94. Mr. PETERS (for himself and Ms. STABENOW) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 95. Mr. MERKLEY (for himself, Mr. COONS, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. VAN HOLL, and Ms. CORTEZ MASTO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 96. Mr. RISCH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 97. Mr. RISCH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 98. Mr. RISCH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 99. Mr. TOOMEY (for himself, Mr. VAN HOLL, Mrs. SHAH, and Mr. JOHNSON) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 100. Mr. GARDNER (for himself and Mr. COONS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 89. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the 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; which was ordered to lie on the table; and follows:

SEC. 335. RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.

Nothing in this title may be construed as an authorization for the use of military force.

SA 90. Mr. RISCH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the 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; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

In section 250(a), insert after “establishment—DEFENSE DEVELOPMENT AND FINANCE CORPORATION” the following: “(which means the end of the transition period, as defined in section 1661 of the Better Utilization of Investments Leading to Development Act of 2018 (division F of Public Law 115–254))”.

SA 91. Mr. RISCH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the 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; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 18, between lines 17 and 18, insert the following:

(3) FORM OF REPORT.—The report required under paragraph (1) shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may include a classified annex.

SA 92. Mr. MERKLEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by amendment SA 65 proposed by Mr. mcCONNELL (for himself, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. BURR, Mr. ROMNEY, Ms. ERNST, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. SASSE, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. WICKER, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. YOUNG, and Mr. BOOZMAN) to the 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; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike “ON WITHDRAWALS OF UNITED STATES FORCES FROM SYRIA AND AFGHANISTAN” and all that follows through “longer” and insert:

“SENSE OF CONGRESS ON TRANSITION OF MILITARY AND SECURITY OPERATIONS IN AFGHANISTAN.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) After al Qaeda attacked the United States on September 11, 2001, the United States Government rightly sought to bring to justice those who attacked us, to eliminate al Qaeda’s safe havens and training camps in Afghanistan;

(2) Members of the Armed Forces, intelligence personnel, and diplomatic corps have skillfully achieved these objectives, culminating in the death of Osama bin Laden;

(3) Operation Enduring Freedom was the longest military operation in United States history, and combined with Operation Freedom’s Sentinel the United States’ involvement in Afghanistan has exceeded $1,000,000,000,000 in costs to the United States taxpayer and continues to cost taxpayers over $45,000,000,000 a year;

(4) Members of the United States Armed Forces have served in Afghanistan valiantly and with honor, and many have sacrificed their lives and health in service to their country;

(5) The United States has suffered more than 2,000 deaths in Afghanistan (including at least 13 in 2018), and the United States has dropped more than 5,200 bombs in 2018, a record high;

(6) Former Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis, reflecting consensus within United States and international security experts, has concluded there is no military solution to the conflict in Afghanistan, stating, “It’s all working to achieve a political reconciliation, not a military victory. The victor will be a political reconciliation.”

(7) Over the past 17 years, the mission of the United States has evolved to include a prolonged nation-building effort in Afghanistan;

(8) Such nation-building efforts in Afghanistan are undermined by endemic corruption, high illiteracy, tribal factions, and a historic aversion to a strong central government in that country.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the announcement by Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation Zalmay Khalilzad that the United States and the Taliban signed the “Taliban’s Inclusive Peace and Reconciliation Framework” that could lead to the withdrawal of U.S. military forces from Afghanistan and that “The Taliban have committed, to the Administration’s knowledge, to do what is necessary that would prevent Afghanistan from ever becoming a platform for international terrorist groups or individuals” should be welcomed as a declaration of an appropriate diplomatic approach to end U.S. military involvement in the country;

(2) the President should complete the transition of the United States military and security operations in Afghanistan to the Government of Afghanistan as soon as possible but no later than September 18, 2021, the 20th anniversary of the enactment of Public Law 107–40, the Authorization for Use of Military Force against those responsible for the attacks on September 11, 2001, in conjunction with efforts to turn the draft framework into a durable peace between the Government of Afghanistan and the Taliban;

(3) The U.S. should re-double diplomatic efforts to support partners as they prepare to hold presidential elections in 2019;

(4) any cost savings resulting from a troop withdrawal should be re-programmed to increase bilateral humanitarian assistance and to maintain gains in human rights to include advances made for women and girls to Afghanistan in an amount no less than one percent of the annual cost to the U.S. budget of our military engagement in Afghanistan in fiscal year 2018; and

(5) not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President should submit to Congress a report—

(A) including a plan for the complete transition of all military and security operations in Afghanistan to the Government of Afghanistan;

(B) assessing the likely humanitarian needs of Afghans in the ten years following a U.S. military withdrawal; and

(C) assessing efforts by Special Representative Khalilzad to turn the draft framework reached with the Taliban into a durable peace agreement between the Government of Afghanistan and the Taliban.

SA 93. Mr. PETERS (for himself and Ms. STABENOW) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the 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; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 48, between lines 20 and 21, insert:

(5) THRESHOLD FOR APPLICATION TO CONTRACTS.—The authority to adopt and enforce measures under subsection (a) to restrict contracting for goods and services shall not apply to contracts with a value of less than $1,000,000.

SA 94. Mr. PETERS (for himself and Ms. STABENOW) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the 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; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 43, strike lines 12 through 20.

SA 95. Mr. Merkley (for himself, Mr. Coons, Mr. Leahy, Mr. Van Hollen, and Ms. Cortez Masto) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the 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; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

TITLE V—GENERAL PROVISIONS

SEC. 501. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON UNITED STATES BILATERAL ASSISTANCE TO THE WEST BANK AND GAZA.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) The dire health and economic conditions facing the Palestinian people has created a humanitarian crisis in the West Bank and Gaza. The United States has long been a leader in helping address the plight of innocent civilians;

(2) These fragile conditions could contribute to circumstances that would undermine Israel’s security and stability in the region.

(3) The Department of State has failed to obligate any of the funds Congress appropriated in fiscal year 2017 and fiscal year 2018, $302,750,000 and $257,500,000, respectively, for bilateral assistance 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; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

(4) The U.S. should re-double diplomatic efforts to support partners as they prepare to hold presidential elections in 2019;

(5) any cost savings resulting from a troop withdrawal should be re-programmed to increase bilateral humanitarian assistance and to maintain gains in human rights to include advances made for women and girls to Afghanistan in an amount no less than one percent of the annual cost to the U.S. budget of our military engagement in Afghanistan in fiscal year 2018; and

(6) not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President should submit to Congress a report—

(A) including a plan for the complete transition of all military and security operations in Afghanistan to the Government of Afghanistan;

(B) assessing the likely humanitarian needs of Afghans in the ten years following a U.S. military withdrawal; and

(C) assessing efforts by Special Representative Khalilzad to turn the draft framework reached with the Taliban into a durable peace agreement between the Government of Afghanistan and the Taliban.

SEC. 502. SENSE OF CONGRESS INDUSTRY FOR THE WEST BANK AND GAZA.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) The dire health and economic conditions facing the Palestinian people has created a humanitarian crisis in the West Bank and Gaza. The United States has long been a leader in helping address the plight of innocent civilians;

(2) These fragile conditions could contribute to circumstances that would undermine Israel’s security and stability in the region.

(3) The Department of State has failed to obligate any of the funds Congress appropriated in fiscal year 2017 and fiscal year 2018, $302,750,000 and $257,500,000, respectively, for bilateral assistance to the West Bank and Gaza.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the Executive branch should spend during fiscal year 2019 for bilateral assistance to the West Bank and Gaza—

$196,500,000 for the Economic Support Fund;

(2) $60,000,000 for International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement; and

(3) $5,000,000 for Nonproliferation, Anti-Terrorism, Demining and Related Programs; and
TITLE V—CYBERSECURITY SANCTIONS WITH RESPECT TO IRAN

SEC. 501. MANDATORY SANCTIONS WITH RESPECT TO IRAN

(a) INVESTIGATION.—The President shall initiate an investigation into the possible designation of an Iranian person under subsection (b) upon receipt by the President of credible information that the person has engaged in conduct described in that subsection.

(b) DESIGNATION.—The President shall designate under this subsection any Iranian person that the President determines has directly or indirectly—

(1) engaged in significant activities undermining cybersecurity conducted by the Government of Iran; or

(2) acted on behalf of the Government of Iran in connection with such activities.

(c) SANCTIONS.—The President shall block and prohibit all transactions in all property and interests in property of any Iranian person designated under subsection (b) if such property and interests in property are in the United States, or are or come within the possession or control of a United States person.

(d) SUSPENSION OF SANCTIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The President may suspend the application of sanctions under subsection (c) with respect to an Iranian person only if the President submits to the appropriate congressional committees in writing a certification described in paragraph (2) and a detailed justification for the certification.

(2) CERTIFICATION DESCRIBED.—

SEC. 502. REPORT ON UNITED STATES POLICY IN SYRIA

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) The regime of Bashar al Assad has committed gross atrocities against the people of Syria.

(2) The commission of these atrocities led to the eruption, and continuation, of the Syrian civil war.

(3) The ensuing conflict has resulted in the death of over 400,000 Syrian civilians.

(4) The Syrian civil war has caused over 5,000,000 Syrian refugees to flee their country as refugees and over 6,000,000 others to be displaced from their homes inside Syria.

(5) The Assad regime has repeatedly used chemical weapons against people.

(6) In 2011 the Assad regime released from its prisons many of the terrorists who would subsequently lead the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS).

(7) ISIS has organized, executed, and inspired countless terror attacks throughout the world since its emergence, including in the United States.

(8) By the end of 2014, ISIS controlled one third of the territory of Syria and one third of the territory of Iraq.

(9) Since 2014, the United States has led Operation Inherent Resolve, with the help of allies, to degrade and destroy ISIS.

(10) Approximately 2,500 members of the United States Armed Forces are deployed to Syria under Operation Inherent Resolve.

(11) The United States and its allies have succeeded in seizing back nearly all the physical territory held by ISIS in 2014.

(12) Tens of thousands of ISIS terrorists remain in Syria and Iraq despite having lost much of their territory ("Caliphate").

(13) The Islamic State continues to pose a threat to the security of the United States and that of its allies.

(14) Syrian Kurdish fighters in the People’s Protection Units, or YPG, have served as effective and trustworthy allies in the fight against ISIS.

(15) The Government of Turkey views these Kurdish forces as an enemy and has expressed its intention to destroy them.

(16) The support of the Russian and Iranian regimes in Syria has been invaluable to the reinforcement of the Assad government.

(17) Russian-backed forces have directly assaulted United States Armed Forces deployed in Syria on at least one occasion.

(18) The Government of Iran seeks to entrench its presence in Syria as a means of supporting its terrorist proxies, like Hezbollah and Hamas, and harming its enemies, like Israel.

(19) Ensuring the existence of Israel, America’s most important ally in the Middle East, represents a key United States interest in the region.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the pursuit of a clear, publicly-articulated strategy will guide any withdrawal of United States Armed Forces in Syria;

(2) such a strategy aims to ensure that the Syrian civil war ends through peaceful, political means;

(3) such a strategy includes the consideration of 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; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. . . . CLARIFICATION OF DEADLINE FOR REPORT ON ESTABLISHING AN ENTERPRISE IN JORDAN

For purposes of section 205(a), the term "establishment of the United States Development Finance Corporation" means the end of the transition period, as defined in section 1461 of the Better Utilization of Investments Leading to Development Act of 2018 (division F of Public Law 115–254).

SEC. . . . FORM OF REPORT ON THE COOPERATION BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND ISRAEL WITH RESPECT TO COUNTERING UNMANNED AERIAL SYSTEMS

The report required under section 123(d) shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may include a classified annex.

SA 99. Mr. TOOMEY (for himself, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mrs. SHAHEEN, and Mr. JOHNSON) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the 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; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

At the end, add the following:

TITLE V—CYBERSECURITY SANCTIONS WITH RESPECT TO IRAN...
The Chair, on behalf of the President pro tempore, and upon the recommendation of the Majority Leader, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2761, appoints the following Senator as Chairman of the Senate Delegation to the British-American Interparliamentary Group Conference during the 116th Congress: The Honorable JOHN BOOZMAN of Arkansas.

NATIONAL TRIBAL COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES WEEK

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 37, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant bill clerk reads as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 37) designating the week beginning February 3, 2019, as "National Tribal Colleges and Universities Week."

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I know of no further debate on the measure.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There being no further debate, the question is on the adoption of the resolution.

The resolution (S. Res. 37) was agreed to.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent 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 preamble was agreed to.

The resolution (S. Res. 37) was printed in today's Record under "Submitted Resolutions."

NATIONAL SCHOOL COUNSELING WEEK

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 38, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant bill clerk reads as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 38) designating the week of February 4 through 8, 2019, as "National School Counseling Week."

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I know of no further debate on the measure.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There being no further debate, the question is on the adoption of the resolution.

The resolution (S. Res. 38) was agreed to.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent 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 preamble was agreed to.

The resolution (S. Res. 38) was printed in today's Record under "Submitted Resolutions."

ORDERS FOR MONDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2019

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 3 p.m., Monday, February 4; 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 resume consideration of S. 1; further, that notwithstanding the provisions of rule XXII, the postcloture time on McConnell amendment No. 65 expire and the cloture motions filed during today's session ripen at 5:30 p.m., Monday; finally, that the filing deadline for today's cloture motion with respect to S. 1 be Monday at 4 p.m. for first-degree amendments.

RECOGNIZING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE AMERICAN FARM BUREAU FEDERATION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 39, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant bill clerk reads as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 39) recognizing the 100th anniversary of the American Farm Bureau Federation and celebrating the long history of the American Farm Bureau Federation representing the farmers of the United States.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to proceeding to the measure?

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. McCONNELL. 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. 39) was agreed to.

The resolution (S. Res. 39) was printed in today's Record under "Submitted Resolutions."
The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 5:36 p.m., adjourned until Monday, February 4, 2019, at 3 p.m.
IN MEMORY OF THE HONORABLE JACK T. BRINKLEY, SR.

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.
OF GEORGIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 31, 2019

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a distinguished public servant, dedicated statesman, mentor, and dear friend of longstanding. The Honorable Jack T. Brinkley, Sr., sadly, Jack passed away on January 23, 2019, at the age of 88. His passing marks the close of a long and prolific life, and his departure leaves a void in the hearts of many Georgians. He leaves behind an impeccable legacy of service that will never be forgotten. A funeral service was held on Saturday, January 26, 2019, at 2 p.m. at Evangel Temple in Columbus, Georgia.

Jack Thomas Brinkley, Sr. was born on December 22, 1930, to the union of the late Lonnie and Stella Brinkley in Faceville, Georgia. A product of the Decatur County Public School System, he graduated from Attaulga High School in 1947 and Young Harris College in 1949 before working as an educator and basketball coach from 1949 to 1951. In 1951, he joined the United States Air Force where he served for 5 years as a combat crew pilot. After honorably serving his country, he obtained his Juris Doctorate degree from the University of Georgia School of Law, was admitted to the bar, and became a prominent lawyer with Young, Holllis, and Mosely and later with Coffin and Brinkley, both in Columbus, Georgia.

He served in the General Assembly of Georgia for two one-year terms from 1965 to 1966. While serving as the State Representative for District 112, he was appointed Chairman of the Local Affairs Committee, authored legislation to require phenylketonuria (PKU) testing for newborn infants, and spearheaded the protest against the closure of the Warm Springs Institute for which he later sponsored funding legislation. In 1966, he was elected to Congress from the 3rd District of Georgia at age 35, and served for eight terms, retiring from the 97th Congress in 1983. While serving as the representative for Georgia’s Third Congressional District, Jack authored several key pieces of legislation. Following the Vietnam War, he was the author of legislation establishing the Gold Star Wives Charter. He also authored dual use legislation in Civil Defense during the Carter administration which authorized, by statute, federal response to natural and wartime disasters. Jack was also the author of legislation designating Andersonville, Georgia, a National Historic Site, which transferred it from the Department of the Army to the Department of Interior. With the help of his Co-Chairman, the Honorable Rudy Hayes of Americus, he was able to place the Georgia Memorial at the site.

During his last Congressional term before retirement, he was Chairman of the Military Construction Subcommittee, which had jurisdiction over military acquisitions and disposals, and as such, blocked the transfer of land at Fort Gilliam chosen for the Region IV Veteran’s cemetery. Subsequently, under Jack’s leadership, the Fort Mitchell VA cemetery was approved by the Reagan Administration.

During the last terms of his service in Congress, there was intense competition for the location of an army plan for One Station Unit Training (OSUT), where basic infantry training was to be combined with advanced infantry training to reduce costs. Endorsements from the New England Mid-West Coalition for Fort Drum in New York and Senator Strom Thurmond for Fort Jackson in South Carolina initially blocked the Army’s choice of Fort Benning. However, Jack’s move to Chairman of the Military Construction Subcommittee led to the authorization of the reception station at Sand Hill at Fort Benning. Jack was also pivotal in establishing Interstate 185 connecting Interstate 85 to Columbus, Georgia. As a Congressman, Jack placed a huge emphasis on constituent service and attendance, as he was known for passionately advocating for citizens facing the heavy hand of bureaucracy and rarely missed a vote or quorum call.

He was a CIVITAN, a Master Mason, and an attorney for 50 years, but he was a Christian for all of his life. He was baptized when he was almost ten years old at Betts’ Mill Pond and he practiced the requirements of Micah to act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with thy God. He faithfully took his family to Edgewood Baptist Church and taught Sunday School there for many years, before joining Evangel Temple, where he served until his passing.

Jack was more than a legislator, he was a servant to all humankind. He gave of himself to countless causes and organizations. Dr. Maya Angelou once said that “I’ve learned that you shouldn’t go through life with a catcher’s mitt on both hands; you need to be able to throw something back.” Jack threw a prodigious amount of love and service back to the state and nation he loved so dearly.

Jack achieved much in his life but none of it would have been possible without the love and support of his loving family. While he was preceded in death by his late and dearly beloved wife, Lois Kite Brinkley, and his son, Jack, Jr.; his legacy lives on through his dear and loving family. His loved wife, Sally; his son, Fred; and a host of family and friends who will miss him deeply.

On a personal note, Jack Brinkley was a mentor to me. But more importantly, he was indeed a role model for my future public service. From his strong example of constituent service, to his eloquent use of poems and appropriate quotations in his oral and written presentations, Jack Brinkley has been the model I have sought to emulate. He held fast to his promise to “remember who I am, where I’m from, and who sent me.” The world and human kind are better because Jack passed this way.

Jack was truly a great representative for Southwest Georgia and a stellar example of how a public servant should serve his constituents. His friendship, leadership, and counsel will be sorely missed.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me, my wife, Vivian, and me, along with thousands in the Chattahoochee Valley and across America in paying tribute to former Georgia Congressman Jack T. Brinkley, Sr. for a life well lived and in extending our deepest sympathies to his family, friends, and loved ones during this difficult time of bereavement. Moreover, we pray that they will be consoled and comforted by an abiding faith and the Holy Spirit in the days, weeks, and months ahead.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

HONORING WILLIAM MARVIN AND BETTY ANN KNIGHT

HON. RODNEY DAVIS
OF ILLINOIS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 31, 2019

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in wishing them many more years of continued health and happiness.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. RODNEY DAVIS
OF ILLINOIS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 31, 2019

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, on Wednesday, January 30, 2019, I was absent from the House because at the time of votes I was attending to a family matter back in my home district. Due to my absence I did not record any votes for the day. I would like to reflect on how I would have voted.

Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 64; and YEA on Roll Call No. 65.
HONORING THE CAREER OF STEPHEN R. BAUMAN—DIRECTOR OF THE VA CENTRAL CALIFORNIA HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

HON. JIM COSTA
OF CALIFORNIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Thursday, January 31, 2019

Mr. COSTA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor my good friend and colleague, Stephen R. Bauman, as he retires from his position as Director of the VA Central California Health Care System in Fresno, California. Throughout his distinguished career with the United States Navy and the Department of Veterans Affairs, Stephen has dedicated his life to public service and the care of our nation’s veterans. Stephen has left an indelible mark on the Central Valley through his commitment to the veteran community.

Stephen honorably served our country for 36 years in the United States Navy. He is a veteran of the Vietnam War. As a reservist, he was activated for support of Operation Desert Storm and completed a tour in Iraq and Kuwait in 2004 as a Command Master Chief in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. He attended Grantham University in Lenexa, Kansas and obtained a bachelor’s degree in Business Administration in 2011.

Stephen began his career with the Department of Veteran Affairs in 1977 as a staff nurse at the VA Palo Alto Healthcare System. He has served at eight VA facilities throughout his career, including the Northern California Health Care System, Sierra Pacific Network and Los Angeles. He was appointed Director of the VA Central California Health Care System in November 2015. His proven experience and sound leadership qualities made him the perfect fit to guide the Fresno VA.

As director, Stephen was responsible for the delivery of health care for approximately 96,000 veterans throughout Central California, with an annual operating budget of $212 million. He oversees both the main campus in Fresno and the outpatient clinics in Tulare, Merced, and Oakhurst, California. My staff and I, and the people of California, owe a debt to Stephen Bauman for the leadership he has provided over the last four years.

Stephen, you have made our country a better place. You are a man of character and commitment, a man who has dedicated his life to serving our country and its veterans. We wish you well as you enter this new phase of your life.

I ask that my colleagues join me in wishing Stephen and his family the very best as he enters a new phase in his life. I ask that you join me in wishing Stephen and his family continued happiness and prosperity.

IN MEMORY OF FORMER EARLY COUNTY SHERIFF JIMMIE R. MURKERSON

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.
OF GEORGIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Thursday, January 31, 2019

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Madam Speaker, it is with a heavy heart and solemn remembrance that I rise today to pay tribute to a great man and outstanding public servant, the former Sheriff of Early County, Georgia, Mr. Jimmie Ray Murkerson. Sadly, Sheriff Murkerson passed away on Sunday, January 27, 2019. Funeral services will be held on Friday, February 1, 2019, at 2 p.m. at the First Assembly of God Church in Blakely, Georgia.

The Blakely, Georgia native was born on June 7, 1947, to the late Leon and Cherrie Murkerson. In addition to being a loving father, son, husband, and friend, Jimmie was also a Vietnam Veteran, store owner (Early Tree Service and Blakely Floor Covering), farmer, former Blakely City Councilman, and former Early County Sheriff.

Sheriff Murkerson was employed with the Early County Sheriff’s Office for more than 34 years and he proved to be a strong and re-vered leader. As the chief law enforcement officer, he was responsible for patrolling and responding to calls within the 516 square mile area of Early County, where the population is just over 10,000 people. During his tenure as Sheriff, he spearheaded the consolidation of various law enforcement services in the county, which resulted in more efficient, resourceful, and proactive law enforcement for the citizens of Early County.

Sheriff Murkerson embodied the definition of a public servant through his strong leadership, steadfast dedication, and unwavering compassion. He served on the Georgia Peace Officers Standards and Training Council; the Governor’s Children and Youth Coordinating Council; the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council; the Board of Directors of the ABAC Police Academy; and the Executive Board of the Georgia Department of Public Safety.

Sheriff Murkerson’s dedication to enforcing the law and protecting the public earned him several awards including the 2011 Georgia Sheriff’s Association’s Sheriff of the Year award; the Georgia Sheriffs’ Association’s Distinguished Humanitarian Award (which he received twice); and the Governor’s Peace Officers Award.

MAYA ANGELOU ONCE SAID, “A GREAT SOUL serves everyone all the time. A great soul never dies.” Sheriff Murkerson is undoubtedly great because of his distinguished service to his community, devotion to his work, and the compassion he showed for his friends and loved ones.

He is survived by his wife, Sarah; children, Tracy and Jimmie, Jr.; and a host of family, friends, and loved ones who will miss him deeply.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognition of Director Stephen R. Bauman, in honor of his remarkable career and contributions to the Department of Veterans Affairs. I wish Stephen the very best in his new phase of life. I ask that you join me in wishing Stephen and his family continued happiness and prosperity.

Ms. Vidaurri Eden was born in San Antonio on May 22, 1924 to Juan and Maria Castilla Vidaurri. At an early age, Ms. Vidaurri Eden showed a keen interest in the performing arts and was encouraged not only by her mother who passed when she was a teenager, but also by her father. Left with the care and responsibility of her younger siblings, Ms. Vidaurri Eden persisted, keeping her passion for singing alive while attending night school by performing on Mexican radio, competing in music contests, and working as an advertising model.

Ms. Vidaurri Eden was known for her unrivaled performance in Ranchera, a traditional Mexican country music genre that often features love ballads and odes to home. She soon earned the nickname “La Calandria,” or the “Lark” whose powerful voice resonated throughout every venue where she performed. By the late 1950s and at the height of her career, Ms. Vidaurri Eden retired from the stage, only later reviving her singing career at the age of 80. In 2001, Ms. Vidaurri Eden along with Beatriz Llamas, Blanca Rodriguez and Janet Cortez, formed a group of elder cantantes—referred to as “Las Tesoros del Westside,” or the beloved “the Treasures of the Westside.”

Ms. Vidaurri Eden performed across Latin America and the nation. She performed on stage with Mexican artists such as Jorge Negrete, Cantinflas, and sang alongside Nat King Cole, Eydie Gorme, and Celia Cruz. She continued to sing until the end of her life.

Madam Speaker, I stand with confidence in the House of Representatives. I give my personal explanation that I wish to place in the record.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOAQUIN CASTRO
OF TEXAS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Thursday, January 31, 2019

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Ms. Rita Vidaurri Eden, who passed away on January 16, 2019. A true Latina musician and icon, Ms. Vidaurri Eden hails from my hometown of San Antonio. She is survived by her daughter, Linda Palevich Alvarado; her sister Henrietta Rodri-guez; her stepbrother, Richard Vidaurri; four step-sisters, Yvan, Rita, Sofia, and Ellena Vidaurri; numerous nephews, nieces, and 5 generations of grandchildren. She will be greatly missed.

Ms. Rita Vidaurri Eden was born in San Antonio on May 22, 1924 to Juan and Maria Castilla Vidaurri. At an early age, Ms. Vidaurri Eden showed a keen interest in the performing arts and was encouraged not only by her mother who passed when she was a teenager, but also by her father. Left with the care and responsibility of her younger siblings, Ms. Vidaurri Eden persisted, keeping her passion for singing alive while attending night school by performing on Mexican radio, competing in music contests, and working as an advertising model.

Ms. Vidaurri Eden was known for her unrivaled performance in Ranchera, a traditional Mexican country music genre that often features love ballads and odes to home. She soon earned the nickname “La Calandria,” or the “Lark” whose powerful voice resonated throughout every venue where she performed. By the late 1950s and at the height of her career, Ms. Vidaurri Eden retired from the stage, only later reviving her singing career at the age of 80. In 2001, Ms. Vidaurri Eden along with Beatriz Llamas, Blanca Rodriguez and Janet Cortez, formed a group of elder cantantes—referred to as “Las Tesoros del Westside,” or the beloved “the Treasures of the Westside.”

Ms. Vidaurri Eden performed across Latin America and the nation. She performed on stage with Mexican artists such as Jorge Negrete, Cantinflas, and sang alongside Nat King Cole, Eydie Gorme, and Celia Cruz. She continued to sing until the end of her life.

Madam Speaker, I stand with confidence in the House of Representatives. I give my personal explanation that I wish to place in the record.
IN MEMORY OF MR. WILLIAM “W.T.” THOMAS HENRY, SR.
HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.
OF GEORGIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Thursday, January 31, 2019

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a loving husband, dedicated father, doting grandfather, distinguished educator, and committed servant to humankind, Mr. William “W.T.” Thomas Henry. Sadly, W.T. passed away on Monday, January 28, 2019. His funeral will be held on Thursday, January 31, 2019, at 2 p.m. at the First United Methodist Church in Albany, Georgia. He leaves behind a host of family and a legacy of service that will never be forgotten.

William “W.T.” Thomas Henry, Sr. was born on October 7, 1938, to the union of the late Jeff and Ludie Gray Henry in Colquitt, Georgia. He graduated from Miller County High school in 1956, where his athletic prowess allowed him to letter in several sports. W.T. went on to attend Young Harris College and Troy State University where he earned a Bachelor’s degree in Education. Never one to rest on his laurels, he went on to earn Master’s degrees in Physical Education and Administration Supervision from Florida State University.

W.T. found his true calling and purpose in life by working with our most precious resource, young people. His prodigious career in education spanned 46 remarkable years in both public and private schools. W.T. positively impacted the lives of students at Arlington High School, Damascus High School, Miller County High School, and Albany Junior High School. He taught math and coached basketball, track, football, and basketball. W.T. taught his athletes how to be successful on the courts and athletic fields, but more importantly he taught them skills that would help them to succeed in the game of life. W.T. left the classroom and the athletic fields to conquer his next challenge, School Administration. He became the principal of Miller County High School and blazed the trail for others by becoming the founding headmaster of Southwest Georgia Academy in 1970.

He left his true love for a short time and worked in the peanut industry. But, he quickly realized this endeavor was not for him and returned to education. He moved to Albany, Georgia and became the Lower School Director for Deerfield-Windsor School. Because he excelled in this position, he became the Headmaster of Deerfield-Windsor School, retiring after 20 years of extraordinary service in 2009.

His tentacles of service stretched far beyond the schools at which he served with distinction. He was a former President of the Georgia Independent Schools and he also served on the Georgia State Board of Education, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, and the Georgia Accrediting Commission.

Most importantly, W.T. was a man of God and was guided by his faith. He was a faithful member of the First United Methodist Church and served on its Board of Directors.

W.T. loved his family and instilled in them the values of faith in God, hard work, and a commitment to serving their fellow man. He had an infectious personality and never met a stranger. He had a special gift of saying the right thing to someone who was in distress at just the right time.

W.T. Henry was a great man and accomplished many things in his life, but none of these things would have been possible without the love and support of his family. His legacy lives on through his wife, Ruth; his children, Lea, Bo, and Kristin; his grandchildren, and all of those whose lives he touched.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join my wife, Vivian, and me, along with the more than 730,000 constituents of the Second Congressional District of Georgia in saluting and honoring the life of Mr. William “W.T.” Thomas Henry for his commitment to young people and humankind and in extending our deepest condolences to Mr. Henry’s family during this difficult time of bereavement. We pray that they will be consoled and comforted by an abiding faith and the Holy Spirit in the days, weeks, and months ahead.
Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S775–S816

Measures Introduced: Thirty-one bills and five resolutions were introduced, as follows: S. 285–315, and S. Res. 35–39.

Measures Passed:

National Tribal Colleges and Universities Week: Senate agreed to S. Res. 37, designating the week beginning February 3, 2019, as "National Tribal Colleges and Universities Week".

National School Counseling Week: Senate agreed to S. Res. 38, designating the week of February 4 through 8, 2019, as "National School Counseling Week".

American Farm Bureau Federation 100th Anniversary: Senate agreed to S. Res. 39, recognizing the 100th anniversary of the American Farm Bureau Federation and celebrating the long history of the American Farm Bureau Federation representing the farmers of the United States.

Measures Considered:

Strengthening America’s Security in the Middle East Act—Agreement: Senate continued consideration of 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, taking action on the following amendment proposed thereto:

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.

Menendez Amendment No. 96 (to McConnell Amendment No. 65), to clarify that the amendment shall not be construed as a declaration of war or an authorization of the use of military force.

Natural Resources Management Act—Cloture: Senate began consideration of the motion to proceed to consideration of S. 47, to provide for the management of the natural resources of the United States.

Pending:

A motion was entered to close further debate on the bill, and, in accordance with the provisions of Rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, and pursuant to the unanimous-consent agreement of Thursday, January 31, 2019, a vote on cloture will occur at 5:30 p.m., on Monday, February 4, 2019.

During consideration of this measure today, Senate also took the following action:

By 68 yeas to 23 nays (Vote No. 13), three-fifths of those Senators duly chosen and sworn, having voted in the affirmative, Senate agreed to the motion to close further debate on McConnell Amendment No. 65 (listed above).

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that at approximately 3 p.m., on Monday, February 4, 2019, Senate resume consideration of the bill; that notwithstanding the provisions of Rule XXII, the post-cloture time on McConnell Amendment No. 65 expire, and the cloture motions filed on Thursday, January 31, 2019, ripen at 5:30 p.m., on Monday, February 4, 2019; and that the filing deadline for the cloture motion with respect to the bill be at 4:00 p.m., on Monday, February 4, 2019, for first-degree amendments.

Appointments:

British-American Interparliamentary Group Conference: The Chair, on behalf of the President pro tempore, and upon the recommendation of the
Democratic Leader, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2761, appointed the following Senator as Vice Chairman of the Senate Delegation to the British-American Interparliamentary Group Conference during the 116th Congress: Senator Leahy.

British-American Interparliamentary Group Conference: The Chair, on behalf of the President pro tempore, and upon the recommendation of the Majority Leader, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2761, appointed the following Senator as Chairman of the Senate Delegation to the British-American Interparliamentary Group Conference during the 116th Congress: Senator Boozman.

Messages From the House:

Measures Read the First Time:

Executive Communications:

Additional Cosponsors:

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions:

Additional Statements:

Amendments Submitted:

Record Votes: One record vote was taken today. (Total—13)

Adjournment: Senate convened at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 5:36 p.m., until 3 p.m. on Monday, February 4, 2019. (For Senate’s program, see the remarks of the Majority Leader in today’s Record on pages S815–16.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: Committee announced the following subcommittee assignments for the 116th Congress:

Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations: Senators Portman (Chair), Paul, Lankford, Romney, Hawley, Carper, Hassan, Harris, and Rosen.

Subcommittee on Federal Spending Oversight and Emergency Management: Senators Paul (Chair), Scott (FL), Enzi, Hawley, Hassan, Harris, and Sinema.

Subcommittee on Regulatory Affairs and Federal Management: Senators Lankford (Chair), Portman, Romney, Scott (FL), Enzi, Sinema, Carper, and Rosen.

Senators Johnson and Peters are ex-officio members of each subcommittee.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 12 public bills, H.R. 934–945, and 1 resolution, H. Res. 94, were introduced.

Additional Cosponsors:

Reports Filed: There were no reports filed today.

Quorum Calls—Votes: There were no yea and nay votes, and there were no recorded votes. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 12 noon and adjourned at 12:01 p.m.

Program for Monday: House will meet in Pro Forma session at 11:30 a.m.

Committee Meetings

No hearings were held.

Joint Meetings

No joint committee meetings were held.

NEW PUBLIC LAWS

(For last listing of Public Laws, see DAILY DIGEST, p. D85)

S. 24, to provide for the compensation of Federal and other government employees affected by lapses in appropriations. Signed on January 16, 2019. (Public Law 116–1)


H.R. 259, to extend the Medicaid Money Follows the Person Rebalancing demonstration, to extend protection for Medicaid recipients of home and community-based services against spousal impoverishment. Signed on January 24, 2019. (Public Law 116–3)

H.R. 430, to extend the program of block grants to States for temporary assistance for needy families and related programs through June 30, 2019. Signed on January 24, 2019. (Public Law 116–4)

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR MONDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2019

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

**Senate**
No meetings/hearings scheduled.

**House**
No hearings are scheduled.
Next Meeting of the SENATE
3 p.m., Monday, February 4

Senate Chamber

Program for Monday: Senate will resume consideration of S. 1, Strengthening America’s Security in the Middle East Act, with votes on or in relation to amendments to the bill, and on the motion to invoke cloture on the bill at 5:30 p.m. The filing deadline for first-degree amendments to the bill is at 4 p.m.

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
11:30 a.m., Monday, February 4

House Chamber

Program for Monday: House will meet in Pro Forma session at 11:30 a.m.

Extensions of Remarks, as inserted in this issue

HOUSE

Bishop, Sanford D., Jr., Ga., E119, E120, E121
Castro, Joaquin, Tex., E120
Costa, Jim, Calif., E120
Davis, Rodney, Ill., E119
Graves, Sam, Mo., E119
Harder, Josh, Calif., E120