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No. 28

Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY).

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Almighty God, our refuge and strength, Your Kingdom cannot be shaken. We praise You that more things are wrought by prayer than we can imagine. We are grateful for Your invitation to ask and receive, to seek and find, and to knock for doors to open.

May this prayer that opens today's session be a springboard for our lawmakers to communicate with You throughout the day. May they pause repeatedly during their challenging world to ask You for wisdom and guidance. Lord, empower the members of their staffs and all who labor for liberty to harness prayer power continuously.

We pray in Your powerful 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.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. DAINES). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 464

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I understand there is a bill at the desk due for a second reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the title of the bill for a second time.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 464) to require the treatment of a lapse in appropriations as a mitigating condition when assessing financial considerations for security clearances, and for other purposes.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, in order to place the bill on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I object to further proceedings.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection having been heard, the bill will be placed on the calendar.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, yesterday Chairman SHELBY, Ranking Member LEAHY, and their House counterparts continued finalizing their legislative proposal to fund the government. Their negotiated solution would wrap up this year's appropriations and avoid another partial government shutdown.

As our colleagues hammer out the final details, I would like to thank them again for their cooperative, bipartisan efforts that have brought us to this point. The agreement reached on Monday was achieved because the conference committee set aside far-left poison pills and utterly absurd demands. None of these radical non-starters was allowed to torpedo the process.

Notwithstanding weeks of over-the-top rhetoric from Speaker PELOSI, the agreement did not cave to the far-left demand that no more than a single dollar go toward new barriers on the southern border—no, indeed, it provides well over a billion such dollars.

The negotiators also prevented last-minute efforts to hamstringing the U.S. Immigrations and Customs Enforcement with an unprecedented statutory limit on their ability to detain criminal aliens in the interior of our country.

Instead, here is what their agreement does provide. It provides another significant downpayment on the President's plan to secure our Nation's borders with new physical barriers and keep American communities safe. It provides nearly \$1.4 billion for new barriers in the Border Patrol's highest priority areas—enough to build nearly twice as many miles as were funded last year. It gives ICE the capacity and the flexibility to continue responding to surges in illegal immigration. It continues to provide the President with appropriate reprogramming authority, so he can direct additional funding toward urgent homeland security priorities should circumstances require. Of course, in addition to all this, the legislation will wrap up all our outstanding regular appropriations bills and get the entire Federal Government funded the right way.

It goes without saying that neither side is getting everything it wants. That is the way it goes in divided government. If the text of the bill reflects the principles agreed to on Monday, it won't be a perfect deal, but it will be a good deal.

I hope that our colleagues will complete the process of turning these principles into legislation soon and final text that can become law before this Friday's deadline.

We can't let any unrelated, cynical, partisan plays get in the way of finishing this important process. I understand, for example, that Speaker PELOSI and House Democrats are apparently objecting, believe it or not, to a modest extension of the Violence Against Women Act. They want this authority to expire on Friday.

Republicans believe that we should follow standard procedure and extend

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



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this important legislation through the end of the fiscal year, which is about 7 months. There are new chairmen in this Congress of both the Senate and House Judiciary Committees, and a modest extension of this authority would allow them to work on a longer term reauthorization of this important law. In addition, a modest extension of this law is consistent with how this matter has been handled in the past. Every time a continuing resolution was necessary in the past Congress, Republicans made sure it included an extension of VAWA.

I don't know what cynical ploy my Democratic colleagues may be trying to pull here, but surely no political maneuvering should be worth letting the Violence Against Women Act lapse this Friday, 2 days from now. It is time to get this done.

H.R. 1

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, as I alluded to earlier this week, I have a feeling this conference is just getting started discussing Speaker PELOSI's signature bill, H.R. 1. I, for one, am eager to continue shining the spotlight on the Democrat Politician Protection Act and asking why, exactly, Washington Democrats are so intent on assigning themselves a whole lot more power over what American citizens can say about politics, how we can say it, and how we cast our ballots.

Remember, among the many fairly blatant power plays built into this legislation is a naked attempt to turn our neutral Federal Election Commission into a partisan weapon. The FEC is a body that, since Watergate and for obvious reasons, has had an even-numbered membership and equal division between the two parties. Enforcement and penalty require both parties to agree, or at least one Commissioner from one party has to agree with three Commissioners of the other party. This is meant to ensure that complaints are evaluated on their substance, not for purely political considerations.

I guess Speaker PELOSI and her colleagues are tired of playing fair and trying to persuade the old-fashioned way because the Democrat Politician Protection Act would take the FEC down to a five-member body and give sitting Presidents—listen to this one—it would give sitting Presidents the power to appoint the Chairperson. They would turn the FEC into a nakedly partisan body and give the sitting President the power to appoint the Chairperson—where his or her party would have a 3-to-2 advantage—who holds the keys to determine whom to investigate and what enforcement to pursue.

The evenness of the FEC is a vital way to ensuring that Americans' political speech and campaigns for public office are regulated fairly and evenhandedly. Of course, that needs to be done on a bipartisan basis, but the Democrats want to throw that right

out the window and carve out a partisan majority on this crucial Commission.

This proposal is outrageous enough on its face, but just wait until you hear about all the new things the Democrat Politician Protection Act would let this newly partisan FEC actually do.

First, they turn it over to the party of the President, so they have a clear majority to go after the minority. But let's see what they can do. There are incredibly vague new standards that seem tailor-made to give this partisan FEC the maximum latitude to penalize or silence certain speech. You begin to get the picture. Of course, this partisan FEC is going to want to silence the voices of its opponents.

Let me give a few examples.

The newly partisan FEC would be handed the ability to determine what kind of speech is "campaign-related"—growing its jurisdiction and widening its bureaucratic wingspan over more of the public discourse, including issues of the day and not just elections.

Private citizens, for example, would be required to make the government aware of times they spend even small amounts of money in engaging in First Amendment activities. Private citizens have to notify the government if they are going to engage in spending small amounts of money on First Amendment activities—on expressing themselves—or they will face penalties. More speech would fall into this category whereby Americans would have to dutifully notify Federal bureaucrats that they are speaking their minds or else pay a fine. To put it another way, it is free speech as long as you fill out government forms and mail a couple of carbon copies to Washington.

In other cases, the Democrats want to impose stunningly vague, broad, and potentially unconstitutional restrictions on the abilities of all kinds of advocacy groups—on all sides of the political spectrum—to exercise their constitutional right to speak out about elected politicians and their positions on substantive issues.

Let's go over that again because I know this is a technical subject.

Under the guise of cracking down on "super PAC coordination," the Democrats want to give a partisan FEC new powers to prohibit advocacy groups from weighing in on politicians' job performances and the issues of the day under a broad set of new conditions. Washington Democrats want individual American citizens, civic groups, trade associations, labor unions, and nonprofits to face more restrictions, more hurdles, and more potential penalties for daring to have opinions about the political races that decide who goes to Washington in the first place.

Call me old-fashioned, but I remember when both political parties were more interested in trying to win debates than in trying to shut down debates. This will be an FEC designed to stifle free speech and tilt the playing field in the direction of the President's

party. I remember when constitutionally minded leaders on both sides of the aisle would have recoiled at efforts to chill or even to prohibit a private citizen's ability to speak.

Let's not forget, in every one of these cases, when these fuzzy, new lines and vague rules need enforcing, who has the final say? Why, it is the newly partisan Federal Election Commission that determines who gets to speak and who doesn't. My Democratic colleagues are trying to muddy the rule book and mount a hostile takeover of the referees all at the same time.

Let me just close with this. Back in 1974, as the creation of the FEC was debated here in this Chamber, California Democratic Senator Alan Cranston gave this warning: "The FEC has such a potential for abuse in our democratic society that the President should not be given power over the Commission." Wise words.

Back then, a California Democrat was warning against a partisan takeover of the American electoral system. It is the distinguished Member of the House from San Francisco, Speaker PELOSI, who is now, today, cheerleading for that very change.

The Democratic Party has changed its views on this subject a lot in the last 45 years, but the purpose of the FEC has not changed one bit, and neither has the importance of the First Amendment.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of William Pelham Barr, of Virginia, to be Attorney General.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, we have a clear and obvious way to avoid another government shutdown in 48 hours. The conference committee has

done its job. It has forged a bipartisan agreement that would keep the government open through September as well as provide additional border security.

As with all bipartisan agreements, it is the product of compromise. Each side gave a little; each side got a little. The conferees deserve our praise for their hard work, their commitment, and their success.

This agreement is the last train leaving the station away from another dreaded government shutdown. The last time we were all in this situation, the President signaled his support for a government funding bill, only for him to retreat at the last possible moment—precipitating the longest shutdown in our history. It was the Trump shutdown, and he now seems to admit that again.

No one wants to see a rerun of that movie. The President must not repeat his mistakes of the recent past.

President Trump, sign this bill.

Neither side got everything it wanted in this bill, but both sides wanted to avoid another shutdown—Democrats and Republicans, House and Senate.

President Trump, sign this bill.

The parameters of the deal are good. It provides additional funding for smart, effective border security. Let me repeat that. It does not fund the President's wall, but it does fund smart border security that both parties support. It also provides humanitarian assistance and beefs up security at our ports of entry. Though it hasn't been discussed much during the negotiations, the passage of this agreement clears the way for the six bipartisan appropriations bills that have languished. These bills contain important priorities, including more support for infrastructure, housing, Tribal healthcare, the census, and money to combat the opioid crisis. I look forward to passing all of these appropriations bills, alongside the DHS agreement, this week.

One of the last things that has to be dealt with is the negotiating of a good compromise to fix some of the problems that have been created by the Trump shutdown. We are trying to get the conferees to approve a proposal to deal with Federal contractors. Thousands of Federal contractors have not been reimbursed from the 35-day shutdown. This issue is still hanging in the balance. The Republicans should join the junior Senator from Minnesota and the Democrats in approving this legislation as soon as possible.

The contractors, many of them just working people, are in the same boat as government employees, except they haven't gotten their backpay. They should. No one should stand in the way of that. It is just not fair to them. They were hostages, just like the government workers were hostages. So I hope we can include that in these final hours of negotiations. It is very important.

Now, the only remaining obstacle to avoiding a government shutdown is the

uncertainty of the President's signature. So I repeat my request: President Trump, say you will sign this bill. Remove the ax hanging over everyone's head. To make progress in our democracy, you have to accept the give-and-take. You have to accept some concessions. You have to be willing to compromise.

Any American President who says my way or no way does a real disservice to the American people. President Trump, in politics, to quote the Rolling Stones, "You can't always get what you want." It is time to put the months of shutdown politics behind us.

NOMINATION OF MICHAEL PARK

Mr. President, on another matter, today the Judiciary Committee is holding a confirmation hearing on the nomination of Mr. Michael Park for the Second Circuit Court of Appeals, which covers my home State of New York.

I have always assessed judges on three criteria: excellence, moderation, diversity. While Michael Park satisfies the first and third prongs of my test, he fails miserably on the second—modification.

Mr. Park has spent much of his career working in opposition to civil rights and seeking to advance the rightwing agenda that lies at the very core of the Federalist Society's mission. Mr. Park is currently working to defend the Trump administration's effort to insert a citizenship question into the 2020 census—a cynical effort to discourage people from responding to the census.

He has been on the frontlines of the effort to dismantle affirmative action policies in education. In 2012, he submitted an amicus brief to the Supreme Court, writing on behalf of the petitioner who sought to have the university's use of race, as one consideration among many, in the admissions process struck down as unconstitutional.

He is currently representing the plaintiffs in a suit challenging Harvard's affirmative action policy. He has worked to deny women's reproductive freedoms when he represented the State of Kansas against a challenge to its attempt to defund Planned Parenthood and ban it from participating in the State Medicaid Program.

In 2012, he submitted a brief to the Supreme Court in *NFIB v. Sebelius* urging the Court to strike down the entire Affordable Care Act. This nominee rather wants to get rid of the whole ACA.

If the American people knew the kind of nominees President Trump is nominating and the kind of nominees the Republican majority is supporting, so against everything they believe in—America believes in *Roe v. Wade*, America believes in keeping the ACA, America believes in voting rights—if they knew all these details, they would be appalled, and our Republican colleagues rarely bring these things to the floor legislatively. They know they would be roundly defeated, but it is sort of an end run—pick judges who in

the courts will uphold these unpopular positions.

Mr. Park has a long and detailed record of support for the most conservative legal causes. A judge is asked to interpret the law rather than make the law, to apply fairly the legal principles set forth by precedent, not reread the Constitution to fit the political cause of the moment.

Mr. Park's career does not give me the confidence that he can be an impartial arbiter on the Second Circuit. I will oppose his nomination, and I will urge my colleagues to do the same.

Now, in the not-so-distant past, my objection to this nomination would mean that the chairman of the Judiciary Committee would not move forward with the nomination out of respect for home State Senators in the blue-slip tradition—but not in this Congress, not with this Republican majority.

Since the election of President Trump, Senate Republicans, led by Leader McCONNELL, Chairman GRASSLEY, and now Chairman GRAHAM, have unceremoniously discarded the blue-slip tradition. My colleagues on the other side will say it is because we haven't worked with them in a timely manner to fill these vacancies, but let's not kid ourselves. This is about one thing and one thing alone—the desire of the Republican majority to ram through more of the Federalist Society's handpicked, hard-right judges.

Last Congress, the majority confirmed two judges over the blue-slip objections of Democratic Senators BALDWIN and CASEY. A third, Ryan Bounds, would have been confirmed over the objections of Senators WYDEN and MERKLEY if not for Senator SCOTT's principled objection to Bounds' past racist writings.

The practice continues, unfortunately, in this Congress. Last week, the Judiciary Committee voted along party lines to advance an additional four circuit court nominees over the blue-slip objections of five Democratic Senators—BROWN, MURRAY, CANTWELL, BOOKER, MENENDEZ—and in the coming weeks, the committee will move forward with two additional court nominees over the objections of Ranking Member FEINSTEIN and Senator HATCH.

Last Congress, we worked with the White House to move eight New York judges—one circuit, seven district—through the Judiciary Committee in a bipartisan way. That is how it should work. I would like to cooperate on New York judges this Congress, but the continued consideration of Michael Park, combined with the majority's clear intentions to ignore the blue-slip tradition, makes this very difficult, if not impossible. I know the leader is proud of what he is doing on judges. I don't think history will look very kindly on it; A, putting such hard-right judges, so against what the American people believe, in office. History will not look kindly on that as their decisions come down; but second, eliminating the last

vestiges of bipartisanship as we select judges.

NOMINATION OF WILLIAM BARR

Mr. President, finally, the Senate will soon resume debate on the nomination of William Barr to be the Attorney General. I oppose this for many reasons, and later today I will join my Democratic colleagues during debate time to lay out my opposition to this nominee.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I thank the leader for his comments. I want to just say that the Democrats on the Judiciary Committee agree with him, and on their behalf, I would like to make the following comments.

Last week, the Judiciary Committee voted on the nomination of William Barr to be Attorney General of the United States. All Democrats voted against the nomination. There are reasons.

There is no question that Mr. Barr is qualified. He previously served as Attorney General from 1991 to 1993, and he has had a long legal career, but the question before us is whether Mr. Barr is the right choice to lead the Justice Department, at this time, with this President, when there are currently several active investigations that implicate this President, his campaign, his advisers, and/or his inner circle.

The answer for me and the Judiciary Committee Democrats is no. Let me explain why. Five months before being named for the Attorney General position, Mr. Barr wrote an extensive 19-page, single-spaced memo in which he provided great detail and legal arguments for his view of the President's absolute authority. Mr. Barr then shared and discussed that memo with the White House Counsel and the President's defense lawyers.

In this memo, Mr. Barr outlined his views on Special Counsel Mueller's investigation into possible obstruction of justice, the unitary executive, and whether a President can, in fact, be indicted.

One example, Mr. Barr argued that Special Counsel Mueller should not be allowed to question the President about obstruction of justice—point 1.

He concluded that the law does not apply to the President if it conflicts with a broad view of Executive authority, and that view is often referred to as the unitary executive.

Under this belief, conflict of interest laws cannot and do not apply to the President of the United States because, as Mr. Barr writes in his memo, "to apply them would impermissibly 'disempower' the President from supervising a class of cases that the Constitution grants him the authority to supervise. Under the Constitution, the President's authority over law enforcement matters is necessarily all-encompassing."

Read the memo. This is on page 11.

Further, Mr. Barr asserted that "the Constitution, itself, places no limit on

the President's authority to act on matters which concern him or his own conduct."

Mr. Barr went on to explain that, in his view, President Trump would have virtually unlimited authority over the Executive branch. As he said in his memo, the President "alone is the Executive branch. As such, he is the sole repository of all Executive powers conferred by the Constitution. Thus, the full measure of law enforcement authority is placed in the President's hands, and no limit is placed on the kinds of cases subject to his control and supervision."

That is page 11 of the memo.

Importantly, based on these conclusions, Mr. Barr asserts that certain Presidential actions—including firing FBI Director James Comey or telling the FBI to go easy on Michael Flynn—is never obstruction of justice.

In fact, Mr. Barr even said that "the President's discretion in these areas has long been considered 'absolute,' and his decisions exercising this discretion are presumed to be regular and are generally deemed nonreviewable."

That is page 10 in the memo.

This is a stunning legal argument. Taken to its natural conclusion, Mr. Barr's analysis squarely places this President above the law. To argue that the President has no check on his authority flies in the face of our constitutional principles of checks and balances and should be concerning to Democrats and Republicans.

Mr. Barr's views about the power of the President are especially troubling in light of his refusal to commit to making the special counsel's findings and the report publicly available, and his refusal to agree to protect the other investigations into President Trump.

When I asked Mr. Barr about this at the hearing, he said, in his own words, that he would "make as much information available as I can consistent with the rules and regulations that are part of the special counsel regulations."

When others pressed him, he changed his answer to suggest that he may instead release a summary of the special counsel's findings. This is not acceptable. There is nothing in existing law or regulations that prevents the Attorney General from sharing the special counsel's report and underlying factual findings with the American public. Many of us believe this report is seminal to the Presidency, and the public must be able to read it.

In addition, as part of our oversight responsibilities, Congress routinely requests and receives confidential information related to closed investigations. In fact, recently Congress asked for and received investigative information, including transcripts of FBI interviews of witnesses involved in the examination of Secretary Clinton's emails. This matter should be treated no differently.

After Mr. Barr's hearing, I sent him two letters. First, I asked him to pro-

vide Congress and the American public with the full accounting of the Mueller investigation, including any report prepared by the special counsel himself.

Secondly, I asked him in writing to commit to protecting all investigations into matters surrounding President Trump and the 2016 election.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that these two letters be printed in the RECORD.

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

U.S. SENATE,

Washington, DC, January 17, 2019.

MR. BARR: I very much appreciated your responses to questions before the Committee and hearing directly from you on many important issues. As I noted during the hearing, ensuring access to Mueller's findings and recommendations—unchanged—is of utmost importance. To this end, I and others asked you about releasing the report as drafted from the Special Counsel. When I first asked you, you clearly stated you would provide the report. Specifically, I asked,

"Will you commit to making any report Mueller produces at the conclusion of his investigation available to Congress and to the public? And you responded, 'As I said in my statement, I am going to make as much information available as I can consistent with the rules and regulations that are part of the special counsel regulations.'"

I then asked, "Will you commit to making any report on the obstruction of justice public?" You responded, "That is the same answer. Yes."

Later as others pressed you on these answers you expanded by saying:

"As the rules stand now, people should be aware that the rules I think say that the Special Counsel will prepare a summary report on any prosecutive or declination decisions, and that that shall be confidential and shall be treated as any other declination or prosecutive material within the Department."

In fact the regulations state, "At the conclusion of the Special Counsel's work, he or she shall provide the Attorney General with a confidential report explaining the prosecution or declination decisions reached by the Special Counsel."

As you may be aware, there is nothing in the regulations saying the report should be "treated as any other" Department material, nor is there anything defining confidential. Finally, there is no language in the regulations indicating that Congress cannot have access—especially when the materials in question relate to a completed investigation.

It is also worth noting that in the most recent past practice, the Department has provided Congress with investigative reports and other materials, including notes and summaries of witness interviews. Specifically, with regard to the investigation into Secretary Clinton the Department provided investigative reports, as well as notes and summaries of witness interviews. As you testified "the country needs a credible resolution of these issues" which argues in favor of complete transparency and public disclosure of as much information as possible, consistent with national security and active law enforcement needs.

I would appreciate your response on this as quickly as possible, and prior to the Committee's consideration of your nomination in our Executive Business meetings.

Sincerely,

DIANNE FEINSTEIN,
U.S. Senator.

U.S. SENATE,

Washington, DC, February 7, 2019.

WILLIAM P. BARR,
Kirkland & Ellis LLP,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. BARR: I am writing to follow up on my January 17 letter about Special Counsel Mueller's investigation, and regarding other investigations that implicate the President's interests. As you know, you were asked numerous questions about both the Mueller investigation as well as investigations in the Southern District of New York, Eastern District of Virginia, and District of Columbia.

As raised at your hearing, it is imperative that all of these investigations be free from any interference and allowed to continue. In your June 2018 memo, you took the position that "no limit is placed on the kinds of cases subject to [the President's] control and supervision," including "matters in which he has an interest." While you testified that you would not stop these investigations, you qualified your answer by saying "if I thought it was a lawful investigation." When asked if the President could fire prosecutors on these cases, you responded that "the President is free to fire his, you know, officials that he has appointed."

This gives you, and the President, considerable discretion and power over these investigations. I therefore ask for your commitment that these investigations will be allowed to proceed without interference, and for an explanation of how you will safeguard their independence and integrity, if confirmed.

Thank you for your attention to these important matters.

Sincerely,

DIANNE FEINSTEIN,
U.S. Senator.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. I did not receive the courtesy of a response to either letter.

Here is a man seeking approval of his appointment. The ranking member of the Judiciary Committee sends him a letter asking two very valid questions, and there is no response. That told me something very loud and clear.

Over the past year, we have seen several other investigations arising out of the Southern District of New York, the Eastern District of Virginia, and the District of Columbia, where prosecutors are looking into crimes involving foreign donations to the Trump inauguration committee, money laundering, campaign finance violations, as well as possible efforts by Russian agents to assist the Trump campaign during the election. When asked about these investigations at his hearing, Mr. Barr refused to pledge they would be protected from interference. He refused to pledge that these valid investigations would be protected from interference.

For example, Senator COONS asked, "If the President ordered you to stop the [Southern District of New York] investigation in which someone identified as individual one is implicated, would you do that?"

Mr. Barr responded that "every decision within the department has to be made based on the attorney general's independent conclusion and assessment that it's in accordance with the law, so I would not stop a bona fide lawful investigation."

However, this qualification of "a bona fide, lawful investigation" is all important. In his 19-page memo, Mr. Barr clearly wrote this: "The full measure of law enforcement authority is placed in the President's hands, and no limit is placed on the kinds of cases subject to his control and supervision," including "matters in which he has an interest." I really see why he was nominated. This is the offering of complete protection from the law by the Attorney General—future Attorney General, if he should become one.

Mr. Barr went on to argue that if the President determined "an investigation was bogus, the President ultimately had legitimate grounds for exercising his supervisory powers to stop the matter." This would mean that the President could stop the Mueller investigation, which the President has repeatedly described as a "witch hunt" and "hoax."

It also means that if Donald Trump decided the Southern District of New York's investigation was, in Mr. Barr's words, "bogus," the President would have the right to stop the investigation. Think about that. Think about the ramifications of that.

When Senator BLUMENTHAL asked Mr. Barr during his hearing, "If the President fired a United States attorney, would you support continuing that investigation, even under the civil servants, the career prosecutors, who would remain?"

Mr. Barr replied, "Yeah . . . I believe, regardless of who or what outside the department is trying to influence what is going on, every decision within the department relating to enforcement, the attorney general has to determine independently that—that it is a lawful action."

Think about that. The Attorney General becomes the arbiter, independently, of what a lawful action comprises. But, again, according to this memo, firing a U.S. attorney, even if it implicates the President's own personal interests, is a lawful action by the President.

During this hearing, Mr. Barr stated that "the President can fire a U.S. attorney. They are a presidential appointment."

The meaning of this is clear: Prosecutors in these cases can be fired arbitrarily by the President of the United States under his plenary authority.

As I said at the outset, the question is whether Mr. Barr is the right person for the job at this time. The memo that I am quoting from I spent a full day reading and thinking about, and it was the most extreme case for Presidential power that I have ever read. In and of itself, it gives me cause to believe this is why—I could be wrong, but this is why he received that nomination.

Given the broad implications of Presidential power and unlimited control Mr. Barr believes this President has over law enforcement matters, I cannot support this nominee to serve as Attorney General. At this critical time in

our Nation's history, we must have an Attorney General who is objective and who is clearly committed to protecting the interests of the people, the country, and the Constitution.—not the President.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

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Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, we are doing a number of important things in the Senate this week.

Last night, we passed the Natural Resources Management Act. This is a bipartisan package of more than 100 individual bills that will help protect our natural resources, spur economic development, increase access to public lands, and much more.

I was very pleased that my Custer County Airport Conveyance Act, which I introduced with the other Members of the South Dakota delegation, was included in this bill. This legislation will give Custer County Airport full ownership of the land on which it operates and allow the airport to make improvements to its facilities.

Custer County Airport supports business and recreational aviation and fire suppression efforts in the Black Hills region, and I am pleased that this bill will increase the airport's ability to serve this area of South Dakota.

I am grateful to Chairman MURKOWSKI for her leadership on this important lands package, as well as to Ranking Member MANCHIN and all of those who worked on these bills at the committee level.

NOMINATION OF WILLIAM BARR

Mr. President, last night, the Senate moved forward on William Barr's nomination to be Attorney General. We will have the final vote on that nomination later this week.

The President made an outstanding choice with Mr. Barr. Mr. Barr is eminently qualified to be Attorney General. In fact, he has already been Attorney General—under President George H.W. Bush. He also served as Assistant Attorney General in the Office of Legal Counsel at the Department of Justice and as Deputy Attorney General.

He has won respect from both sides of the aisle. He has been confirmed by the Senate without opposition—not once, not twice, but three times. He was unanimously confirmed as Attorney General under George H.W. Bush in a Democrat-controlled Senate. Then-Judiciary Committee Chairman Joe Biden described him as "a heck of an honorable guy."

Senator LEAHY also spoke at that time, expressing his belief that Mr. BARR would be "an independent voice for all Americans."

Today, Mr. Barr continues to earn respect from Democrats. The ranking member on the Judiciary Committee noted in January:

He's obviously very smart. He was attorney general before. No one can say he isn't qualified.

Mr. Barr is extremely smart and eminently qualified. He would be a judicious, thoughtful, and independent Attorney General, whose allegiance would be to, as he said, “the rule of law, the Constitution, and the American people.” I hope the Senate will quickly confirm him in a bipartisan fashion.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. President, the final order of business this week is funding the government. I am very pleased and encouraged that Chairman SHELBY and his counterparts have reached an agreement “in principle” to fully fund the government and fund important border security measures.

No one wants another government shutdown. I am very glad Democrats abandoned their efforts to force a cap on the number of individuals that Immigration and Customs Enforcement could detain in the interior of the country. If Democrats’ enforcement cap had been adopted, Immigration and Customs Enforcement would have been forced to release criminals already in detention onto our Nation’s streets. I am pleased that Democrats decided to separate themselves from the radical anti-border-security wing of their party. Instead, the deal will now give Immigration and Customs Enforcement the flexibility it needs to address surges of illegal immigration at our southern border.

I am also very glad Democrats moved from their insistence on zero funding for physical barriers at the border. Barriers are an essential element of border security, and I am pleased this compromise will allow 55 new miles of physical barriers in the Rio Grande Valley’s sector, which is a high-priority area for the Border Patrol. That is double the number of new miles provided in fiscal year 2018 and nearly three times as many as would have been available under a continuing resolution.

I thank Chairman SHELBY and Members of both parties who have been working on a funding and border security deal, as well as the staffers who have worked nights and weekends, to help develop this agreement. I look forward to reviewing the final language and voting on a final funding and border security package later this week.

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

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

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I appreciate the bipartisan conversation that is going on with the chair, and I hope more of that will go on. That really is a little bit of why I rise today, because I hope and pray that if there—while we have many legitimate policy dif-

ferences in this body, one thing we ought to have absolute, complete agreement on is that the United States of America cannot afford another government shutdown.

The last shutdown, which President Trump was so proud to initiate, cost our economy—and this is the lowest estimate we could find so we don’t look like we are overstating—an estimated \$6 billion.

The truth is, that number hardly reflects the human cost of this self-inflicted disaster our country was led into. A recent survey found that 62 percent of Federal workers depleted most or all of their emergency savings, 42 percent of Federal workers took on debt to pay bills or other expenses, and 25 percent tapped their retirement accounts. If you tap your IRA, you pay tax penalties, and you get none of that reimbursed.

Listen to this: 25 percent of our Federal workers who were the victims of this shutdown—25 percent of our Federal workers, during this shutdown, had to visit a food bank. If you work for the United States of America, the greatest Nation in the world, and you are asked to show up to work without pay, you should not have to visit a food bank.

I spent most of my career in the private sector, and I am proud of those activities, but I know very few folks who work for any of my companies who would have continued to show up day in and day out to do their jobs if they were going for 35 days without pay—and 35 days without pay where, frankly, you had some Members of the so-called board, the Congress, who showed no appreciation at all for their suffering and many who said they didn’t mind if that shutdown continued indefinitely.

Those fellow Americans are Federal workers, contractors, private businesses that support Federal installations or the campground outside the Shenandoah National Park or the restaurant outside Petersburg National Battlefield—not just Federal employees, folks in the private sector as well endured tremendous hardship because the President decided to use their livelihoods as a bargaining chip. That can’t happen again.

While I want to always try to be optimistic and appreciate the bipartisan agreement that has been reached by the budget negotiators, unfortunately, we find ourselves in the same spot right now—potentially just days away from another Trump shutdown.

The President said he is not happy, but he won’t say whether he will sign the bipartisan deal that came from the conference committee. Let’s be clear. The uncertainty itself is having a negative impact on the operation of the Federal Government and costing taxpayer dollars each and every day that this cloud hangs over the government. Agencies are already interrupting investigations and canceling trainings and meetings. They are being forced to

act as if the government will once again be shut down at the end of this week. This is just plain mismanagement of government by the Trump administration. It is another example of the disrespect this White House has shown to our Federal workforce.

In Virginia, over the past few weeks, Senator KAINE and I have spent a lot of time listening to Federal workers. We heard from Federal workers who had to pull their kids out of daycare and send them away to relatives because they couldn’t meet those daycare expenses if they weren’t getting paid and folks who missed student loan payments or literally had to choose between their medications and paying rent. Now, these workers have started to receive some of their backpay, and many of them have not received all of their backpay from the shutdown.

The truth is, those Federal workers who drew down their savings or incurred a tax penalty from taking money from their IRA or who took an advance on their credit card are not made whole by receiving backpay because they have incurred penalties that will never be made up, beyond the psychic damage that is taking place with their families.

But even if we accept that most of the Federal workers will ultimately get their backpay, that is not the case for thousands of Federal contractors in Virginia and around the country. Quite honestly, the nightmare is not over.

The President’s decision to finally reopen the government didn’t magically undo 35 days of missed pay. Unfortunately, no one from the White House could be bothered to meet with any of these folks, whether it be Federal workers or contractors who were hurt by this government shutdown. If they had, they would know how much pain this President’s shutdown continues to inflict on Federal contractors, particularly low- and middle-income workers. I spent the last couple of months, the last month and a half listening to these folks describe the anxiety of not knowing when their next paycheck will come or if it will come at all.

Sometimes when we think about Federal contractors, we think about high-priced folks, many of whom do a good job working for our government, many in my State. Sometimes that is the image of a Federal contractor. I wonder if most of the Members of this body realize that the people who clean the toilets at the Smithsonian or serve the food at the cafeteria in the Smithsonian are Federal contractors, and for the 35 days of the government shutdown—they have no recourse at this moment in time. They are struggling as we speak, and they will continue to struggle if Congress doesn’t take advantage of this opportunity—if we get this deal signed by Friday and keep the government open—to make good on our commitment to those contractors as well. If we end up with the alternative and the government shuts down again, these folks’ lives—at least their economic lives—will be in jeopardy.

A number of small businesses—women-owned businesses, minority businesses, veteran-owned businesses—that tried, through this last 35-day shutdown, to keep their workers on payroll had to take that money out of their business pockets to try to make ends meet. But after a couple of weeks, a lot of them couldn't afford to do that. Those businesses have shut down. Years and in certain cases decades of work down the drain, not because they did something that was mismanagement, not because they did something that was irresponsible, not because they weren't providing the taxpayers with the full value of their work, but because we here in Congress and the White House couldn't come to a common agreement on the most basic responsibility of government, which is to keep the doors open and the lights on.

I held a roundtable recently with a contractor in Springfield, VA. A contractor there named Barbara told me she is behind on her rent and had to take her granddaughter out of daycare because she can't pay the bills. Now, she is glad she is back at work, but that 35 days with no pay—unless we rectify that with this deal that may come to pass before the weekend, she is still left in the cold. Another at that same roundtable told me she had to choose between food and medicine.

A couple of weeks ago, I met a contractor named John, an Afghanistan veteran, who was picking up groceries at the food bank in Arlington because the shutdown wiped out his savings. We had some press, but John didn't want to go on camera. He was a little bit embarrassed that he had to pick up food at the food bank. This is someone who is a veteran. This is someone who continued to serve in terms of protecting the country. Thirty-five days without pay. With the status quo—he will never get those lost earnings back if we don't rectify that this week.

Another contractor named Joseph, who works as a custodian at the Department of the Interior, told me this:

We work just as hard as anyone else. We need our backpay so we can catch up on our bills and survive.

The remarkable thing is, for some of these janitors and custodial workers, on buildings that were open, they had to continue to work and still don't get backpay.

One of the most heartbreaking things was listening to these contractors talk about the shame—the shame of being treated as if their work does not have value. The truth is, these folks take pride in their work because they love their country. That same contractor, Joseph, says he thinks of the building he cleans as the President's house, and he works hard because he wants to make it shine every day. What a disgrace that this government can't even honor his service with back wages so that he can pay his bills and get his personal finances in order.

Many other contractors take pride in their work because it represents their

independence. Over 45,000 disabled Americans work as Federal contractors through the AbilityOne Program. I know this program is very successful in Delaware. The Senator from Delaware will speak on it shortly.

I have met contractors who are double amputees, veterans with PTSD, and folks with physical and intellectual disabilities. They are able to live normal lives and contribute to society because of these Federal contractor jobs. For many of them, these jobs are more than about pay. It is about respect. It is about being valued and part of a community, part of a team at the offices they work in. They suffer more than just about anyone when their lifeline—that source of income, independence, and dignity—is cut off because of a government shutdown.

I will close with something a Federal contractor named Constance told me last week. Even though she and her team of custodians still face tremendous financial hardship, she told me that she remains hopeful. She is hopeful because she and her coworkers are now back to work, and she is hopeful because people in this Chamber are finally starting to listen to folks like her.

I share her hope that the Senate will have the decency and the basic humanity to make sure, one, that we don't close down this government come Friday, and two, that when we come to this deal, we take that moment—and I see colleagues from both sides of the aisle. We have gotten the CBO score. It is scored to make sure the backpay for the contractors, with an emphasis toward low-income contractors, under \$50,000—the cost would be at \$1 billion. That is the CBO score. We ought to make sure that these people's lives—that the work they do is valued.

I hope, as we have this bipartisan deal to avoid the shutdown, that we can also make it right for the folks who oftentimes many of us don't see—who clean the buildings, serve the food, many folks from the disabled community—who rely upon us to do the right thing.

Congress should pass this backpay for Federal contractors legislation. The President should sign it, and if the President doesn't, the Congress should override his veto.

Let's make sure, as we did with Federal workers, that they will always be assured that they will get their backpay. Let's make sure that contractors get that same decency. It is time to do the right thing.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

NOMINATION OF WILLIAM BARR

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I rise today to offer briefly my remarks on the nomination of William Barr to serve as Attorney General of the United States.

This past Thursday, when the Judiciary Committee of the Senate considered him, I was absent, being the co-

chair of the National Prayer Breakfast. I would like to offer my conclusions briefly here on the floor.

I have weighed carefully over several weeks William Barr's nomination to serve as the next Attorney General. Initially, I have to say, I was greatly encouraged that the President nominated a nominee whose service had included leadership roles in the Justice Department, including Attorney General of the United States.

However, I believe my responsibility to assess Mr. Barr's candidacy requires me to consider his entire record, including his recent writings, his statements, and his work, and to focus on his ability to actually meet the test of our current time. Having met with him in person, having questioned him during the Judiciary Committee's confirmation hearing, having reviewed his record, and having reviewed his written answers to questions submitted for the record, I ultimately believe Mr. Barr does not meet this test. I am not confident that he will uphold the Attorney General's critical role in defending the Department of Justice as an institution and in ensuring that the special counsel's investigation proceeds with independence and, by so doing, restores the trust of the American people in the rule of law.

In weighing his nomination, the memo Mr. Barr chose to author in June 2018—and to submit—criticizing the special counsel's investigation into obstruction of justice, I concluded was significant and could not be ignored. Mr. Barr tried to narrow or minimize the import of this memo by saying it was a specific application to a particular statute. The fact remains that his memo is rooted in and embraces an exceptionally broad theory of executive power that could threaten not only the special counsel's investigation but a lot of our current understanding of the scope and reach of Executive power.

When I asked him if he had sent other lengthy, detailed legal memos he had researched and written himself to the Department of Justice as a private citizen, he could only cite that one memo from this year, dealing critically with the special counsel's investigation.

At his nomination hearing in the committee, I sought simple and concrete assurances from Mr. Barr that he would give the special counsel's ongoing investigation the independence and separation from partisan politics it needs and deserves. In some instances I was genuinely encouraged by his answers. I was glad to hear a forceful answer from Mr. Barr that he would not fire the special counsel without cause and would resign rather than do so, if so ordered.

On other issues, however, he failed to give the sort of simple and clear commitment that former Attorney General Elliot Richardson gave at his confirmation hearing before the Senate Judiciary Committee during the period of an

important investigation in the 1970s. Mr. Barr would not commit to following the guidance of career DOJ ethics officials on whether he should recuse himself. He would not commit to deferring to special counsel Mueller's investigative decisions. Finally, he would not commit to making special counsel Mueller's final report public. In essence, Mr. Barr is asking the American people and those of us who represent them to trust him to do the right thing. There are reasons to believe that he will, but there are, as I have laid out briefly, reasons to be gravely concerned that he will not.

Something my predecessor here in the Senate, Senator Joe Biden, expressed in voting to confirm him back in 1991, was his grave concerns about his expansive view of Executive power, but that was a very different time in our history, with a different Court and a different context.

I think we must be clear-eyed about the moment our country faces and the Attorney General's potentially pivotal role in ensuring the integrity of the rule of law and the institutions of our democracy. I believe it is my responsibility in the Senate to protect the special counsel investigation, to ensure that other ongoing Federal investigations are not interfered with because of a narrow or partisan purpose, and to safeguard the rule of law.

If Mr. Barr is confirmed, I hope he will prove me wrong. I hope he will demonstrate to the American people of all parties and backgrounds that he will put the interests of our democracy above the moment and partisan priorities. I hope he will prove to be a terrific, solid, and reliable steward for the ongoing investigation. Special Counsel Mueller is leading into Russian interference in the 2016 election. If so, I will gladly put aside our policy differences to work with him for the good of the American people during this critical time, but I regret I have reached the conclusion that I cannot support his nomination this week.

Thank you, Mr. President.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

BORDER SECURITY

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, on Monday, I was in El Paso, TX, to talk with some of my constituents about the challenges that exist along our south-west border and how we can work together to address them.

It is almost surreal to have people here in Washington, DC, who have never been to the border and whose, perhaps, only supposed knowledge is from novels they have read or movies they have seen. Having spent quite a bit of time along the border of Texas and Mexico, myself, I can tell you it is a unique part of our country and certainly a unique part of my State.

The people you learn the most from are not the elected officials who serve here in Washington but rather from the Border Patrol, the sheriffs, the mayors,

and countless others who live and work along the border. They can provide, I think, the kind of expert knowledge that we need in order to address the challenges that exist.

What they tell me and what I have learned is that there is no one-size-fits-all, because you can look at urban environments, like El Paso, or you can go out to Big Bend, which has thousands-of-feet-high cliffs overlooking the Rio Grande. Obviously, a physical barrier in one place, like in highly trafficked urban areas, is one situation, but putting it atop a 3,000-foot cliff is another. So no one-size-fits-all solution works.

That is why it is important to listen to the stakeholders who live and work in these communities, and this is key to actually doing something with the feedback they provide. What I have constantly been reminded of is that border security is a combination of three parts: physical barriers in some hard-to-control locations, personnel, and technology. What is best for a high-trafficked urban area, as I said, is probably much different than what is good for the vast expanses between the ports of entry. Figuring out what we need or where we need it is not a decision that ought to be micromanaged in Washington. It should come from the experts who know the threats and challenges along every mile of the border.

While I was in El Paso, we also talked—as we must—about the important role the border plays with our economy. Border communities in Texas depend on people and goods moving legally through our ports.

For example, in Laredo, TX, alone, about 14,000 trucks pass each day through the ports of entry. It is one of the largest if not the largest land-based port in the United States. These goods need to move legally through our ports, and any disruption in legitimate international commerce can have a swift impact on these communities.

For the people of El Paso, for example, border security means much more than just safety. It means economic security as well. Just as it is important to keep the bad actors out, it is equally important to promote efficient transit through our ports for legitimate trade and commerce.

On Monday, I also had a chance to reconnect with my friend Mayor Dee Margo, the Mayor of El Paso. Among other things, we talked about the importance of ensuring that in our efforts to create a strong border, we are not neglecting our ports of entry.

In recent months, a number of El Paso Sector Customs officers have been sent to other high-need areas along the U.S.-Mexico border. The personnel shortage has resulted in increased wait times for both pedestrian traffic and commerce. Certainly, fewer CBP agents mean a reduced vigilance in terms of screening out contraband and other things that we don't want coming into the country. The goods moving through the ports in El Paso fuel not just the local economy, as I said, but

also that of the entire State of Texas—and, I would argue, of the Nation. I share the mayor's concerns on the harmful impact these slowdowns at the ports of entry can have.

As we debate the importance of securing our borders to stop the illegal movement of people and goods, we shouldn't neglect the importance of facilitating legal movement through our ports. We need to do both, whether that means providing additional funding for infrastructure improvements or scanning technology to make sure the ports of entry aren't exploited by drugs in vehicles or other places where they are hard to find. In the absence of scanning technology, if we are unable to find them, the cartels win, and the American people lose. We also know that in addition to that technology, we need additional personnel.

I hope my colleagues listen to the feedback that we have all gotten from the experts and these local stakeholders and take seriously the economic impact on our ports of entry as well.

As I said yesterday, I look forward to reviewing the details of the funding agreement struck by the conference committee, and I hope that, in addition to physical barriers where appropriate, it reflects these principles of smart border security, because when we listen to the experts—the law enforcement officials who work along the border and in the communities—that is when we move in the right direction, spending money in a responsible and smart way rather than just pursuing political agendas from Washington.

NOMINATION OF WILLIAM BARR

Mr. President, we are also going to be voting—perhaps today, maybe tomorrow—on the nomination of William Barr to serve as the next Attorney General of the United States. The role of Attorney General is unique in the President's Cabinet because while you are a political appointee of the President, you are also the Nation's chief law enforcement officer and, obviously, are obligated to put your highest loyalty in upholding the rule of law.

I asked Mr. Barr about this unique role during his confirmation hearing. He told me that over the years he has received a number of calls from people who were being considered for appointment to the position of Attorney General. He told them that if they wanted to pursue any political future, they would be crazy to accept the job of Attorney General. He said: "If you take this job, you have to be ready to make decisions and spend all your political capital and have no future because you have to have that freedom of action." He assured me that he is in a position now in his life where he can do what he needs to do without fear of any consequences.

I was glad to hear that because I believe that is the most fundamental quality of an Attorney General. The Department of Justice must be able to operate above the political fray and

prioritize the rule of law above all else, and to do that it needs a strong and principled leader like Bill Barr—particularly, on the heels of Loretta Lynch's and Eric Holder's administrations as Attorneys General of the United States during the Obama term of office, where we know that, unfortunately, politics pervaded the actions not only of the Department of Justice but also the FBI in things ranging from the Hillary Clinton email investigation to the counterintelligence investigation of some of the people associated with the Trump campaign.

Of course, this isn't the only reason he is the right person for the job. We know that he can faithfully execute the duties of the office because he has done it before.

More than two decades ago, President George Herbert Walker Bush recognized the talent in this promising young attorney and nominated him to three increasingly important positions in the Department of Justice. For all three positions, Assistant Attorney General for the Office of Legal Counsel, Deputy Attorney General, and, finally, Attorney General, he was unanimously confirmed by the Senate. I would hope that he would be unanimously confirmed as Attorney General once again, but I have my doubts.

After hearing Mr. Barr speak about his views of the role of Attorney General, I have no question as to why not a single Senator opposed his nomination during those three previous confirmation votes. He spoke of the importance of acting with professionalism and integrity, of ensuring that the character of the Department of Justice is maintained and can withstand even the most trying political times, and of serving with independence, providing no promises or assurances to anyone on anything other than faithfully administering the rule of law.

When Mr. Barr was nominated for Attorney General the first time, then-Judiciary Chairman Joe Biden noted that Mr. Barr, a nominee from the opposing political party, would be a "fine Attorney General." I agree, and I thank Mr. Barr for agreeing to serve, once again, this country in this critical position. I look forward to voting yes on his nomination.

I would just add that I am saddened by the way the politics of the moment—the desire to defeat any legislation or oppose any nominee by this President—has led some of our colleagues across the aisle to oppose this nomination. I don't know whether it is out of fear of the most radical fringe of their political party or by their antipathy for this President, but it is regrettable.

I do believe, however, that Mr. Barr will be confirmed, as he should be, as the next Attorney General of the United States. I look forward to casting a "yes" vote on that nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, once again, I would like to respond to the

Senator from Texas as he continues to hold the position that the Democrats on this side of the aisle simply oppose all of the President's nominees because they happen to be this lying President's nominees. That is not the case at all.

Donald Trump has consistently thought to nominate people to his Cabinet who he believes will do his bidding and protect his interests. Once confirmed, if these Cabinet Secretaries displease him, out they go—Jeff Sessions, Jim Mattis, Rex Tillerson.

The President believes William Barr will be an Attorney General who will protect him. Why does the President believe that? Because William Barr auditioned for this position. How? Mr. Barr wrote a highly unusual and factually unsupported, unsolicited 19-page memo to the Sessions Justice Department, arguing that Special Counsel Robert Mueller should not be permitted to interrogate the President about obstruction of justice. Nobody asked him to weigh in.

He admits he didn't have any facts or inside information, and, in fact, Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein chose not to discuss the matter with him, but Mr. Barr felt compelled not only to put his views in writing and send them to the Department of Justice, but he also made sure the President's lawyers knew his views. His memo sent a clear message to this President that he would protect Donald Trump from the Mueller probe.

Once Donald Trump did nominate him for Attorney General, after having earlier offered him a job as his personal attorney—virtually the same job in Donald Trump's mind—Mr. Barr came to the Judiciary Committee and continued to signal his willingness to shield Trump from scrutiny.

First, he refused to commit to follow the advice of career ethics officials on the question of recusal from the Trump investigations. He didn't want to make the same mistake Jeff Sessions did and open himself up to Presidential humiliation, no matter what the ethics experts recommended.

Second, he refused to commit to make public Special Counsel Mueller's report. In both instances, he said he wanted to keep his options open, leave himself room to make his own decisions, and trust his ultimate judgment.

While these answers were reassuring to the President, they certainly were not to those of us who want an Attorney General independent of a President who does not believe the rule of law applies to him. When asked at his hearing, Mr. Barr should have affirmatively committed to allowing all active investigations to continue until the prosecutors say they are done. That includes the special counsel's investigation, as well as the probes being conducted by, again, at least three U.S. attorney's offices. Instead, he gave his usual equivocal response.

Of course, these are all active investigations having to do with Mr. Trump

and his activities. Barr's position on these investigations is consistent with his views on the unitary Executive. He has long endorsed a view that the President is an all-powerful Executive, restrained by very little, least of all by Congress. This is a very dangerous view for the Attorney General to have, especially at a time when we have a President who attacks and undermines the rule of law.

Mr. Barr's views on the Trump investigations and the unitary Executive aren't the only reason he should not be confirmed as Attorney General. His agreement with this administration's immigration policy also, in my view, disqualifies him. There was no daylight between Donald Trump and Jeff Sessions on immigration. Mr. Barr has given every indication that he will follow the lead of Jeff Sessions and of Matthew Whitaker in aggressively implementing, basically, Stephen Miller's extreme immigration policies.

As George H.W. Bush's Attorney General, Barr played a key role in the Justice Department's policy in the early 1990s of detaining HIV-positive Haitian refugees at Guantanamo Bay. These refugees were held in prison-like living conditions and denied medical treatment until a Federal court ruled that their indefinite detention was illegal.

More recently, in November 2018, Mr. Barr cowrote an op-ed with the title "We Salute Jeff Sessions," full of praise for Sessions' tenure at DOJ, including on immigration. Mr. Barr praised Sessions for "attack[ing] the rampant illegality that riddled our immigration system, breaking the record for prosecution of illegal-entry cases," and increasing prosecution of "immigrants who reentered the country illegally" by 38 percent.

These statements are deeply concerning because as Attorney General, Mr. Sessions implemented policies that are abhorrent and in direct opposition to American values.

Sessions instituted the zero-tolerance policy—a stain on our Nation that resulted in thousands of children being separated from their families, many of whom may never be reunited. This country, under Jeff Sessions, made instant orphans out of thousands of children. That is hardly a value that I think any of us can support.

At his hearing, Mr. Barr also embraced key aspects of the Trump-Miller immigration agenda, including endorsing Donald Trump's vanity wall; attacking cities that refused to undermine their own anti-crime efforts by cooperating with the Federal Government's draconian policies; agreeing with the Trump administration's atrocious treatment of legal asylum seekers; joining President Trump in criticizing judges for blocking the President's Muslim travel ban; and astoundingly, refusing to say whether birthright citizenship is guaranteed by the Constitution, telling me, when I asked him this, that he hadn't "looked at that legally." What is there to look at?

The Fourteenth Amendment plainly states that all persons “born or naturalized in the United States . . . are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside.” Nullifying birthright citizenship would violate the Constitution and impact millions, but it is certainly something the President wants done.

Mr. Barr’s record and position on some of DOJ’s other important responsibilities, such as enforcing civil rights laws, defending laws enacted by Congress, and protecting established constitutional rights, are unacceptable to me in the Nation’s top law enforcement officer.

Some examples include: Mr. Barr’s refusal to admit that voter fraud is incredibly rare and his focusing on so-called voter fraud problems rather than voter suppression problems. States are very busy continuing to pass laws that should be attacked as a silly veiled effort at voter suppression, but that is not where Mr. Barr is; his stand that LGBTQ people are not protected from employment discrimination under Federal civil rights laws, contrary to what the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and two Federal courts have held; his personal involvement in two challenges to major premises of the Affordable Care Act; his record of belief that *Roe v. Wade* was wrongly decided, including his statement that this landmark Supreme Court case guaranteeing a woman’s right to choose, as he put it, was a “secularist” effort to “eliminate laws that reflect traditional norms.” At a time when the newest Trump-appointed Justices on the Supreme Court have demonstrated a hostility toward a woman’s constitutional right to an abortion, such an anti-choice Attorney General is a danger to women.

In some of his academic writings, William Barr expressed his dismay at the moral decay of American society, but when I asked him at his hearing, he testified that he didn’t have any problems with a President who lies every single day and has undermined so many of America’s most important institutions such as the FBI, the Justice Department, and the intelligence community.

An Attorney General is a member of the President’s Cabinet and is entitled to enforce the administration’s policies, but in this instance, the policies this President pursues are often pushed beyond the constitutional breaking point and just as often are plain cruel; i.e., the separation of children from their parents at the border, making them instant orphans.

The Attorney General’s independence is critical in normal times, but it is absolutely essential in these times that are anything but normal that his independence cannot be questioned. Sadly, I cannot say that.

I cannot support William Barr’s nomination. I urge my colleagues to vote against his confirmation.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. DURBIN. What is the pending business before the Senate?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Barr nomination is pending before the Senate.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I rise to speak about the nomination of William Barr to be the next Attorney General of the United States.

Mr. Barr has an admirable record of public service in his career. He has dramatically more qualifications and experience than many of his predecessors and, certainly, the Acting Attorney General. We can see he brings more experience to the job.

I respect Mr. Barr and his family. I have told him as much to his face. He has a wonderful family, and he brought them with him to the hearing, and many of them have chosen public service careers, as he has.

I carefully reviewed his record, trying to consider him in not only the context of this awesome responsibility of being Attorney General, but at this awesome moment in history.

When it comes to the ongoing investigation of President Trump’s campaign by Robert Mueller, I fear that Mr. Barr has said and done things that raise questions about his objectivity. He has clearly indicated to President Donald Trump and to all of us how he would oversee this investigation if he is confirmed. Just look at the unsolicited—unsolicited—19-page memo that William Barr sent to Special Counsel Mueller’s supervisors and to the Trump legal defense team just in June of 2018.

It is notable that Mr. Barr did not send this memo to Special Counsel Mueller himself, and he did not make it public.

This was the only time Mr. Barr had sent a memo like this to the Justice Department, and he did not disclose in his memo that he had personally interviewed with the President the previous year about serving on the President’s defense team.

This memo is critical for its substance. In it, Mr. Barr argued that Bob Mueller, the investigator, the special counsel, should not be permitted to ask the President any questions about obstruction of justice, even though Mr. Barr’s analysis focused only on one narrow obstruction theory.

The memo calls into serious question Mr. Barr’s ability to impartially oversee the obstruction of justice issues in the Mueller investigation at a moment in history when that is an essential question. Mr. Barr has made no commitment to recuse himself from such questions. That is worrisome.

That William Barr would volunteer a 19-page legal memo with dramatic efforts at research and verification, give this to the President’s defense team and to Mr. Mueller’s supervisors at the Department of Justice, and basically make arguments diminishing the authority of the special counsel to move forward in the investigation raises a serious question about his impartiality.

Just as important, I am alarmed by Mr. Barr’s continued hedging about what he will do when Mr. Mueller completes his investigation and has a presentation of his conclusions, his evidence, and his findings.

Make no mistake. Special Counsel Mueller’s findings and conclusions should be shared with the American people and with the U.S. Congress. Current Department of Justice regulations and policies allow for such a release. I am concerned that Mr. Barr will exercise his discretion under those regulations narrowly and issue a cursory report that does not take the findings of the Mueller investigation in their entirety and make them available to the American people. This investigation is too critical to seal its result in some vault at the Department of Justice.

I believe we can trust Bob Mueller to be impartial and unbiased. I don’t know if he will find the President or people around him guilty of wrongdoing beyond the indictments and convictions that have already come down or whether he will conclude that there is no further responsibility or culpability, but I trust his findings, whatever they are. He is a true professional.

It is important, after we have gone through a year or two of investigation, that the American people hear the details, hear the information that may be part of the Mueller investigation.

I am also concerned that Mr. Barr will continue his predecessor’s harsh approach on immigration instead of charting a different course.

It was just last year, I believe in April in 2018, when the Attorney General Jeff Sessions announced something called the zero-tolerance policy.

Do you remember it?

The zero-tolerance policy said that the U.S. Government would forcibly remove infants, toddlers, and children from their parents at our border.

The inspector general’s reports say that it had been going on for a year before it was publicly announced.

Twenty-eight hundred children were removed from their parents. What happened to them next is shameful. There was no effort made to trace these children and the parents who were forced to give them up.

It was only when a Federal judge in San Diego stepped forward and required the Department of Homeland Security and Department of Health and Human Services to make an accounting of how many children were still not united with their parents that they took the effort to do so months—months—after those children had been separated from their parents.

I saw those kids in an immigration court in Chicago in a large office building that you would never guess was a court building in the Loop in Chicago. There it was, the immigration court taking up most of one floor in this office building. People were stacked three and four deep in the corridors, waiting for their hearing. But the judge—and she was a good person, a real professional—couldn't get her hearing underway. She had a problem with those who were appearing before her court that day. The problem was this: She had said that before they could start the proceeding, those who were appearing had to sit down. One of the clients who was in there for a hearing that day had some difficulty. I was there to witness it. The difficulty was she was 2 years old. She wasn't tall enough to crawl up in that chair without somebody lifting her.

The other client who had a hearing that day, who had been removed under this zero-tolerance policy, was a little more skillful. He spotted a Matchbox car on the top of the table, and this 4-year-old boy got up in the chair to play with it.

Those were two of the clients before this immigration judge in this office building in the Loop in Chicago. They had been forcibly removed from their parents, and they were up for a hearing. It was in August.

As a result of the hearing, as with most of the hearings, they said: We are going to postpone this until we get further evidence. The next hearing will be in December—December.

I would ask any parent, any grandparent: What would you think about being separated from that little girl, that 2-year-old girl, whom you love so much, for 6 months, 8 months, 9 months?

That was the policy of this Trump administration with zero tolerance—a policy created and announced by Attorney General Jeff Sessions.

So when I asked Mr. Barr: You are going to take over this job. What is your view on this type of policy? Sadly, I didn't get a direct answer.

I am concerned that in many respects Mr. Barr could continue the harsh approach to immigration that we have seen by the Trump administration instead of charting a different course, a course more consistent with America's values and history.

We are in fact a nation of immigrants. Throughout American history, immigration has strengthened and renewed our country. I stand here today, the son of an immigrant girl who came to this country from Lithuania at the age of 2. Her son grew up and got a full-time government job right here in the Senate. It can happen. It is my story. It is my family's story. It is America's story.

When I listened to the diatribes by this President in the State of the Union Address about immigrants coming to this country—of course there are bad people. We don't want any of them

in this country, and if they are here, we want them to leave. But think of all of the good people who have come to this country and made America what it is today. The President dismisses those folks, doesn't take them as seriously as he should, as far as I am concerned.

I want to know if this Attorney General, Mr. Barr, subscribes to the President's theories on immigration. For the past 2 years, President Trump and Attorney General Jeff Sessions did everything in their power to make America's immigration policy harsh and unwelcoming.

Mr. Barr's comments and history make me fear that he will bring the full weight of the Justice Department to advance the President's anti-immigration agenda. Mr. Barr has refused to disavow the cruel and un-American zero-tolerance policy, which I just described, that led to thousands of children being forcibly removed from their parents, and he has fully and repeatedly echoed President Trump's call for a border wall after the debate we have been through over the last several months, falsely arguing that it will help to combat the opioid epidemic. That is a ludicrous argument. In fact, the Drug Enforcement Administration, which Mr. Barr would supervise, has found that the vast majority of deadly narcotics coming into America through the Mexican border are coming in through ports of entry. They are not being carried in backpacks by people scaling fences. That is where our security efforts should be made, not with some medieval wall.

Mr. Barr also falsely and repeatedly was critical of our asylum laws for a host of problems. Our asylum laws, which have historically had broad bipartisan support until this President came along, simply ensure that we honor our legal and moral obligation to provide safe haven to families and children who are fleeing persecution.

Who are these families seeking asylum and refugee status in the United States? You can find members of those families right here on the floor of the United States Senate. You can find three Cuban-American U.S. Senators—one Democrat and two Republicans—whose families came here as refugees from Castro's Cuba. Are we having second thoughts now about whether they are a valuable part of America? I am not. These people, these Cuban-Americans, have become an integral part of our Nation. They were once refugees and asylees. Now, they are party of America's future, and we are better off for it.

I could tell that story so many different ways. Soviet Jews trying to escape persecution in the old Soviet Union and the Vietnamese who stood by us and fought by our men and women in uniform during the Vietnam war, who had to escape an oppressive regime, came to the United States as refugees and asylees. We are now seeing under President Trump the lowest level of refugees in modern memory.

We are walking away from our obligation to the world.

And Mr. Barr called for withholding of Federal funds to force cities to cooperate with the Trump administration's immigration agenda, even though courts have repeatedly struck down that approach.

Perhaps most troubling is Mr. Barr's comment to me that he thinks it is absolutely appropriate for the Attorney General to change the immigration rules to help advance a President's campaign. He said he did it to help the campaign of President Bush in 1992. The idea of an Attorney General letting campaign politics drive immigration enforcement is unacceptable regardless of the President.

I am also concerned with the views Mr. Barr expressed on something known as the unitary executive theory and his expansive view of Presidential power. He put it bluntly in that 19-page memo I mentioned before, when he said the President alone is the executive branch. We need an Attorney General who recognizes the need for checks and balances, but he did not believe that this President should be held accountable for many of the actions he has taken. I may be naive, but I don't believe any American is above the law, including the President of the United States.

This is not an ordinary time in the history of the Justice Department. President Trump has criticized the Judiciary, individual Federal judges, our intelligence Agencies, and the Department of Justice when they continued an investigation into his campaign. He has undermined their independence and integrity with his storm of tweets every single day.

William Barr said he sees the Attorney General as "the President's lawyer"—in his words—but the chief law enforcement officer of the United States is supposed to be the lawyer for the people of the United States. We need an Attorney General who will lead the Justice Department without fear or favor and who will serve the Constitution of the American people even if it means standing up to a President.

If he is confirmed, I hope Mr. Barr will prove me wrong and that he will be a good Attorney General who came at the right moment in history, but I have not received the reassurances I was looking for from him to give him a vote to reach that position. I will be voting no on the Barr nomination.

I see my colleague and friend Senator LEAHY on the floor. I will withhold two other statements for the RECORD to yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I applaud the Senator from Illinois, the senior Senator from Illinois, for his comments. He knows what it is to have immigrants in your family, as do I. I was fortunate to have a little more understanding as my paternal grandparents immigrated to Vermont from Italy,

and my wife's parents immigrated to Vermont from French-speaking Canada. I still struggle with the Italian I knew as a child. I have done a little better with French, in order to speak to Marcelle's family. But I see the diversity that came of it. I see it in our State of Vermont, and I hope our country is better for it. So I thank the Senator from Illinois.

The last time William Barr was before the Senate was 28 years ago, during the George H.W. Bush administration, and I voted for him to be Attorney General. I did so despite having some reservations that I shared with him and the Senate at the time. Mr. Barr and I did not see eye to eye on many issues. We did not then, and we do not now. But he was clearly qualified for the position, and he had earned the confidence of the Senate. So I felt free to vote for him.

I am concerned by some of the remarks that Senator DURBIN has referred to which seem to indicate that Mr. Barr may feel that he is the lawyer for the President, not only the Attorney General of the United States. He is there to represent everybody—everybody—and to make sure the laws are upheld for everybody.

Now we find ourselves considering his nomination under extraordinarily different circumstances than we did when my friend President Bush had nominated him. Multiple criminal investigations loom over the Trump Presidency. In fact, these investigations may ultimately define the Trump Presidency, and the President has reacted to it with apparently the only way he knows how. He just attacks relentlessly. He doesn't respond to them, but attacks. That includes attacking investigators, witnesses, even the justice system itself. That also includes firing both the FBI Director and his previous Attorney General for not handling one of the investigations as the President wanted, but instead as the law required.

The President views the Justice Department as an extension of his power. He has repeatedly called on it to target his political opponents. He has even reportedly told his advisers that he expects the Attorney General to protect him personally. I have been here with eight Presidents. I have never known a President, either Republican or Democrat, to have such an outrageous and wrong—wrong—view of the Department of Justice.

The integrity of the Justice Department has not been so tested since the dark days of Watergate. Yet when the Judiciary Committee considered the nomination of Elliot Richardson to be Attorney General in the midst of that national crisis, nominated by Richard Nixon, the nominee made numerous, detailed commitments to the committee. Mr. Richardson did so, in his words, to "create the maximum possible degree of public confidence in the integrity of the process." That same principle applies equally today.

Indeed, that may be the only way the Justice Department escapes the Trump administration with its integrity intact. In large part due to the relentless politicizing of the Department by the President, millions of Americans will see bias no matter which way the Department resolves the Russia investigation. Because of seeing such bias, our country is diminished. The justice system is greatly diminished. In my view, the Department has only one way out—transparency. The American people deserve to know the facts, whatever they may be. That requires the special counsel's report, and the evidence that supports it, be made public.

Unfortunately, despite efforts from both Republicans and Democrats in the Senate, Mr. Barr has repeatedly refused to make that commitment. Worse, much of his testimony before the Judiciary Committee left us with more doubts. Will Mr. Barr allow President Trump to make a sweeping, unprecedented claim of Executive privilege that allows him to hide the report? Will Mr. Barr, relying on a Department policy to avoid disparaging uncharged parties, not disclose potential misconduct by the President simply due to another policy to not indict sitting Presidents? We don't know the answer, but we do know that Mr. Barr's testimony on these issues could lay the groundwork for potentially no transparency at all.

Mr. Barr also repeatedly refused to follow the precedent of Attorney General Jeff Sessions and commit to follow the advice of career ethics officials on whether he needs to recuse himself from the Russia investigation. He even declined my request to commit to simply sharing their recommendation with the Judiciary Committee. That is critical because there is reason to question whether an appearance of a conflict exists.

Prior to his nomination, Mr. Barr made his unorthodox views on the special counsel's obstruction of justice investigation very clear. He did that with a 19-page memo sent directly to the President's lawyers. Mr. Barr spoke dismissively about the broader Russia investigation. He even claimed that a conspiracy theory involving Hillary Clinton was far more deserving of a Federal investigation than possible collusion, and this was notwithstanding the fact that, by that time, that conspiracy had been debunked. He was asked, in effect, whether this memo was a job application, because it is difficult to imagine that these views escaped the attention of the President. That makes it all the more critical that Mr. Barr follow the precedent of prior Attorneys General and commit to following the advice of career ethics officials on recusal.

I am also concerned that, if confirmed, Mr. Barr would defend policies that I believe are both ineffective and inhumane. We heard Senator DURBIN speak eloquently about the horrible, horrible program of separating families

at the border, and I think the Nation is still reeling from that systematic separation. But, in light of that, Mr. Barr praised Jeff Sessions for "breaking the record for prosecution" of the misdemeanor offenses that forced families to be separated. In other words, on a misdemeanor, you take the child away from the parents and separate them. Nobody seems to know where everybody goes after that.

Ask a 4-year-old: What are your parents' name? They will say, in whatever language: Mommy and daddy.

Where do you live?

We live in the house next to so-and-so.

They don't know the addresses. They rely on their parents, and now they have been separated from them.

It makes me think Attorneys General should be able to stand up for the rule of law. I remember a time when former Acting Attorney General Sally Yates stood up for the rule of law. She refused to defend President Trump's first iteration of his Muslim ban as a deeply flawed order. It was stained with racial animus, that even applied to individuals who were lawful permanent residents and had valid visas. Mr. Barr described Ms. Yates's decision as "obstruction" and a "serious abuse of office."

My God, this country should not have religious tests. If we did, my grandparents would not have been able to come to this country.

Relevant to each of my concerns is Mr. Barr's extremely broad views of executive power. He is an advocate of the unitary executive theory, believing that the Constitution vests nearly all executive power "in one and one only person—the President." He has said that an Attorney General has "no authority and no conceivable justification for directing the department's lawyers not to advocate the president's position in court." This expansive view of a President's power would concern me no matter whose administration it was. In fact, if you go way back in history, it conflicts with Supreme Court Justice James Iredell's observation in 1792 that the Attorney General "is not called the Attorney General of the President, but Attorney General of the United States."

I find Mr. Barr's deferential view of Executive power especially concerning. We already know much of what President Trump intends to do. It includes taking billions of dollars that Congress has already appropriated and diverting it toward a wasteful and ineffective vanity wall. What would Mr. Barr do when confronted with such an order? He has essentially told us: Mr. Barr has argued that Congress's appropriations power provided under Article I, Section 9 of the Constitution is "not an independent source of congressional power" to "control the allocation of government resources." That would come as great news to everybody—Republicans and Democrats—who has been an appropriator in any session of Congress.

He even believes, that if a President “finds no appropriated funds within a given category” but can find such money “in another category,” he can spend those funds as he wishes so long as the spending is within his broad “constitutional purview.” Such views should concern all of us here—Republicans and Democrats alike—who believe, as the Founders of this country believed, that Congress possesses the power of the purse.

Unfortunately, I fear that Mr. Barr’s long-held views on Executive power would essentially be weaponized by President Trump—a man who we know derides any limits on his authority. Over the past two years, we have seen the erosion of our institutional checks and balances in the face of creeping authoritarianism. That can’t continue.

In conclusion, let me be clear. I respect Mr. Barr. I voted for him when President George H. W. Bush nominated him. As Attorney General, I do not doubt that he would stand faithfully by his genuinely held convictions, but I fear this particular administration needs somebody who would give him a much tighter leash, as Attorneys General have in the past. So because of that, I will vote no on Mr. Barr’s nomination.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, while Senator LEAHY is still on the floor, I want to thank him for his extraordinary work on the conference committee to try to resolve our budget impasse. I know he has been working night and day. He has shared with many of us the work he has been doing on behalf of getting a budget that reflects the will of this body and of the House, and hopefully it will be completed before midnight on Friday.

So I want to personally thank the distinguished Senator, the senior Senator from Vermont, Mr. LEAHY, for the work he has done to keep the government open, to provide security for our borders, and to make sure we get all of our appropriations bills done.

Mr. LEAHY. Thank you.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to proceed as in morning business.

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

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, 54 years ago, 600 nonviolent protesters set off to march from Selma to Montgomery, AL, to protest the disenfranchisement of Black voters in the South.

They got as far as the Edmund Pettus Bridge when they saw police officers lined up on the other end, waiting with tear gas, clubs, and dogs. The iconic bridge stood between the police and protesters like a physical barrier between hope and violence, democracy and second-class citizenship.

Although the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments—which cemented into law the freedom, citizenship, and vot-

ing rights of Black Americans—passed nearly 100 years earlier across the country, literacy tests, poll taxes, violence, and intimidation stood in the way of this constitutional promise. This was especially true in Alabama.

According to the 1961 Civil Rights Commission report, at the time of the famous protests, fewer than 10 percent of the voting-age Black population was registered in Alabama’s Montgomery County. This infamous march from Selma was intended to right the wrong and to shine light on the injustice of all the many laws that kept voting from being accessible to Black Americans.

For months leading up to it, a community of activists—led by Martin Luther King, Jr., and of course our esteemed colleague Representative JOHN LEWIS—carried out voting registration drives and nonviolent demonstrations, all against the resistance of the local government and members of the Ku Klux Klan. These efforts laid the groundwork for the march from Selma, which ended with Alabama State troopers attacking the protesters.

The images of the State-sponsored violence were shown across the country, galvanizing the American public in favor of voting rights in a day that has since become known as Bloody Sunday.

Five months later, on August 6, 1965, the Voting Rights Act was signed into law. The bill is one of the crowning victories of the civil rights movement and for our American democracy.

This monumental legislation outlawed the malicious barriers to the polls and held States accountable for the discriminatory obstacles imposed on citizens who sought to fulfill their constitutional right. It opened doors for Black citizens across the South to register, to cast a vote, or to run for office in higher numbers than ever before.

As we celebrate this February as Black History Month, we must remember that Black history is American history. We must remember that too often in our Nation’s past, the work to create a more perfect Union has fallen upon the shoulders of Americans whose full rights of citizenship were discounted simply because of the color of their skin. The right to vote is a fundamental American tenet. Yet it has historically been denied to men and women of color.

We must remember that when we tell stories of those who fought and struggled to secure voting rights in our Nation’s past, it is because their stories serve as a precursor to our own.

Today voting rights are still under attack. Many who survived the brutal attack on Bloody Sunday and lived to see the passage of the Voting Rights Act have also lived to see the same monumental bill weakened by the 2013 Shelby County Supreme Court decision.

They have watched our President and Republican legislators tout myths of voter fraud to justify strict voter ID

laws, partisan gerrymandering, and limited access to voting information. These efforts undoubtedly disadvantage Black Americans more than most and put a scourge on the system that defines our democracy. It is an insult to those who were robbed of their freedom and oftentimes their lives to create a more equal future.

One such example of modern voter disenfranchisement can be found in the fact that the United States denies voting rights to citizens with felony convictions. We are one of the exceedingly few Western democracies that permanently strip citizens of their right to vote as a punishment for their crimes.

Let’s be clear. We are not talking about voting rights for felons currently incarcerated; we are talking about voting rights for those who have served their time and have since been released, attained jobs, raised a family, paid taxes, and moved on with their lives. Under the current law in 34 States, these individuals are still denied the right to vote, and that is simply unfair and undemocratic.

Black History Month demands that we bring this injustice to light because felony disenfranchisement disproportionately affects men and women of color. One out of thirteen Black Americans is currently unable to vote because of a prior conviction for which they have already served time—a rate that is more than four times greater than the non-Black Americans.

Right now, in total, more than 2 million Americans are unable to vote because of prior convictions, despite having already served their time and paying their debt to society. That is why this year I will again be introducing the Democracy Restoration Act, a bill that would restore voting rights to individuals after they have been released and returned to their community.

I am committed to seeing this legislation passed. My hope is that Black History Month inspires all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join me.

We must also combat efforts to intimidate and disenfranchise voters. That is why last year I introduced legislation that would prohibit and penalize knowingly spreading misinformation, such as incorrect polling locations, times, or the necessary forms of identification. This Deceptive Practices and Voter Intimidation Act will prohibit and penalize intentionally and knowingly spreading misinformation to voters that is intended to suppress the vote, including the time and place of an election and restrictions on voter eligibility.

Reliably, these tactics always seem to target minority neighborhoods and are blatant attempts to reduce turnout. Such tactics undermine and corrode our very democracy and threaten the integrity of our electoral system.

In Stacey Abrams’ response to the State of the Union last week, she said that “the foundation of our moral leadership around the globe is free and fair

elections, where voters pick their leaders—not where politicians pick their voters.” This is precisely why I have chosen to speak out about voting rights this month—because this issue defines our moral and democratic character as a nation and because it is an area where we still have so much work left to do.

Casting a vote is one of the most basic and fundamental freedoms in any democracy, and Congress has the responsibility to ensure the right is protected.

Congress has the responsibility to remove barriers to voting and make it easier for people to register to vote, cast their vote, and make sure their votes are counted. No one can appreciate the need for us to meet this responsibility better than Black Americans whose collective story is one of triumph over racist laws and undemocratic norms.

On Black History Month, Congress must vow to follow their example and work together across party lines to make voting easier, fairer, and more accessible to all.

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.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ROMNEY). The Senator from Minnesota.

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

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

NOMINATION OF WILLIAM BARR

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I want to join my colleagues today in making some brief remarks on William Barr’s nomination to serve as Attorney General of the United States.

I had the opportunity to meet with Mr. Barr one-on-one in my office. We had a very good meeting, and we talked in some detail about securing our elections from foreign interference, something that is a major priority of mine, and we really are close in passing a bipartisan bill, which Senator LANKFORD and I have, called the Secure Elections Act. We just need a little help and support from the administration.

We also talked about modernizing our antitrust enforcement to fit the challenges that we have today and to make our laws as sophisticated as the trillion-dollar companies we are now seeing and the mergers we are seeing all across the United States. So we had a good discussion about that.

We also talked about his family and working in the Justice Department. During the hearing, I gave an opportunity for him to talk to those workers who were, through no fault of their own, furloughed or not getting paid, and he clearly showed respect for the people in the Justice Department. I appreciate all of that. I think that is important to have in an Attorney General.

But I have some serious concerns about this nominee. I had already announced I was opposing him during our Judiciary Committee vote, but I have some serious concerns when you look at the context in which he has come before us.

His nomination comes at a time when there are investigations by a special counsel and multiple U.S. attorney’s offices in New York into campaign finance violations and an attempt, as we know, by a foreign adversary to interfere in our elections. This special counsel’s investigation has led to indictments or guilty pleas from over 30 people and three companies, including seven former advisers to the President.

These investigations, as we know, go to the heart of the integrity of our elections, our government, and our institutions, and it is why it is essential, first of all, that Special Counsel Mueller and the U.S. attorney’s offices be allowed to finish their work free of political interference.

The President, as we know, has made past statements and sent out tweets about Attorney General Sessions: I am critical of him for allowing these investigations to go forward. This is the context we are in. He has made it very clear as to what he is looking for in an Attorney General. He wants someone who will be his lawyer. He wants someone to use the Justice Department, in a way, to protect him.

I think this should worry us because, yes, the Attorney General works for the President, but, more importantly, who the Attorney General really works for are the people, the people of the United States.

The Attorney General of the United States is the people’s lawyer and pledges to uphold the rule of law and apply the law equally no matter who you are.

Mr. Barr has made clear, one, that he respects Mr. Mueller, which I truly appreciate. He said that both in my private meeting and on the record at the hearing. But he has also said that he intends to take over supervision of the special counsel’s investigation.

He wouldn’t commit, at his nomination hearing—despite having written that 19-page memo, he wouldn’t commit to following the advice of career ethics lawyers at the Department about whether he should be recused.

Why did that concern me? Well, because he had actually commended the Deputy Attorney General for following those rules, and he had commended Senator and then-Attorney General Sessions for following these rules. So that concerns me.

We know that if he is confirmed, he will be in a position to oversee the special counsel’s budget, the scope of the investigation, and he will, ultimately—and this is key—receive the results of investigation under law.

He will get to decide whether the results are released to the public or, perhaps, as he suggested during the hear-

ing, are not released at all, and that is in addition to those related investigations he will oversee. These U.S. Attorney’s investigations don’t have the special counsel regulations to protect them, so he is in direct line to oversee those.

Even though many of my colleagues asked him to pledge to make Special Counsel Mueller’s report public, he wouldn’t commit to do so. He always had a way to kind of dodge a commitment to do so, instead of, in my mind, making a full-throated endorsement of releasing that report.

If he is confirmed, he will also have room to make his own interpretation of what the law allows. In fact, as Attorney General, he can make the Department’s rules and regulations and issue guidance that would make the difference between transparency and obscurity. That is why we have to look at his judgment on this particular issue.

Maybe if we were in a different time, in a different moment, we would be talking about things like the opioid epidemic and what the Attorney General is doing, which is very important, and I know he does care about that; or we would be devoting our moment, which I wish we could be doing, to anti-trust and upgrading the way those laws are enforced and what we should do; or we would be talking, which we should be doing, about the SECOND STEP Act and not just the FIRST STEP Act.

All of those questions were asked in the hearing—immigration reform, very important issues—but we are where we are. We are where we are, and we have to look at his judgment to see what kind of Attorney General he would be at this time with respect to law and order, which, to me, right now, is not just about law and order in our communities—very important—but it is also about law and order when it comes to our entire justice system.

Like many of the nominees from the President, Mr. Barr has demonstrated, just as Justice Kavanaugh did, just as Justice Gorsuch did, an expansive view—an unprecedentedly expansive view of Presidential power. We don’t have to look far to see how those views would impact the special counsel’s investigation.

Just a few months before he was nominated as a private citizen—I don’t have many constituents who would do this, but, for some reason, Mr. Barr decided to send in this 19-page memo as a private citizen. It was no ordinary memo. This memo was 19 pages, single-spaced, and addressed to the leadership of the Justice Department, but it was sent to all of these people—conservative activists and all kinds of people all over the place, the lawyers at the White House Counsel’s office, and the President’s personal lawyers. I don’t think my constituents would really have their addresses or emails, but it was sent to all of these people.

It argued that a portion of the special counsel’s obstruction of justice inquiry was “fatally misconceived.” He

said that it was based on a legally insupportable reading of the law.

Now, that makes you pause. How can we be sure, how can we think he can impartially evaluate the special counsel's investigation if, before he has even seen its result, he writes extensively that part of it, not all of it, was legally insupportable and fatally misconceived?

It is not just those statements that are troubling. He goes on to state, not for the first time, his alarming views about the President's powers. Here is one of them: "[T]he President's law enforcement powers extend to all matters, including those in which he had a personal stake."

Mr. Barr doesn't cite laws or cases from the Supreme Court or the history of our Nation's founding or even the Federalist Papers when making his claims. He just says it as if it is obvious.

Let me be clear about what he means by this. Mr. Barr believes that a President gets to supervise an investigation into his or her own conduct. As a former prosecutor, I know that it is a fundamental value in our country that no one—no one—is above the law, and it is a fundamental principle in our legal system that no one should be a judge in their own case, not even the President of the United States.

I also have grave doubts about Mr. Barr's respect for Congress, a coequal branch of government, and our duty to provide oversight of the executive branch.

Mr. Barr is a proponent of the unitary executive theory, which is the idea that the President has expansive powers, even in the face of Congress's constitutional duties. His writings on the topic raise serious questions about how Mr. Barr will approach congressional oversight of the administration.

I am concerned that Mr. Barr will rely on the broad interpretation of Executive power to support the White House's reported efforts to exert Executive privilege to prevent the release of the special counsel report, its findings, or its conclusions.

If that happens, Congress must be ready to assert our responsibility to make sure the public and, especially, State election officials who are working to secure our elections have the facts about what happened.

How are we going to fix this in the next election if we don't know what happened? How are we going to have accountability for our government if the public is shut out in viewing what happened?

This is not the time to install an Attorney General who has repeatedly espoused a view of unfettered Executive power. Congress cannot abdicate its responsibilities or shirk its duties—not when it comes to national security, foreign relations, the budget, or, as is key today, oversight into law and order.

A few years ago, I went to Atlanta to make a speech, and, of course, I took a

little trip over to the Carter Presidential Library. Of course, I wanted to see this library—I had never seen it—to learn more about President Carter, but as a Minnesotan, I really wanted to look for all the Mondale memorabilia. I may have been the only one there looking for Joan's dress and other things related to the Mondale half of the Carter-Mondale team.

One of the things I noticed that to me was most prominent was a quote of Walter Mondale's etched on the wall. At the time, I liked it. I thought it was simple. I wrote it down, and I put it in my purse. But I never knew how relevant it would be today. The quote came from Mondale's reflections on his service with President Carter after they had lost their reelection but had served their country for 4 years. He said:

We told the truth. We obeyed the law. We kept the peace.

I believe that is the minimum standard we should expect of any administration. We told the truth. We obeyed the law. We kept the peace. Every President faces great challenges, many of which are unforeseen and require difficult decisions, but at the minimum, an administration should tell the truth, obey the law, and do all they can to keep the peace.

That is where I will end. What concerns me about this nominee is not the vast experience he has or the work he would do on a few of the things that I mentioned; it is his views on Executive power, his views on Congress's power to be a check and balance to the Executive, his views on what the Executive can do right as we face this crucial time in history, when coming right at us is this major report from the special counsel. I want someone who will make sure that whoever is in the White House obeys the law and tells the truth.

Sadly, I cannot support this nominee. I do hope that I am wrong in some of my conclusions based on what I have read and heard. I would like nothing more.

I appreciate so much the work of Rod Rosenstein as Deputy Attorney General and many of the other people in the Justice Department who have worked with him to allow this investigation to continue. I hope that will be the case if this nominee does go through this Chamber, that he will do the same.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

S. 429

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, cyber attacks are one of the greatest threats to our national security today. As our world becomes increasingly connected, bad actors are trying to infiltrate our most critical networks, from our military systems and our electrical grid to our financial institutions and our small businesses.

We face a rising number of cyber attacks that have the potential to expose

our sensitive, personal information or disrupt nearly every aspect of our lives. These cyber security vulnerabilities cut across every industry. Whether you are a small business trying to protect your customers' credit card details, a doctor's office with private medical insurance information, or even a sophisticated tech startup that needs to safeguard your customers' passwords, cyber security protections are absolutely vital to your success.

We have seen the dangerous consequences of attacks that exposed the private data of millions of Americans—from companies like Equifax and Target to Federal Agencies like the Office of Personnel Management and the IRS. Government Agencies of all sizes are at risk of a breach that could jeopardize the sensitive information they are trusted with, and these threats will only continue to grow.

We need a skilled cyber workforce of professionals to shore up our cyber protections, fortify our legacy systems, and build new and innovative infrastructure with safety and security in mind. Despite the glaring need for more cyber security professionals, we face a serious shortage of highly trained cyber experts to fill these positions. Estimates indicate there is a global shortage of approximately 3 million desperately needed cyber security professionals, including nearly half a million in North America, where government and the private sector are competing to hire the best talent.

The Federal Government faces serious challenges in this competition. Agencies often cannot offer the same top salaries and benefits that Silicon Valley uses to entice and to retain employees. Our cyber workforce is on the frontlines of every aspect of our digital security, and we need policies that address that reality and sustain and grow our ranks.

While thousands of dedicated public servants choose to work in government because they are motivated by the mission of serving our country, there is more we can do to grow the pool of cyber workers and recruit them to government service. Congress has made strides in recent years to improve incentives and attract skilled cyber professionals to join the ranks.

Moving forward, we can make cyber positions in government more attractive by providing cyber professionals with unique opportunities to enhance their careers while they help protect our country's security. That is why I introduced the Federal Rotational Cyber Workforce Program Act with Senator HOEVEN. Our bipartisan legislation helps the Federal Government develop an integrated cyber security workforce that retains high-skilled employees by establishing a civilian personnel rotation program specifically for cyber professionals. It is based on similar joint duty programs for the military services and the intelligence community.

The Rotational Cyber Workforce Program will provide civilian employees in

cyber roles opportunities to enhance their careers, broaden their professional experience, and foster collaborative networks by experiencing and contributing to the cyber mission beyond their home Agencies. By offering these kinds of dynamic and rewarding opportunities, this legislation will help retain highly talented cyber professionals and strengthen our government's security by developing greater interagency awareness and collaboration.

I am pleased that this morning the Homeland Security and Government Affairs Committee unanimously approved this legislation. It moves us closer to closing the cyber security workforce gap.

In addition to taking commonsense steps like we did today in committee, Congress needs to look ahead and plan for long-term solutions to ensure that we always have a strong, competitive pool of cyber security talent to draw on. We need policies that encourage students of all ages and educational levels to seek out STEM fields, such as computer science, so they are prepared to fill these in-demand jobs and be our first line of defense against these emerging and rapidly evolving threats.

I look forward to continuing to work with my Republican and Democratic colleagues to get this bill signed into law and to advance other commonsense legislation that strengthens our Nation's cyber capabilities and safeguards the weakest links in the cyber security chain from harm.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

TAX FILING SEASON

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I come to the floor for two reasons: No. 1, to speak about the tax bill of 1 year ago, and then, for a longer period of time, to address the issue before the Senate, which is the nomination of Mr. Barr.

The tax filing season began just over 2 weeks ago. Despite the disruption of the temporary partial government shutdown, the IRS is reporting to the Nation that all systems are go. Tax returns are being processed as normal, and refunds are being sent out. While there are lingering effects from the shutdown, overall, the IRS and Treasury have done a pretty good job of minimizing the effects of the shutdown on tax filers.

This season is receiving additional scrutiny as it is the very first time that tax filers are filing under the tax cuts and reforms enacted last year. My colleagues on the other side of the aisle and some in the media appear to be obsessed with finding anything they can

manufacture to declare the filing season under the new law a failure. Of course, that is after only 2 weeks of tax filing—not a long enough period of time to draw too many conclusions.

Case in point: Last week the IRS released preliminary filing data covering the first weeks of the filing season. Immediately, naysayers began focusing on data that suggests that tax refunds in the first week were down slightly over last year, as well as focusing on anecdotal social media posts. Never mind that the current refund numbers are based on only a few days of data, or that refund statistics can vary widely from one week to the next. Never mind that most of the social media posts are unverified. Many have the markings of a coordinated effort by liberal activists who have regularly used hashtag “GOP tax scam” to attack the law on Twitter, despite a vast majority of taxpayers paying less in taxes.

Yet our journalists, who are well educated and ought to know better, fall for it—hook, line, and sinker—including such tweets in articles with no questions asked or verifying the veracity of these claims.

To be fair, oftentimes buried deep in such articles, well below a sensational headline, is an attempt to demonstrate some semblance of unbiased reports, noting that under the tax law, most taxpayers will see tax cuts. That is right. Most taxpayers will see tax cuts. You most assuredly wouldn't know this from the headlines bemoaning a reduction in tax refunds, but the vast majority of taxpayers experienced a tax cut last year, and will this year, as well.

Every analysis—from the non-partisan Joint Committee on Taxation to the right-leaning Tax Foundation, to the liberal Tax Policy Center—demonstrates that taxpayers are sending less of their hard-earned money to Washington this year.

As an example, an Iowa family of four with the State's family median income of around \$75,000 stands to see their tax bill cut by more than half, or about \$2,100 in savings. This is real tax relief that began appearing in many taxpayers' paychecks at the start of 2018. That is a very important point. The government could have chosen to deprive this taxpayer of this extra \$2,100 last year until they filed their taxes during this tax season.

This may have been the best thing to do if you are someone who starts with the assumption that their money would be better off in the hands of the government interest-free. But I do not believe that is the best thing to do.

I believe taxpayers know better how to spend their hard-earned money than Washington does. It should be up to the individual taxpayer whether it is in his or her interest to put that extra \$2,100—or about \$175 a month—in a savings account or spend it on buying school supplies for their children or maybe even making a car payment. That is a decision 157 million taxpayers can make and not 535 Members of Con-

gress or the bureaucrats who are out spending the money.

In early 2018, Treasury and the IRS implemented updated withholding tables to give taxpayers that option of deciding whether to save or spend and what to spend it on or how to save it.

A chief priority for the new withholding tables was accuracy. The IRS' goal was to help taxpayers get the right amount withheld from their paycheck. However, common sense ought to tell us that no withholding table will ever be perfect—at least not perfect for 157 million different taxpayers. If they were, there would be no need for tax refunds. Only what was necessary to satisfy a taxpayer's tax obligation would need to be taken from their paychecks.

But that is unlikely. Every taxpayer is affected a little differently under the Tax Code based on their personal circumstances, and some taxpayers' incomes may fluctuate throughout the year. This makes exact withholding based on general tables nearly impossible. As a result, the amount of a taxpayer's refund is unlikely to be exactly the same as it was under the old law compared to our new law. Yes, some taxpayers may see a smaller refund, but others may see a larger refund. The size of one's refund tells you nothing about whether a specific taxpayer benefited from last year's tax law.

Given this fact, the best way for any taxpayer to see how tax reform affected their bottom line is to compare this year's tax return with last year's tax return, rather than making that judgment based upon what the refund is.

Tax preparers and tax return software often will provide an analysis comparing the current and previous year's tax return. I encourage taxpayers to compare the total amount of taxes paid this year with the total taxes paid last year, or, if your income materially changed from last year, compare your effective tax rate. That is the taxes paid as a percentage of your adjusted gross income. If your tax preparer does not already provide you with this information, simply ask them for that information.

If taxpayers take this approach, the vast majority will see that their tax bill has gone down. This is what matters, not the size of their refund. The size of the refund tells you nothing beyond the degree to which a taxpayer has overpaid their taxes over the course of the year. I hope Americans will take the time to check so they know the real effects that last year's tax cuts had on their lives and their family.

NOMINATION OF WILLIAM BARR

Mr. President, I will now turn my attention to the vote that will happen shortly today or tomorrow on William Barr to be Attorney General for the United States.

Mr. Barr is a highly accomplished attorney and an experienced public servant with an outstanding record. The

Justice Department needs good, effective leadership, and we should act quickly to fill this top spot.

I believe that Mr. Barr will be a good leader for the Justice Department as he has demonstrated in the past. In my opinion, at his Judiciary Committee nomination hearing, Mr. Barr was very candid with Senators. I believe he did his best at answering questions on his views on a wide variety of topics, as well as addressing concerns, including my own.

For example, at the beginning of this confirmation process, I had concerns regarding Mr. Barr's prior negative statements on a subject that I have been working on for 4 years with Senator DURBIN and Senator LEE—criminal justice reform.

In particular, I was concerned about a 1992 Justice Department report released when he was Attorney General entitled "The Case for More Incarceration." That title ought to tell you that he is tough on law enforcement. I was also concerned about a letter he signed in 2015 opposing the bill that we then entitled the Sentencing Reform and Correction Act of 2015. Obviously, if I think we need criminal justice reform for the first time in a generation, and the Attorney General puts out a letter against the part of it that Senator DURBIN and I were working so hard on—by the way, the President signed that just before Christmas—then, I think it is legitimate that I ask him these questions.

As Attorney General, Mr. Barr will be responsible for implementing the recently passed FIRST STEP Act of 2018, which 89 Members of this body supported. These Members also worked tirelessly for its passage. The FIRST STEP Act is the title of the bill that I call criminal justice reform. This is why one of my first questions during his confirmation hearing was to directly and clearly ask Mr. Barr if he would commit to fully implementing the FIRST STEP Act, considering the fact that he had written a letter 3 years ago against the concept.

His answer was very clear and convincing to me, and that was one word—"yes." He went on to say: "I have no problem with the approach of reforming the prison structure and I will faithfully implement the law." Later in the hearing, other Senators pointed to Mr. Barr's past stances on criminal justice and sentencing reform. Those Members asked for Mr. Barr's current views on the subject. They also asked for assurances that Mr. Barr would dutifully implement the FIRST STEP Act, just like I asked that question.

Mr. Barr expressed his current misgivings about high sentences for drug offenders established in the 1990s. Each time, he answered very clearly that he would dutifully implement the FIRST STEP Act and work to ensure that the intent of Congress was realized. Mr. Barr's answers regarding the FIRST STEP Act relieved my concerns of his past statements.

While I will continue to use the oversight powers of Congress to ensure that the FIRST STEP Act is applied and implemented as required by law, I believe Mr. Barr's testimony, and I look forward to working with him on both the implementation of the current law and future steps in criminal justice reform.

I want to go on to another issue of importance to me, which was Mr. Barr's position on the False Claims Act. If you remember my participation in the False Claims Act, going back to 1986, that act has brought in \$59 billion of fraudulently taken money from the Federal taxpayers. Leaders and top prosecutors of both sides of the aisle have now praised the law as the most effective tool the government has to detect, to prosecute, and actually to recover public money lost to fraud. Most of the \$59 billion has come as a result of patriotic whistleblowers who found the fraud and brought the cases at their own risk.

To let you know why I am concerned about Mr. Barr's opinion, in the past he was extremely critical of the False Claims Act, even after it was signed by President Reagan. He called it unconstitutional. At one time, he said it was an "abomination." So at his nomination hearing, I pointedly asked Mr. Barr whether he believed the False Claims Act is unconstitutional. He said: "No, Senator. It's been upheld by the Supreme Court."

Mr. Barr also stated that he would fully and faithfully implement this very important law. He acknowledged the benefits of the False Claims Act and said: "I will diligently enforce the False Claims Act."

I also asked Mr. Barr about his stance on something called the "Granston Memo." That memo provides a long list of reasons that the Justice Department can use to dismiss False Claims Act cases. Some of these reasons are pretty vague, such as "preserving government resources." Just think as to how that can be used by some faceless bureaucrat to avoid some issue, like maybe he doesn't want to go after fraudulent money or doesn't like some whistleblower. Obviously, those words could mean anything the government wants it to mean.

Of course, the government ought to be able to dismiss, obviously, meritless cases, but we don't want to give broad discretion to the administration without good justification. Even when the Justice Department declines to participate in a False Claims Act case, the whistleblower can and, in many cases, still does recover taxpayers' money.

Although Mr. Barr had not yet read the memo, he pledged to sit down with me if problems arose. These are positive steps and positive statements. However, actions speak louder than words. So I want Mr. Barr to know that I am going to monitor aggressively how he enforces and protects the False Claims Act to ensure that he follows through on his promises.

On another matter, during his confirmation hearing, I pressed Mr. Barr

about transparency with regard to the special counsel's report. I made very clear that I want the report to be made public because taxpayers deserve to know what their money is being spent on—in this case, maybe \$25 million to \$35 million. I am not sure we have an exact figure, but it is a lot of money. The only way the American taxpayers and Congress can hold the government accountable is through transparency.

You have heard me say many times that transparency brings accountability. Of course, there are some traditional reasons for withholding certain information even in a special counsel's report, such as national security or people's privacy, but there should be as much transparency as possible regarding the release of the report.

During his hearing, Mr. Barr said that he would place a high priority on transparency, particularly with Mueller's report, and there is no reason to think that Mr. Mueller will not be allowed to finish his work. Mr. Barr told me and other members of this committee that he would "provide as much transparency as [he] can consistent with the law and the Department's longstanding practices and policies." There is a lot of room there for him to work within, I suppose, and to still be honest in these answers. At this point, I can tell you I have no reason to doubt Mr. Barr's sincerity or his commitment to transparency and the law.

If he is confirmed, I will be sure to hold Mr. Barr to his word on transparency. Yet I also realize that there are some differences of opinion around here on what is currently required under the Justice Department's special counsel regulations. That is why Senator BLUMENTHAL and I recently introduced S. 236, the Special Counsel Transparency Act. This bill would require by statute that a special counsel provide a report to Congress and the American people at the conclusion of an investigation, not just Mueller's special counsel report but special counsels' reports into the future. This is commonsense transparency and accountability under any administration, not just under the Trump administration. I look forward to working with my colleagues and Mr. Barr, if he is confirmed, on this important legislation.

I also pressed the nominee on a number of other issues that were related to transparency and accountability, including the Freedom of Information Act—or, as we call it around here, FOIA—and the Foreign Agents Registration Act. Around here, we refer to that as FARA. When I served as chairman of the Judiciary Committee, I helped to steer the FOIA Improvement Act of 2016 into law, which creates a very important point—a "presumption of openness" standard. The Justice Department oversees the Federal Government's compliance with FOIA. So that is why we discussed it with Barr. It is critical that the nominee, if confirmed to lead the Justice Department, takes FOIA and transparency seriously.

When you talk about a presumption of openness, it ought to be this simple: Any of the public's business ought to be public, and you presume it to be public. Let the government give a justification as to why it ought to be kept secret or not be open to the public under the Freedom of Information Act.

I asked Mr. Barr if he agreed that FOIA were an important tool for holding the government accountable. Naturally, he said yes. I also asked the nominee if he would commit to ensuring the faithful and timely implementation of the 2016 FOIA amendments. He said: "Yes, we will work hard on that." I also think that the entire FOIA process would be improved if Americans didn't have to fight tooth and nail for disclosure in the first place. Let me repeat that—fight tooth and nail for disclosure. That is why we have a presumption of openness when it comes to the Freedom of Information Act.

Getting the public's information out to the public automatically should be a top priority. So I asked Mr. Barr if he would help to advocate for the more proactive disclosure of government records. Again, he said he would. I appreciate Mr. Barr's assurances. Of course, as I have said so many times during these remarks on different issues, I expect to hold him true to his word.

Then, I went to the Foreign Agents Registration Act, or FARA. I asked him about the importance of it. My oversight work has highlighted the Justice Department's historically lax enforcement of that act. I think we had a hearing on it and found out that since 1937 there have been fewer than a dozen prosecutions under it. Now, all of a sudden, with Russia, Ukraine, and Turkey and a lot of other places, it has come to my attention that there are a lot of people who even recently haven't registered under it. On the other hand, I will bet people are hastening to register very fast.

Yet the law has some shortcomings. In an age in which we are witnessing more foreign government efforts to influence the American public and policymakers, we should see more transparency and more enforcement against bad actors, not less enforcement. So I asked Mr. Barr if he agreed that FARA was an important national security and accountability tool, and he said yes.

I asked Mr. Barr if he would be sure to make FARA enforcement a top priority under his leadership. Again, he said he would.

I also asked Mr. Barr if he would commit to working with me on my bill to improve FARA. This bill before Congress is called the Disclosing Foreign Influence Act, and it seeks to better ensure transparency and accountability. Again, he said yes. Again, Mr. Barr can expect that I will hold him to his word.

I also asked Mr. Barr about his position on antitrust enforcement—specifi-

cally, whether he would ensure that healthcare and prescription drug anti-trust issues would be a top priority for the Justice Department.

The nominee responded: "Competition is an important factor in containing the costs of healthcare" and that he would "work with the Antitrust Division to ensure appropriate and effective criminal and civil enforcement to protect Americans' interests in low-cost, high-quality healthcare." He stated that if confirmed, antitrust enforcement in the healthcare and pharmaceutical sectors "will remain a priority" for the Justice Department.

I also expressed to the candidate my concerns about agriculture competition. He indicated that enforcing the antitrust laws in the agriculture sector will remain a priority.

The topics I just discussed are just some of the areas that I asked Mr. Barr about at the confirmation hearing and in written questions for the record, and my Judiciary Committee colleagues questioned Mr. Barr at length on a variety of topics. I take Mr. Barr at his word. I don't believe he would bow to any kind of pressure, even from the President, if he thought there were a problem with the legality, constitutionality, or ethics of an issue. He is an excellent nominee—extremely competent and experienced.

Mr. Barr previously led the Justice Department and has proven his strong leadership abilities. Recall that back in 1991 the Senate Judiciary Committee unanimously reported Mr. Barr's nomination to be Attorney General under President George H.W. Bush. Can you believe it? The Senate confirmed him by a voice vote.

What has changed after 25 years?

I don't know, except that there is something some people think is wrong if a person by the name of Trump nominates somebody to some office. The only difference I can see is that even in the last 25 years, he has proven himself to be in the private sector what he did so well as a public servant. He is a very capable attorney and a straight shooter. He is willing to engage in productive discussions with Congress. That is a key quality that we want in anybody who runs the Justice Department, and I have had enough trouble with the Justice Department.

I hope he will respond to my requests for oversight information more than the Democrats and Republicans had who preceded him. He is committed to working with me on my oversight requests, and I think my colleagues know that that is a responsibility that I take seriously.

He will uphold the law and the Constitution. Mr. Barr deserves our support, and one can tell from my remarks that I am, obviously, proud to vote for him.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PERDUE). The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, as the former chairman of the Judiciary Com-

mittee, the Senator from Iowa, has just pointed out, the Senate will soon vote on the nomination of William Barr to serve as Attorney General.

As has also been pointed out, this is, undoubtedly, one of the most qualified nominees to come before the Senate in his having already held the same position under President George H.W. Bush. He has also served as an intelligence analyst at the CIA, as an Assistant Attorney General in the Department of Justice's Office of Legal Counsel, and as Deputy Attorney General before he served as Attorney General.

His confirmation hearing lasted more than 12 hours, during which time he and other witnesses answered hundreds of questions on a wide variety of issues he might confront as Attorney General. He was straightforward and forthcoming. He earned high praise even from the ranking Democrat on that committee—our colleague, Senator FEINSTEIN from California—who said:

He's obviously very smart. He was Attorney General before. . . . No one can say he isn't qualified. I was thinking last night, obviously Mr. Barr is qualified. He is bright. He is capable.

She could have said more, but one of the things she said after that is, "I won't be voting for him."

This is an important job for the American people. There are a lot of jobs out there to be filled. It is hard to argue that any of them are more important than this one, but it is also hard to argue that there is not something wrong with a process where that is the comment that could be made, followed not too long after that by: I won't be voting for him.

Senator GRASSLEY pointed out that the last time Bill Barr was confirmed to be Attorney General, it was by voice vote. It seems as if that must have been a long time ago. It hasn't been that long ago; it is just the way the Senate used to work. That is why the Rules Committee that I chair voted out a Senate resolution earlier today dealing with this issue. This should not be the problem that it is. It shouldn't be an issue, but, frankly, the nomination process is broken.

In every election in this country, one thing has been certain: At least one party will not be happy with the result. I certainly understand why our Democratic colleagues weren't happy with the results of the 2016 election. There have been elections I have not been happy about and some that I have been happier about than others even when I was happy. This is a process that makes it easy not to be pleased with what voters decide to do, but that doesn't give you the right to stand in the way of what voters try to do, and that is exactly what our friends on the other side of the aisle have done.

Over the past 2 years, we have had unprecedented obstruction when it comes to just trying to put a government in place, unprecedented obstruction to confirming a President's nominees.

During the first Congress President Trump was in office, the previous 2 years, he submitted 1,136 nominees for jobs across the Federal Government. During that same period of time, President Obama submitted 1,132 nominees.

By the way, President Trump is sometimes criticized for not getting the nominees up here quickly enough. He actually got four more nominees up during that period of time than President Obama did, but the Senate confirmed 920 of President Obama's nominees during that first 2 years, and the Senate only confirmed 714 of President Trump's nominees—barely half for President Trump and about 70 percent, 75 percent for President Obama. There is a nearly 200-person difference, but more important, maybe, than the difference is the obvious effort for us not to be able to get other work done.

At the end of the last Congress, we returned the largest number of nominees from any President since Ronald Reagan. There are really only two reasons for that. One is to, frankly, stall the confirmation process and make it difficult for the President to do the job of being President. If you don't get the people to help you do the job you are elected to do, you can't do the job as effectively as you would otherwise.

We just had a government shutdown, which I think all of us were disappointed by. That is bad policy. We don't want to repeat it again. We didn't want to repeat it that time. But we have a partial shutdown of many of these Agencies and parts of the government every single day because we don't have the people necessary to put the rules in place.

There was a lot of discussion during the government shutdown about farmers who weren't able to get the loan guarantees they needed because the office was closed. Well, to some extent, it is the same way when the door is open but the people aren't there, when the door is open but the rules for the new farm bill haven't been issued, and when the door is open but the trade regulations that need to be made for the tax bill aren't out there.

The other reason, by the way, the second reason, is just to use up floor time. There are only so many things we can do here on the Senate floor. The majority leader is fond of saying that the most precious commodity in the Senate is floor time. If we are required to drag out this process, as the minority has insisted we do for the last 2 years, things don't happen otherwise.

During the first 2 years of the Trump administration, there were 128 cloture votes right here—128 cloture votes. That is where a Democrat—usually the minority leader—insists that we are going to have to get a majority of votes to even have the debate on a candidate. Once you file that, that takes a day before you can even begin to have the debate, and then the debate is 30 hours. So half a week is gone before the week starts just trying to confirm one person for one thing. That could be as

important as a Supreme Court Justice, or it could be the lowest level of confirmation in any of the Agencies of government.

By the way, those are the people who haven't been put in place because obviously lifetime judges matter, and both parties would prioritize that.

There have been 128 cloture votes. In the first 2 years of the past three Presidents, there were cloture votes a total of 24 times—24 times. That is an average of 8 compared to 128. There is a lot of difference between 8 and 128.

Because the tradition of the Senate—as a matter of fact, I think if President Bush were on here, President George H. W. Bush—that number was zero. No time. And that was much more traditional, up until that time, than now.

When President Reagan was President, once a nominee got out of committee, it was an average of 5 days before that nominee had a vote here on the Senate floor. It was normally the same kind of voice vote that Senator GRASSLEY mentioned that Bill Barr had the last time. The average was 5 days. With President Trump, it was 55 days before a nominee could get a vote once they got out of committee.

Remember, if you have agreed to serve in one of these jobs, you have given all of your financial information, you have given all of your personal information, and you have been investigated through and through. You have appeared before a committee, and they have asked you every question they could think of to ask you. They have voted you out of that committee. And then 24 people, at the end of last year, were sent back to the White House, at the end of that conference—I think it was over 24 people, over two dozen people—who had been waiting 1 year to become maybe the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Interior.

This will not work. This is not how our system is supposed to work, and we need to move forward. And it is not like when this happens—when these 128 cloture votes happen—there is a huge debate. There are 30 hours, plus the intervening day, but that doesn't mean there is any big debate. In fact, usually there is almost no debate at all on these nominees. When the nominees were voted on, 48 percent of the nominees got over 60 votes and 37 percent of the nominees got over 70 votes. So clearly this is not about holding back somebody who could be confirmed; it is about using up time that should be used for other things.

There are two jobs in the Senate. One of them is the personnel business. One of them is confirming people the President nominates. But the other is the legislating business. The other is the funding the government business. The other is the talking about foreign policy business. The other is talking about the economy and trade and taxes. Every hour we spend on this is an hour we can't spend on that.

The resolution we passed out today was one I introduced with my colleague

from Oklahoma, Senator LANKFORD, who has been working on this issue for 2 years now, and others of us have as well. We introduced this bill to cut the amount of time back to what had been a temporary standing order when Republicans were in the minority, and we agreed to this temporary standing order. The Democrats were in the majority. There was a Democrat in the White House. We agreed to essentially this same framework: 2 hours for most nominees, 30 hours for circuit judges and Supreme Court Justices and Cabinet officers. Seventy-eight Senators voted for that temporary order.

Usually when you do you a temporary order, it is to see if it works. Well, it worked, but we didn't do it again. So we are now saying, let's make that temporary order a permanent part of the way the Senate approaches this part of its job. We are moving in that direction. We had a debate this morning in committee. The time we are spending on the floor—if there is a nominee who needs 30 hours, they are almost certainly going to be in that category that gets 30 hours. If there is a nominee who would be in the 2-hour category, they are going to have been through committee, they are going to have been thoroughly vetted, and the committee will have decided they should be reported out. We need to get back to where 5 days after that, the Senate lets this person go on to fill a job that is, in all likelihood, not going to last beyond one administration and maybe not even that.

It won't be long before nobody is willing to sign up if a year later, after you have put your life on hold, you find out that the Senate somehow can't get to the job you have agreed to serve on because we have to take time that the Senate never took before.

I hope my colleagues on both sides of the aisle look at that standing order that could change our rules in a way that allows people who are willing to serve to be thoroughly vetted, thoroughly questioned, and then voted on. This can't happen unless they get voted on. Clearly, the current process of voting on people is a process that has been abused.

While the Senate is a place that recognizes the rights of the minority, those rights have only been upheld when the minority viewed them for what they are—rights of the minority rather than tools of the minority to obstruct the elected Government of the United States of America and the work of the Senate.

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.

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

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

S. 47

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, we have finally completed our work on S. 47, the Natural Resources Management Act. We had a good day yesterday. We had a good day here in the U.S. Senate. We passed this significant bill—really, a landmark piece of legislation—out of the Senate by a vote of 92 to 8. That is pretty strong. You don't see a lot of that in the Senate anymore—every now and again, and this was one of those every now and agains. I appreciate all the work.

We have now sent this over to the House of Representatives, and it has some good momentum. We are looking forward to being able to work with the House. I encourage them to move quickly on this important measure and see it enacted into law.

I want to take just a few moments this afternoon, while I can, to thank so many who have been key in getting us to this point. I want to start my comments with acknowledging the former ranking member of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, Senator CANTWELL from Washington. We have spent a lot of time together. We have spent a lot of time over the years working on these lands bills. We did it in the public forum through the committee process. We had hearings on hundreds of bills. We worked to refine and reach agreement on them and to report them from committee. So there was all of that process, which went on throughout the committee, and then the two of us sitting down with our staffs on noncommittee time, just working through these particulars, in many meetings in my office and in her office. We really did this on a bipartisan basis. We stuck together. There were times when the prospects for this package did not look so good, and then there were moments when it looked even worse than not so good. But we kind of pulled one another along. I think that is a tribute to the commitment we made as colleagues and partners in this to advance not just to a message but to a product. I truly think that is a tribute to Senator CANTWELL and her willingness to work together to find a path forward.

Then we weren't able to finish things at the end of the year. Senator CANTWELL moved over to another committee, and I had an opportunity to pick up with Senator MANCHIN. He picked up.

Here he comes in, a new ranking member, and he has a bill to help manage on the floor with some 100-plus bills. But he helped us in a way that I am most, most grateful for. He kept us on track and helped us secure a very strong final tally here.

I am also very grateful to my other corners, the chairman and ranking member of the Natural Resources Committee on the House side, Chairman GRIJALVA and Ranking Member BISHOP. I thank them for their exceptional, exceptional work on this package and look forward to working with them as we finish this out.

Next on my list are Leader MCCONNELL and Senator SCHUMER. The minority leader is here. We had a conversation on the floor just about where he is sitting—this was back in December. But the two leaders gave their commitment to take this bill up early this year. They kept that commitment. They made it happen. I thank them for what they did in recognizing that this public lands, resources, and waters bill deserved early attention in this new Congress.

I mentioned on the floor that there were many colleagues on both sides: Senator HEINRICH, Senator GARDNER, Senator DAINES from Montana, Senator WYDEN from Oregon, all of whom have been great partners here on the floor.

It is important to briefly mention the staffs, who put in the long hours—the work and the family life they gave up.

The first person on my list to recognize is my deputy chief counsel, Lucy Murfitt, who is truly an expert, a true expert on the lands issue. She has poured her heart and soul into these issues, and it is no exaggeration to say they would not have happened without her efforts.

I also thank my staff director, Brian Hughes; my chief counsel, Kellie Donnelly; the members of my lands team, Annie Hoefler, Lane Dickson, and Michelle Lane; our communications team, Nicole Daigle, Michelle Toohey, and Tonya Parish; our support staff, including Melissa Enriquez and Sean Solie; then Brianne Miller and Isaac Edwards, who basically kept the committee running while everyone else was focusing on this bill.

While I am proud of my team, we had great partners on the other side of the aisle. Sarah Venuto and Lance West joined the committee with Senator MANCHIN, and they have been great to work with. Sam Fowler, David Brooks, Rebecca Bonner, Bryan Petit, Camille Touton, Mary Louise Wagner, and Amit Ronen also played key roles.

Then on the House side, we had David Watkins and Brandon Bragato of Chairman GRIJALVA's staff, along with Parish Braden and Cody Stewart, who has now left the Hill, of Ranking Member BISHOP's staff.

I have to give a shout-out for the floor staff. Laura Dove and her team were fabulous. We also appreciate our Parliamentarians, Elizabeth McDonough and Leigh Hildebrand; Terry Van Doren with Leader MCCONNELL; and Aniela Butler at the Senate Budget Committee.

Two of the individuals who probably put the most time into this package, Heather Burnham and Christina Kennelly, are in the Office of Senate Leg Counsel. I also thank Janani Shankaran, Kim Cawley, and Aurora Swanson at CBO.

Great members, great team—we could not have done this great work without them.

To Senator SCHUMER, I say thank you for allowing me to complete this in its entirety. I appreciate your indulgence.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, let me thank the chair of the Energy Committee, the senior Senator from Alaska, for the wonderful work she always does around here. She has the respect of Members on both sides of the aisle. She tries to do the right thing and ends up there so often. This lands bill wouldn't have happened without a lot of the people she mentioned, but at the top of the list would certainly, certainly, be the senior Senator from Alaska.

Once again, I tip my hat to the junior Senator from Washington State, who worked so long and hard on this. The two of them were a great team, and JOE MANCHIN filled in when he became ranking member. We are all very glad that this wonderful lands bill, with so many good things in it, will, barring any unforeseen mishap, become law very soon.

NOMINATION OF WILLIAM BARR

Mr. President, I rise this afternoon to address the nomination of Mr. William Barr to be the next Attorney General of the United States.

We take all these nominations very seriously. Each member of the President's Cabinet holds immense influence within our government, with the power to affect the lives of millions. At this moment in time, the Attorney General might be the very most critical of all of the Cabinet officials in our government.

Not only will the Attorney General assume the traditional responsibilities of the office, but the next Attorney General would also oversee one of the most sensitive investigations in our Nation's history—the special counsel's investigation into Russian influence in the 2016 elections. Just to say those words, "Russian influence in the 2016 elections," makes your hair stand on end a little bit.

Under normal circumstances, the position of Attorney General demands an individual of unimpeachable integrity, impartiality, and independence. Under these circumstances, that bar is more important and probably higher than ever. Why? Because as we have all seen, President Trump has demonstrated utter contempt for the rule of law. He has expressed a view of the Department of Justice that is completely counter to the history of this grand Department as an independent Agency of the law. Rather, he views the Justice Department as an Agency that should protect him personally and one he can compel to protect his friends and prosecute his enemies. That sounds like a third-world country, not the United States of America.

In the process of attempting to discredit the special counsel's investigation, the President has run roughshod over the norms of the executive branch's relationship with the Justice Department. President Trump has demeaned the public servants of the Justice Department. He has questioned its

motives, up to and including the up-grading and belittling of the former Attorney General on Twitter—an Attorney General that he himself appointed.

As the special counsel continues to investigate the connections between the most senior members of the Trump administration and the Kremlin, it is an extraordinarily important and extraordinarily dangerous moment for the Justice Department. That is the maelstrom into which the next Attorney General will step.

Certainly, Mr. Barr is intelligent. Certainly, Mr. Barr has experience. In fact, he already did the job. Let me say that I have always respected his public service and believed him to be a good man, but what so many of us find lacking in Mr. Barr's nomination this time around is his fundamental lack of awareness about the moment we are in.

Only a few months ago, it was uncovered that he authored an unsolicited memo to the Justice Department criticizing—criticizing—the special counsel's investigation. He wasn't involved with the Justice Department in any capacity at the time. He was a private attorney. He could not have had access to any of the facts in the case. Yet he decided to write this memo, which, in addition to making unproved claims about the investigation, outlined an extremely broad—in my judgment—overreaching vision of Executive power. Writing that memo showed poor judgment and, worse, it showed bias at a time when the country could not afford either in its Attorney General.

I felt the memo alone was disqualifying at a time when we have a President who scorns the rule of law, but I believed Mr. Barr deserved the chance to change my mind so I met with him privately a few weeks ago. Our conversation focused on three questions.

First, I asked him very directly if he would recuse himself if the ethics officials at the Justice Department said he should. He would not commit to doing this. Instead, he said he would make his own decision.

Second, I asked him if he would release the special counsel's full report on Russian influence in the 2016 election, with, of course, appropriate redactions that the intelligence services would require. His response was to say: "I'm for transparency." That is not good enough.

He is a good lawyer. Everyone knows when you can make an ironclad commitment or when you have words that seem good but don't make such a commitment. To say you are for transparency doesn't say very much. I asked for an unequivocal and public commitment to release the report. He would not give that assurance.

Finally, I asked Mr. Barr to commit that he would not interfere in any way with the special counsel's investigation, whether by denying subpoenas, limiting the scope of the investigation, or restricting funding. He referred to the special counsel regulations and said he wanted to see Mueller finish his

investigation. Again, that is not good enough—not with any President and certainly not with this one.

With this President, we need an Attorney General who can assure the Senate and the American public that he will stand up to a President who is dead set on protecting his political interests above all norms and rules of conduct. The President wants a Roy Cohn to be his Attorney General, but this moment calls for another Elliot Richardson.

The next Attorney General must be a public servant in the truest sense, with the integrity, the force of will, and the independence to navigate the Justice Department—and maybe our democracy—through treacherous waters.

Mr. Barr's attitude of "leave it to me" is not good enough—not for any nominee and certainly not for a nominee President Trump has chosen.

The authorship of the memo, followed by the inability to commit to release the report or let the investigation continue unimpeded—those are three strikes. Mr. Barr should be out. He does not recognize or appreciate the moment we are in. Again, his "leave it to me" attitude does not measure where we are with a President like this.

Now, I hope I am wrong. I hope Mr. Barr, who we know is likely to be confirmed—our Republican colleagues show none of the independence that is required—will rise to the occasion, but I remain unconvinced that Barr is prepared to meet this moment. So I will be voting, with strong conviction, no on this amendment. I hope Mr. Barr disproves my view, but his words make me very much worried that this will not happen.

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

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

Mr. BOOKER. Mr. President, I rise today to speak on the nomination of William Barr to be the next Attorney General of the United States of America.

Last Thursday, I voted against his nomination in the Senate Judiciary Committee, as did nine of my fellow Committee Members. I voted against his nomination because of some very serious concerns I have with his record on everything from criminal justice to environmental justice, to defending the economic rights of Americans, the rights of immigrants, LGBTQ rights, and women's rights.

I want to go through those concerns here on the floor today, but I also want to be clear that Mr. Barr has been nominated at a time of extraordinary challenge when it comes to defending rights in this country. This is a crisis.

We are in a moment in history when, after years of attacks on civil rights by this President and Attorney General Jeff Sessions, some of our most fundamental democratic principles—the rule of law, separation of powers, equal protection under the law—are hanging in the balance. We now face a full-blown crisis when it comes to rolling back the rights of Americans.

From community to community across the country, we see what it looks like when the Department of Justice fails to pursue justice for all Americans.

It looks like hate crimes in this country are on the rise for the third year in a row but a Department of Justice that rolls back protections for LGBTQ Americans instead of strengthening them.

It looks like more than one-third of all the LGBTQ youth in the country missing school because they feel unsafe but a DOJ that refuses to fight for them and protect them against State laws that target transgender students.

It looks like unchecked voter suppression of Black Americans in Georgia, Native Americans in North Dakota, and the voter ID and voter purge laws across the country that tried to target and suppress minority voters but a Justice Department that has stood by and failed to take on one single voting rights case during the last 2 years.

It looks like communities that are being poisoned by corporate polluters pushing their costs of doing business onto neighborhoods least able to defend themselves, making their land and air and water toxic but a DOJ that has made it easier for polluters to get settlement agreements while cutting its own enforcement capacity to hold those corporate polluters accountable.

It looks like corporate malfeasance continuing to target the most vulnerable while DOJ enforcement of corporate penalties drops by 90 percent during the first 2 years of the Trump administration.

It looks like doubling down on the failed war on drugs, which is known to be not a war on drugs but a war on the American people—disproportionately low-income Americans, disproportionately mentally ill Americans, disproportionately addicted Americans, and disproportionately Black and Brown people—which is exactly what Jeff Sessions did when he directed all Federal prosecutors to "charge and pursue the most serious, readily provable offense" and seek the highest penalties in nonviolent drug crimes.

It looks like unarmed Black men being killed by officers in their own homes and backyards, Americans of color being disproportionately stopped and arrested without adequate systems of accountability, but having a DOJ that limits the use of consent decrees that can prevent systemic abuses of power by law enforcement and can actually help to make law enforcement better, more accountable, more effective, rebuilding and repairing the trust

between law enforcement and communities necessary to create safe and strong communities.

Of course, it looks like children fleeing violence, being ripped from the arms of their parents, of their mothers at the southern border, 6-year-olds being thrown into cages, and an untold number of children who still have not been reunited with their families because of the DOJ's so-called zero-tolerance policy.

Right now we see a Justice Department whose leadership over the past 2 years has failed countless communities, from low-income Americans who are being victimized by large corporations with bad actors to individual Americans who are trying to have their basic, fundamental rights protected.

The Justice Department has failed the American people, and, most of all, it has failed to seek that ideal we all hold dear, which is equal justice under the law. That is why, at this moment in history, during this crisis of conscience, during this crisis of moral leadership, we need an Attorney General who grasps the urgency of the moment, who is aware of the impact of the Department of Justice on communities across this country, and who is willing and prepared to protect our most fundamental rights in every community for every American. That is the ideal of justice; that is the ideal of patriotism.

What is patriotism but love of country? You cannot love your country unless you love your fellow country men and women. What does love look like in public? Justice, justice, justice.

I appreciate that Mr. Barr took the time to sit down and meet with me. It was after the hearings; yet at my request, he finally agreed to come and meet with me. There was no staff in the room. It was an honorable gesture—a gesture of courtesy. We had a chance to have dialogue about his record, his experiences, his perspectives as well as mine. I appreciate that. It is a constructive first step.

I appreciate his willingness to listen to me and talk about his record of mass incarceration. I even appreciate his willingness to accept the book I gave him—I hope he reads it—titled “The New Jim Crow” by Michelle Alexander.

I continue to have concerns about Mr. Barr's ability and willingness to be the kind of Attorney General this country needs at this pivotal moment in American history. I am concerned because throughout his career, time and again, and during his confirmation process, Mr. Barr has demonstrated not only that he holds troubling views but also that he has an alarming lack of knowledge about the crises that make our justice system so broken right now, at a time when the United States continues to lead the globe, to lead the planet Earth and all of humanity in the sheer number of people we incarcerate.

One out of every four people incarcerated on the planet Earth is right here

in the United States, the land of the free. One out of every three incarcerated women on the planet Earth is right here in America, the land of the free. I say, again, that they are not the wealthy; they are not the privileged. As my friend Bryan Stevenson says: We have a nation that treats you better if you're rich and guilty than if you're poor and innocent.

Since 1980, our prison population in this country alone has grown on the Federal level by 800 percent. You can tell a lot about a nation by whom they incarcerate. In Russia they incarcerate political prisoners. In Turkey they incarcerate members of the media. In this country we incarcerate the poor. We incarcerate Americans with mental illnesses, Americans with disabilities, Americans who are survivors of sexual assault, Americans who are struggling with addiction, people who have faced harm and need help, who often in the system get hurt and experience retribution and not restorative justice. We have a nation where we are locking people up for doing things that two of the last three Presidents admitted to doing.

Mr. Barr has a record of actively pushing the policies that have led to mass incarceration, that have driven up our Nation's prison populations at a time when we need an Attorney General who is willing to follow the lead of this body, which passed criminal justice reform.

When Mr. Barr served as Attorney General during the first Bush administration, he literally wrote the book on mass incarceration. He commissioned a report titled “The Case for More Incarceration” and wrote the forward endorsing it. He is an architect of the criminal justice system that is so disproportionate—out of proportionality—that is ruthless, doing things that other countries, until this body acted, called torture, like juvenile solitary confinement.

At his hearing, Mr. Barr said he recognized that some things have changed over the last quarter century, but he failed to explain how his views on criminal justice have actually evolved. He was describing more of what he was seeing this body and others do, but he didn't talk about his own evolution. He didn't say: Hey, that was my perspective then, and it has changed now.

On the issue of implicit racial bias, I asked him if he acknowledged its well-documented existence in our criminal justice system. Implicit racial bias has been pointed out by both sides of the aisle in this body, by big city police chiefs and a former FBI Director. Time and again, it has been documented by university studies. It is actually in our Justice Department's policies to train people in implicit racial bias. This isn't something that is new. This is something we understand.

When asked about it, Mr. Barr said:

I have not studied the issue of implicit racial bias in our criminal justice system. . . . Therefore, I have not become sufficiently fa-

miliar with the issue to say whether such bias exists.

I find this incredibly alarming. There are widely documented instances of racial disparities throughout our criminal justice system from police stops to sentencing, to charges. Racial bias exists even in our school pipeline; with Black kids and White kids having committed the same infractions in school, African-American kids are more likely to be suspended for them.

There is no difference, for example, between Blacks and Whites in the United States of America for using drugs—no differences for Blacks, Whites, Latinos. We have a drug problem in America, and it is equally seen, regardless of race. Whites are more likely than Blacks, in many studies, to deal drugs. Yet, despite this, we live in a country where Blacks are about three times more likely to be arrested for using drugs and almost four times more likely to be arrested for selling drugs.

What does it do when you apply a justice system to certain communities and not to others? It has a multiplier effect of impact. It affects voting rights because States still eliminate the right to vote for nonviolent drug charges. It is called felony disenfranchisement. It affects economic opportunity because if you have one criminal conviction for doing the same things that past Presidents have admitted to doing and Members of this body have admitted to doing, then you can't get a job, you can't get business licenses. Doors are shut to you; opportunity is closed. When you have a justice system that disproportionately impacts certain Americans, those communities then face serious, serious consequences.

As a Villanova study shows, overall, we would have about 20 percent less poverty in America if our incarceration rates were the same as those of our industrial peers. Poverty is more inflicted on those communities of color when they are more likely to be arrested, charged, and convicted because of the existence of implicit racial bias.

But the nominee for the top law enforcement position in our country says he is not sure “whether such bias exists.”

This should be deeply troubling to all Americans because we believe in an ideal of equal justice under the law. This should be troubling to all Americans because we believe, as King said, “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.”

This should be deeply troubling to all Americans because there is a deep lack of faith that people have in our criminal justice system. They are losing faith that they will receive equal treatment.

When the justice system does not operate in good faith, it is hampered in doing its most sacred duty.

Right now there is a lack of belief that people will be treated fairly, a lack of belief that the system works

the way it is supposed to. Mr. Barr's response and his record show me that he will do nothing to address these legitimate concerns in communities all across this country. At a time when he could be a leader, a champion, a light of justice and hope for those who have lost hope, for those who have lost faith, for those who feel left out and left behind, he almost doubles down with a dangerous lack of knowledge about what we all know exists.

If confirmed, Mr. Barr would also be charged with implementing what this body collectively has done to start to reform, for the first time in American history, mass incarceration and increased sentencing.

For the first time since 1994's crime bill, we in this body, with wisdom and in a bipartisan way, have started to go back to more proportionate sentencing. Through the FIRST STEP Act, this body put more justice back into our justice system. It is the first step, but it is the first step in the right direction in decades in our country's history.

I am proud of what we did together. The bipartisan criminal justice reform that this body just passed into law, by an overwhelming vote, is incredible, but it is critical that the FIRST STEP Act be fully and fairly implemented by the Justice Department. Mr. Barr has not demonstrated his commitment to the law or to fixing any part of the broken criminal justice system I have outlined.

Then, of course, we have industries, from the private prison industry to phone companies charging exorbitant fees in prisons and jails, making a profit off of these injustices, making a profit off policies that penalize and criminalize low-income communities and communities of color and that target refugees of color.

What is happening in our country's criminal justice system today is a human rights crisis. Think about a justice system right now that has people sitting in prison for months before they even get a trial because they can't afford bail or a lawyer. We have a human rights crisis in this country.

We need an Attorney General who recognizes the problem and has a willingness to do something about it, not one who says they are not sure we even have a crisis. This is an extraordinarily challenging time in our history. This Nation was formed under ideals of justice and fairness and equality. It was formed at a time when we mutually pledged to each other—as it says in our Declaration of Independence—“our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor.” This is a country where we are all in this together. This is a country where our values and ideals have to be real for all and not just a select few.

After 2 years, we have seen the Justice Department's relentless attacks on basic fundamental rights by our President and Attorney General. We now need an Attorney General who will work to uphold the values that are most in danger. We need an Attorney

General who will fight for equal justice for all, not just the privileged few. We need an Attorney General who knows the difference between ensuring justice is done and does not automatically seek the harshest penalty in every case, with a blind eye to circumstances, or facts, or extenuating circumstances.

We need an Attorney General who will stand up for all of our children, LGBTQ rights, for voting rights, environmental justice, and a fairer justice system. We need an Attorney General who will refocus on the mission of the Department of Justice in seeking justice for every young person who is afraid to go to school because of prejudice and policies that discriminate. We need one who is seeking justice for every elderly man who lived through Jim Crow only to be blocked from exercising his voting rights because of racially targeted voter ID laws.

We need an Attorney General who is seeking justice for Americans who have become entrapped in our broken criminal justice system, whether it is a kid from a community like the one I live in who is being targeted by our ineffective drug laws or kids who have been picked up on the southern border and thrown into a privately run detention center.

We need an Attorney General who is seeking justice for communities whose soil, air, and water are being polluted by massive corporations and that feel no one will fight for them. We need an Attorney General who will live up to the purpose of the Justice Department. This is the call of our country. This is the leadership we need. This is the Attorney General we must insist on, one who will seek justice for everyone in every community from the gulf coast to the Great Lakes, from sea to shining sea.

Mr. Barr has not demonstrated that he understands the fierce urgency of this moment in our history and the imperative for the Attorney General to be deeply disturbed by injustice and to urgently seek justice. For this main reason, I will be voting against his nomination, but if confirmed, I will perform my constitutional duty and provide oversight and accountability. I will continue to work to ensure that our Justice Department lives up to its demands.

I hope this Attorney General, should he be confirmed, learns, sees the vulnerable, understands the challenges of the meek, and understands communities in crisis; that he gets to know people; that he reaches out and sits down with folks to learn and to develop a more courageous empathy, but I will not wait on that.

I will fight every day to make sure our Justice Department seeks justice. If Mr. Barr tries to double down on the failures of a broken criminal justice system, tries to roll back basic rights, or fails to protect voting rights and civil rights, I will fight against his efforts at every step. I will fight for jus-

tice that doesn't just take the side of the powerful few but seeks justice for all Americans. That is our obligation—all of us. Whether you sit in this body or you sit in communities across this country, we have gotten to where we are because we all sought justice. Even if it didn't affect our families directly, we knew the call of our country must be about all of us understanding that injustice for one is an injustice for all.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, in just a matter of hours, we are expected to vote on the nomination of William Barr to be Attorney General of the United States. This office is one of paramount importance to the people of this country, and as a former U.S. attorney, the chief Federal prosecutor in Connecticut, I have deep respect—indeed, reverence—for this office and the legal authority it commands and the moral powers it embodies.

So the stakes of this nomination, especially at this point in our history, could not be higher.

I believe William Barr should not be confirmed, and it has more to do with the role of the Attorney General of the United States than with his specific positions or policies on issues where we may disagree.

I do disagree with William Barr on positions he has taken on civil rights, women's healthcare, reproductive rights, and the powers of the Presidency.

At this moment in time, at this hour of our history, an imperial Presidency, such as envisioned by many of the doctrines that William Barr has espoused, in my view, would be an absolute catastrophe. Giving the President the power, in effect, to override statutes or refuse to enforce them or disregard Supreme Court precedent, especially with this President, would be a recipe for disaster.

An imperial Presidency at any point in our history is unwise. At this moment in our history, it would be catastrophic. That view of a unitary Executive and all that comes with it is one of the reasons I would have reservations about this nominee, but for me, the transcendent issue—as it was with Jeff Sessions, our former colleague—is whether this nominee will be the people's lawyer or the President's lawyer. Will he put first the interests of the American people or of President Donald Trump? Will he have foremost in mind the public interests or the personal interests of the President who appointed him?

Unfortunately, I am left with deep concerns, doubts, and questions that

are disqualifying. The best example is his position on the release and disclosure of the special counsel's report. There were doubts—and there continue to be—among some of my colleagues about whether he will, in fact, allow the special counsel to do his job. He said that he would resist firing the special counsel and that he would allow Robert Mueller to finish his investigation, but he was pretty careful to avoid specifically committing that he would permit subpoenas to be issued, indictments to be brought, resources to be provided, and other essential factors that go into the effectiveness of the special counsel.

Even giving him the benefit of the doubt on those issues, there remains his refusal to commit that he will provide the evidence and findings of the special counsel directly to Congress and directly to the American people. For me, that refusal to commit is one of the factors that are disqualifying.

The American people want transparency for the special counsel, as they do in their government generally. Just yesterday, the Washington Post released a poll indicating that 81 percent of Americans believe the Mueller report should be released. That number includes 79 percent of Republicans. The simple, stark fact is, the public has a right to know. The American people paid for the special counsel's report. They deserve to know everything that is in it, and they deserve not only the conclusion but also the findings of fact and his prosecutorial decisions and the underlying evidence that he considered in making those decisions. The clear specter arises that he will choose to bring no indictment against the President or other officials and that there will be no disclosure of the report, which would be tantamount to a cover-up. What we may be watching is the Saturday Night Massacre in slow motion.

The reason this issue is of such paramount importance to this nomination relates to the obligation that the Attorney General has to promote transparency. In his responses to me, he said he would follow all the rules and regulations without delving into all the words and technical issues relating to those rules and regulations. The simple fact is, they provide near complete discretion to the Attorney General.

The American public has a right to see the Mueller report, not the Barr report. We have a right to see not what William Barr in his discretion permits us to know but, in fact, what the findings and evidence are—the Mueller report, not the Barr report. My fear is that despite his very vague references to wanting transparency, his refusal to commit to making that report public reveals his state of mind: that he will abridge, edit, conceal, redact parts of the report that may be embarrassing to the President. In effect, he will act as the President's lawyer, not as the people's lawyer.

During a hearing, I asked William Barr point blank, if he were presented

with evidence beyond a reasonable doubt that the President committed a crime, would he approve an indictment. He declined to answer the question directly or clearly. He pointed to two Office of Legal Counsel opinions saying that a sitting President cannot be indicted. I asked what he thought, not what the OLC thought. Would he permit an indictment against a President if presented with incontrovertible evidence of criminal wrongdoing? And he said he saw no reason to change the policy embodied in those OLC memos. The assumption is wildly held that Robert Mueller will follow those OLC memos, and William Barr confirmed those assumptions.

There is also Department of Justice policy that prosecutors do not speak publicly about people they are investigating but are not prepared to indict. I followed those policies as U.S. attorney. I know them well. In the normal case, they are fully applicable, but these two policies taken in combination lead to a truly frightening outcome: If the President cannot be indicted but has committed crimes, the American people may never know. That is, in effect, tantamount to a coverup. The American people may never know about that proof beyond a reasonable doubt. They may never see those findings in evidence. They may never have the benefit of the full report. Even though it may leak in dribs and drabs, in parts, they will never have the full and complete picture.

That is why I believe so strongly in the legislation that Senator GRASSLEY and I have offered to require transparency. It is called the Special Counsel Transparency Act. It would require that there be a report. If the special counsel is transferred or fired or if he resigns or at any point completes his investigation, there would be a report, and it would be required that that report be provided to the American people. It would be mandatory, not discretionary.

I believe this issue is a transcendent one in this era—the public's right to know the truth about the 2016 election and the President's responsibility for any obstruction of justice or any collusion with the Russians. Again, it is about the public's right to know and about the Attorney General's responsibility for enabling the public's right to know. His answers were evasive and deeply troubling, and instead of providing straightforward and forthcoming answers, he was, in effect, evading and avoiding the question.

In addition to the special counsel's investigation, there are at least two U.S. Attorney's Offices—the Southern District of New York and the Eastern District of Virginia—that have concurrent investigations into Trump campaign activities during this same period of time and beyond. In the Southern District of New York, the President has been essentially named as an unindicted coconspirator. He is individual No. 1, an unindicted cocon-

spirator. That is a distinction he shares with only one other President—Richard Nixon.

The unencumbered continuation of these investigations is of vital public interest. That is why I asked Mr. Barr whether he would impose any restrictions on these prosecutors. Again his answer was evasive and deeply troubling. Instead of issuing a simple no, he stated that the Attorney General has the responsibility and discretion to supervise U.S. attorneys, and he declined to say that he would defer to them. He declined in the hearing, and he did again in our private meeting. That answer gives me no confidence that, if confirmed, William Barr will avoid interfering in the investigations now underway in those two additional jurisdictions, where, in fact, they may pose an even more dire danger that his culpability will be revealed and perhaps prosecuted. It should not give the public any greater degree of confidence either.

On other issues—the emoluments clause, for example. When I asked him, he said: I haven't even looked up the word "emolument." That is a direct quote. There are a number of very high-profile cases against the President involving the emoluments clause of the U.S. Constitution because the President has been violating it. The chief anti-corruption provision in Federal law is the emoluments clause. Litigation is underway. Decisions have been rendered in the district courts in favor of the standing of 200 of us Members of Congress who have challenged the President's lawbreaking. I am proud that that case—Blumenthal v. Trump; Blumenthal and Nadler v. Trump—is proceeding. William Barr has a responsibility to know about that case and to say whether he would recuse himself from it since he was appointed by the defendant in that case, and if not, what justification there can be for continuing to make decisions about it.

Again, William Barr is a distinguished attorney. He has a strong background and qualifications. He served in this position before. He has very impressive credentials. He and I differ on issues of policy, but the main question relates to disclosure and transparency, to fidelity and priority, to the American people's interests—putting them unquestionably above the President's. Because I have such deep reservations and concerns about his determination to do so, I will oppose him as Attorney General, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. BLACKBURN). The Senator from West Virginia.

Mr. MANCHIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to enter into a colloquy with the Senators from Ohio, West Virginia, Virginia, and Pennsylvania.

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

S. 27

Mr. MANCHIN. Madam President, once again, I stand here on behalf of our hard-working and patriotic coal miners. We have been here before, and we are going to stay here until we get the job done.

Right now, retired coal miners' healthcare, pensions, and black lung benefits are on the chopping block again, and, once again, there are 1,200 new coal miners and dependents who will lose their healthcare coverage due to coal company bankruptcies. This could happen later this month if the court, as expected, allows Westmoreland to shed their Coal Act liabilities.

This has happened time after time because of the bankruptcy laws—the inadequate bankruptcy laws—to protect the hard-working men and women who do all the work.

At the end of last year, Westmoreland indicated they would provide 8 months of healthcare funding to the UMWA, but there was a condition. It was dependent upon the sale of certain mines for which they have received no qualified bids, according to documents filed in court.

Our broken bankruptcy laws are about to let another coal company shirk their responsibilities and get out of paying for healthcare and pensions the coal miners have earned and deserved. They have worked for this. They have negotiated. They are not asking for a handout. They are asking to get what they paid for, what they negotiated for, and what they didn't take home to their families.

We have to keep our promise that was signed into law in the Krug-Lewis agreement. This goes back to 1946—1946. It is the only one of its kind. The agreement makes sure we protect our patriotic coal miners' healthcare and pensions.

We have the chance today to pass my bill that was cosponsored with my colleagues, the American Miners Act, that will ensure that none of these coal miners or their beneficiaries would lose their healthcare, pensions, or black lung benefits.

The American Miners Act uses the same funding mechanism that the Miners Protection Act did to protect retired miners' healthcare. It is the same funding mechanism Congress has used time and again to protect our miners' hard-earned healthcare after our bankruptcy courts have ripped them away. This is not going to be a drain on the Treasury. It does not cost the taxpayers money. We have pay-fors, and this will be taken care of, as we have taken care of our healthcare benefits.

I am asking you to keep the promise just the way we did when we passed the Miners Protection Act and saved the healthcare for 22,600 miners. We need to finish this job. Save the healthcare of these miners suffering from new bankruptcies, protect the pensions of 87,000 miners nationwide, and do it by passing the American Miners Act, which would also ensure the future of

the Black Lung Trust Fund, a lifeline for the growing number of miners with black lung.

I don't know if you all understand the background or if you have heard about what happened, but with the passage of the bills we are working on, it cuts the black lung fund from \$1.10 down to 50 cents. You would think that if you were reducing it, we had found a cure, and there is less need for the money to save our coal miners and to heal them. That is contrary to what is happening. If anything, it is exacerbating, and it is growing quicker, faster, and younger people are getting this horrible disease more than ever before.

What we are asking for—my colleagues on both sides of the aisle—is to join us here today to demonstrate our commitment to our promise. That is all it is.

I am asking the President of the United States, President Trump, please join in, Mr. President. I know you know the miners. I know you have spoken eloquently about the miners and your support for the miners. This is one way to truly support the miners, to make sure they get what they worked for and what they have earned—what they worked for and what they have earned. We have it paid for. It does not add one penny to the Nation's debt. Everything is ready to go. Please call Senator MCCONNELL and tell him to put this on the agenda. You put it on the agenda, Mr. President, and you have Senator MCCONNELL put in the amendment—a Senator from Kentucky who has an awful lot of coal miners in his State also. I will assure you we will get it passed, and we will do the job we should have done a long time ago for the people and families who have given everything they have, who have patriotically committed themselves to the energy this country has needed, and who have defended this country every step of the way.

With that, I yield to my friend from Ohio, Senator BROWN.

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, I say thank you to Senator MANCHIN. We are joined by Senator CAPITO, Senator WARREN, and I know, in spirit, a number of others. I think Senator CASEY will be here in a few minutes. I join them to remind this body—it is a constant reminder—that more than 86,000 miners—86,000 miners—are on the verge of facing massive cuts to the pensions and healthcare they earned.

This body doesn't always remember what collective bargaining is all about. Collective bargaining is when union members sit down and give up wages today to have something for the future, to have healthcare and to have retirement in the future.

Of those 86,000 miners, 1,200 miners and their families could lose their healthcare this month because of the Westmoreland and Mission Coal bankruptcies. The bankruptcy courts could allow these corporations to “shed their liabilities,” which is a fancy way of saying walk away from paying miners

the pensions and the healthcare benefits they absolutely earned.

Senator MANCHIN is working to fix this. I thank him for his efforts, and I thank others in this body. We know the mine workers aren't alone. The retirement security of hundreds of thousands of teamsters, ironworkers, carpenters, bakery workers, and so many other retirees is at risk.

We know this affects, in my State alone, 250 businesses, mostly small construction and transportation companies, 60,000 workers in my State alone, and the health of communities. Mine worker communities are especially hurt by this because so many of them live in the same community—local stores and local businesses.

As we know, Congress pretty much tried to ignore these workers and these retirees. Senator MANCHIN and I saw that day after day and week after week, but they fought back. We saw workers rally. They rallied in very hot weather on the Capitol lawn, and they rallied in very cold weather on the Capitol lawn. They rallied. They called. They wrote letters. We have seen those camo UMWA T-shirts around the Capitol. Many of them are veterans. They fought for their country. We owe it to them to fight for them.

We made progress on the bipartisan Pensions Committee that Senator MANCHIN and I sat on. Thanks to Senator PORTMAN, also from my State, and members of both parties who put in months of good work in good faith on this.

I am committed to these miners and workers. We will not give up. That is why I brought Rita Lewis as my guest to the State of the Union Address down the hall last week. Rita Lewis is the widow of Butch Lewis, the teamster who died from a heart attack a couple of years ago, in large part, we think—she thinks, his family thinks brought on by the pressure of fighting for his union, his Teamsters 100—1 million members around the country.

It is about the dignity of work. When work has dignity, we honor the retirement security people have earned.

As I said, people in this town don't always understand the collective bargaining process. People give up money today to earn those pensions. If you love your country, you fight for people who make it work, people like these mineworkers.

Mr. MANCHIN. Madam President, I want to mention one more thing and then I will turn it over to my colleague, my friend from West Virginia, Senator CAPITO.

The reason this is so urgent, our miners' pensions are in dire need. It goes first. They come to insolvency by 2022. What happens is we are one bankruptcy away—one bankruptcy from one coal company—of this thing tumbling down in 2019. When it starts tumbling, then you have the Central States that will come right behind it, the PBGC becomes insolvent, and then we have serious problems. That is why we are

working with urgency for this to be adopted and fixed now.

With that, I want to go ahead and turn it over to my friend and colleague, the Senator from West Virginia, Mrs. CAPITO.

Mrs. CAPITO. Madam President, I am really pleased to be here to join in the colloquy with my fellow Senators, Mr. MANCHIN, Senator BROWN from Ohio, and Senator WARNER from Virginia.

This is important. This is really important. I could say I look around the room, and it is important to us, but it is important even more granularly to some other folks who are right here watching what we are doing.

Many of us have worked together previously in order to save retiree health benefits for 22,000 retired miners in 2017, following the bankruptcies of Patriot, Alpha, and Walter Resources. Today we are back together to advocate for another over 1,000 retirees and beneficiaries whose healthcare is impacted by the Westmoreland Coal bankruptcy, as Senator MANCHIN described.

It is also critical that we redouble our efforts to find a solution to the 1974 UMWA Pension Fund. If we do nothing—if we do nothing, which I don't believe is an option—this pension fund, which provides 83,000 current beneficiaries with their pensions, will be insolvent by 2022. That is getting close, and insolvency can come even sooner, depending on market conditions.

So combined with the 20,000 people who have a vested right to future benefits, more than 100,000 people are covered by this pension plan. As Senator MANCHIN said, these are hard-working people who were promised and who, in the course of their working lives, gave up something so they could have a better peace of mind later on. They worked hard day in and day out. They powered our communities and industries and helped our country achieve greatness, even in the toughest times, and they did that with the promise of healthcare and a pension that would allow them to live with dignity in retirement.

We are not talking about lavish pensions. I think this is an important point. The average benefit paid by this fund is \$560 per month. These retirees are not getting rich on their pension plans, and they are not taking lavish expenditures, but without this monthly benefit, many of them would be living on the edge of poverty, if they are not already.

One miner from Logan, WV, who worked in the mines for 36 years wrote:

Please keep fighting for our pension. I receive \$303.34 monthly. We need this badly to help pay for food, medicine, and other bills.

Another retired miner from Richwood, WV, who worked in the mines for 17 years, wrote that his monthly check of \$192 “is not a lot of money, but it means a lot,” and on top of that, he earned it. It helps him make his ends meet.

Another miner from Kistler, WV, who mined for over 35 years, expressed concern that he might not be able to pay his expenses or help his daughter in college without that monthly pension check.

Failing to fix the pension fund would have a terrible impact on communities where many of these miners live. More than 25,000 pension fund beneficiaries live in the State of West Virginia, and they received \$200 million in benefits last year. If they didn't spend that money in their community supporting businesses and other jobs in our coal-field communities—if you subtract those funds out of the community, you would have a significant economic blow.

We have a solution that will prevent the insolvency of the pension fund and protect our retired miners, their families, and their communities. We should pass legislation that expands the use of the same transfer of payments used to support retiree healthcare to make the pension fund solvent. I have supported various forms of that kind of legislation over the years, but as we come closer to the time—2022—when the pension fund will become insolvent, we must redouble our efforts. That is why I appreciate Senator MANCHIN's advocacy. I appreciate his sense of urgency, and I share that.

At the same time, our West Virginia representatives, along with representatives from the States—DAVID MCKINLEY, ALEX MOONEY, and CAROL MILLER—are leading a bipartisan effort in the House to fix this problem as well.

I will keep fighting alongside all of you and all of them and others I see until we enact a solution that keeps the promise of our hard-working coal miners.

Thank you.

I yield back.

Mr. MANCHIN. Madam President, at this time, I would like for the former Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia and the senior Senator from Virginia to please have the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. WARNER. First of all, Madam President, I want to thank my colleague from West Virginia, Senator CAPITO, for her comments. I know shortly we are going to hear from the Senator from Pennsylvania. We heard from the Senator from Ohio.

This is sometimes hard for me to say as a former Governor of Virginia to a former Governor of West Virginia, but I want particularly those who are following this issue to know that no one in this body has fought for miners harder, longer, more passionately, more consistently than JOE MANCHIN.

It was only through his repeated efforts—and this man is like a dog with a bone in his mouth who will not let it go. At times he is stiff in the spine with folks on this side of the aisle when they wanted to say: Well, maybe no. We ought to move to something else. He has come back and back and back again.

So I am honored to stand with him one more time. Let me again say that it is with some challenge that someone from the Commonwealth of Virginia has to say these many nice things about somebody from West Virginia, but the folks in the Gallery ought to know there has been no one who has been a better advocate for miners than the Senator from West Virginia.

I don't think there is a Member of the Senate—I know at least on this side of the aisle—who has not heard at least a half dozen times about the promises Harry Truman made to the miners in 1946 and how it is our obligation to keep that word and to keep that promise.

The Senator from West Virginia has indicated why this is timely. Again, it is because we have the challenges around the pension fund. We have other challenges, but we have a crisis right now.

We talked about Westmoreland—the Westmoreland bankruptcy, 1,200 miners, 500 of those live in Virginia. If we can't get a solution on this deal right now on the American Miners Act, then a lot of those miners and their families are going to go bankrupt because their day of reckoning is already upon us.

I want to echo what the Senator from West Virginia said to urge the majority leader and, for that matter, the minority leader that there is a way—if we do the rational, sensible thing and not shut down the government on Friday, we ought to take advantage of making sure the American Miners Act is part of that provision. I can think of nothing better, as we go into the work period, than to try to give miners some certainty.

Let me just mention one other item that the American Miners Act had, and that is the strengthening of the Black Lung Disability Trust Fund. This is also an issue that, if we don't get it resolved, the amount of contributions that go into that trust fund will drop in half.

I don't think many folks realize—and I think this is particularly the case in West Virginia and Southwest Virginia—black lung is still a real, enormous medical challenge. As a matter of fact, we have now seen growth in large populations in my State, and I know in West Virginia, as well, of advanced black lung cases called complicated black lung, which has an even more devastating effect.

If this trust fund is cut in half, based upon legislation that took place at the end of calendar year 2018, the ability of the trust fund to meet the needs of these miners and their families, who are still hard hit by a debilitating disease—we are not going to be able to give them, again, the high-quality care they deserve. It is way past time to fix this problem. Let's take that step.

We have one of these large pieces of legislation, hopefully, that the President will not decide to veto, that we will get through. Wouldn't it be—I ask the Senator from West Virginia this

before I cede to the Senator from Pennsylvania, but sometimes, with these giant bills, strange things pop out at the end of the day, and you kind of wonder how they got in. Wouldn't it be great if, on this mini giant bill, one of the things that popped out might be the promised relief for our miners in terms of healthcare and their pensions? This is something I believe, we, as a country, owe to the miners—back, yes, to President Truman's promise in 1946.

I stand with all of my colleagues on this issue. I particularly thank, again, my friend the Senator from West Virginia for his great leadership and his willingness to stand tall time and again. Let's see if we can get it done this time.

With that, Madam President, I yield to the Senator from West Virginia.

Mr. MANCHIN. Madam President, I thank, first of all, the Senator from Virginia for fighting for his coal miners in Southwest Virginia.

They have been out there fighting in Westmoreland, and we have 1,200 miners about ready to lose everything that we had to fight for to gain. They are going to lose their pensions. They are going to lose, also, the healthcare. We have to get them in the bill. We have to get our trust fund on the black lung restored.

Mr. WARNER. Right, all we have to try to do with the trust fund is to get it back to the status quo.

Mr. MANCHIN. I am going to make one more plea to the President. I will do that after my good friend and senior Senator from Pennsylvania speaks about his miners, whom he supports.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. CASEY. Madam President, I thank the senior Senator from West Virginia for his time today, but, more importantly, as the Senator from Virginia, Mr. WARNER, said, Senator MANCHIN has fought harder than anyone in this Chamber on behalf of men and women, whether they are coal miners or their families or their spouses.

This is a very simple debate. It is not a debate about some far-off, complex issue. This is about a promise—a promise that was made to coal miners and their families in the 1940s.

The only question—a real simple question—is that we are either going to keep the promise or not. It is as simple as that. Both parties, both Houses, and the administration—this is not complicated. We made substantial progress, but it took far too long, and there are some people in this Chamber who have been blocking it for far too long on healthcare. We got that done. That is the good news.

The bad news is, the pension issue is still unresolved. There is still a lot of suffering, a lot of uncertainty, a lot of trauma because two branches of government haven't done enough for these families.

I come from a State where large portions of our State were dependent upon the sweat and the blood of working

men and women, especially coal miners. Stephen Crane, the great novelist, wrote an essay in the early 1900s—actually late 1800s—about all of the dangers in a coal mine and all of the ways a miner could die. He described the mine as a place of “inscrutable darkness” and “a soundless place of tangible loneliness.” That is how he described the work of the coal miner.

I know we made progress in the intervening generation since then, but that work has always been difficult. It has always been dark and dangerous, but the people who did it kept their promise. They kept their promise to their employer to work every day and kept their promise to their family. Many of them kept their promise to their country when they served in World War II or Korea or Vietnam or any conflict after that, even up to the present day—but especially those who were serving in those years.

The only question is whether this government and all of us here—and both parties are on the hook here—whether we are going to keep our promise along with this administration and any future administration. It is as simple as that.

We have some work to do here to make sure that promise is fulfilled. These families, these miners have already kept their promise. They are done. This isn't something extra we are giving them.

All we are doing is our part. We are obligated here, and I am grateful that the senior Senator from West Virginia and others have worked together to make sure that this issue is front and center, even as we are dealing with a range of other issues.

I yield the floor.

Mr. MANCHIN. Madam President, I will wrap up now, and I want to, first of all, thank the Senator from Pennsylvania and the Senators from West Virginia and Ohio for speaking so eloquently for the people who have worked so hard for our country.

This has been a bipartisan movement. This has been bipartisan. I thank all of my Republican colleagues for supporting the hard-working people they all had in their States. We all benefited from the energy they produced for our great country, to defend ourselves in two wars. We had the greatest economy—the only superpower in the world—because of what they have done every day and the sacrifices they have made for us.

Mr. President, if you are watching, if you get a copy of this tape, I am pleading with you. I am pleading with you, Mr. President, on behalf of 87,000 retirees: Please help us. One phone call from you to Majority Leader MCCONNELL to support and adopt the American Miners Act of 2019, which is S. 27—ask him to take this up immediately. We can put it on the bill that we are about ready to open to keep the government open or he can take immediate action. But, Mr. President, you can make a difference. These are peo-

ple who supported you, and I know you support them, and this is the way you can show it.

They are only asking for what they worked for. It does not cost the government one penny of debt—not one penny of debt for the taxpayers. We have payers. It has been bipartisan. It came out of the Finance Committee in a bipartisan movement under the leadership of Senator HATCH. I am very grateful for that.

You will see the miners going around; they make an effort every week, faithfully, to come here. There are real faces, real people, real families who are involved and affected by our inaction. We are asking for your help, Mr. President.

I yield the floor, respectfully.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

MAINTAINING AIR FORCE STRENGTH

Mrs. FISCHER. Madam President, I rise today to support the Air Force's plan to expand the 386 operational squadrons.

Since the earliest days of flight, the United States has been an aviation leader. From the time of the U.S. Army Air Corps through today's modern U.S. Air Force, our Nation has always been at the forefront of air combat.

From air-to-air combat to aerial refueling, to the intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance conducted by the planes of Nebraska's own 55th Wing, the U.S. Air Force is renowned as the dominant force in the sky.

Recent developments have put that advantage at risk. Around the world, nations are rapidly modernizing their capabilities by investing millions in their air forces and air defenses, threatening our ability to claim and maintain air superiority.

Rapid advances in anti-access/area-denial technology and a coordinated, calibrated effort by nations like China and Russia pose a significant threat to our ability to operate in contested airspace.

For decades, we have been accustomed to flying unconstrained, fighting adversaries on the ground that lack modern technology and the ability to seriously threaten our freedom to conduct aerial missions.

The face of 21st century warfare is changing. Competitors are rapidly closing the gap, and while our Air Force remains the most professional and effective air combat force in the world, these nations are pouring hundreds of millions of dollars into matching and exceeding our capability.

We have a choice. If we fail to react, we risk falling behind and losing the air dominance that has been essential to U.S. national security for decades. We cannot sit back and accept that possibility.

We must meet this challenge head-on. The United States must adapt, invest, and show the world that we will never cede control of the skies to our enemies.

Recently, the Air Force conducted a rigorous analysis of future air combat

scenarios that we could face in the coming decades. Utilizing over 2,000 simulations based on the latest intelligence to assess force performance against strategic competitors, the Air Force produced a model of the requirements necessary to fulfill the goals of the national defense strategy.

This analysis found that we will need an array of advanced capabilities to counter ongoing and robust military modernization by our competitors. The assessment determined that we must focus our own modernization around several key areas to ensure our continued ability to defend the homeland and to defeat strategic threats.

Perhaps most critically, this analysis, which the Air Force calls “the Air Force We Need,” has determined that to be effective in achieving these goals, we must grow the Air Force to 386 operational squadrons.

Given the growing threats we face, the Air Force will play a key role in any future conflict. That is why I believe it is imperative that we act on this analysis and align the necessary resources to bridge the gap between the Air Force we have and the Air Force we need and reach that goal of 386 squadrons.

The need to grow the Air Force is not some arbitrary desire for more planes. The reality is that, even today, our Air Force is too small, and it is stretched too thin to properly execute all of its missions.

Right now, the Air Force has 39 percent fewer aircraft and 58 percent fewer combat-coded fighter squadrons than it did during Operation Desert Storm, and it is struggling to maintain a rapidly aging fleet. All the while, Russia and China continue to invest hundreds of millions of dollars into new technology and equipment that is designed to seize control of the sky.

That is why it is imperative that we act to provide the resources necessary to grow to 386 operational squadrons. We simply cannot face these challenges with one of the smallest Air Forces we have ever had. That is a recipe for disaster. It is a recipe for defeat.

Instead, we must rebuild the fleet. We must increase flying hours, improve training, add pilots and maintainers, and retain the best airmen we have. We have to act now, without delay.

While the “Air Force We Need” adds significantly to the physical capability of our Air Force, it is about more than simply adding equipment to the flight line. This plan will also modernize the way we fight. With an increased focus on “jointness” and integration with advanced technology like unmanned systems and artificial intelligence, we can continue adapting to stay ahead of our enemies, all of whom have spent years watching and learning from us in the field.

As a senior member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, I commend the Air Force for putting forward a bold vision for the future. I believe if we truly are to execute the goals of the

national defense strategy, this is the kind of analysis and planning that has to happen, and it must be followed by action from Congress.

That is why I urge my colleagues in the Senate to join me in supporting a robust defense budget and investing in the enhanced capability the Air Force needs to continue its mission of protecting the American people.

At this critical juncture in the Nation’s history and amid a fundamental shift in the type of threats we face, now is not the time to let partisanship get in the way of what must be done to continue supporting our airmen and maintainers. Let’s work together so that we can build the Air Force that we need so that, above all else, the world knows that the U.S. Air Force will never allow any adversary to dictate how, when, and where we fly.

Thank you.

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

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

NOMINATION OF WILLIAM BARR

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I rise this afternoon to speak regarding the nomination of William Barr to serve as the next Attorney General of our country.

First, I want to take a few minutes to reflect on the circumstances surrounding this vacancy. I believe that every Member of this Chamber should use this occasion to decide, ultimately, whether we believe Mr. Barr will be the Attorney General for all Americans or whether Mr. Barr will be the Attorney General, really, for one American.

When President-elect Trump selected then-Senator Jeff Sessions, our colleague from Alabama, to serve as Attorney General for this country, it brought me no joy to vote against our long-time colleague and friend. The truth was, though, that our views too often diverged on too many important issues that included immigration, healthcare, civil rights, voting rights, LGBT rights, environmental protection, and more.

After considerable prayer and reflection, I reached the conclusion that Senator Sessions would not be an Attorney General for all Americans.

Unfortunately, during his tenure at the Department of Justice, he went on to preside over a number of divisive policies and decisions, including the Muslim ban, overturning protections for Dreamers and asylum seekers, enacting a cruel policy of family separation at our southern border, and failing to defend the constitutionality of the Affordable Care Act in court.

I have not been shy about expressing my disagreement with these decisions,

and others, made by the Department of Justice during the current administration. However, one area where I strongly agreed with Attorney General Sessions was his decision to recuse himself from the special counsel’s investigation into Russian interference in our 2016 elections.

One of my core values is to figure out what is the right thing to do and to try to do it—not what is politically expedient, not what is easy but what is the right thing to do. After it became clear that then-Senator Sessions provided testimony to the Senate Judiciary Committee that called into question his impartiality on matters relating to Russia and the 2016 election, Attorney General Sessions recused himself from all matters related to the 2016 Presidential election. That was the right thing to do. It certainly wasn’t what our President wanted him to do. The President has said as much repeatedly. I should say that, maybe, he has tweeted as much repeatedly.

The President repeatedly admonished Attorney General Sessions for doing what I think many of us believe was the right thing to do. Here is what the President tweeted on June 5, 2018:

The Russian Witch Hunt Hoax continues, all because Jeff Sessions didn’t tell me he was going to recuse himself . . . I would have quickly picked someone else. So much time and money wasted, so many lives ruined . . . and Sessions knew better than most that there was No Collusion!

Let me be clear, Special Counsel Robert Mueller’s investigation is not a witch hunt. It is, in fact, the unanimous opinion of the U.S. intelligence Agencies and law enforcement community that Russia attacked our democracy and interfered in our 2016 elections.

As a result of the special counsel’s ongoing investigation, 34 individuals and 3 companies have been indicted or pled guilty to a range of crimes. This includes the Trump campaign manager, the Trump deputy campaign manager, Mr. Trump’s National Security Advisor, and, most recently, President Trump’s longtime political advisor.

Special Counsel Mueller is a lifelong Republican who served with distinction in the Vietnam war. I think I am the last Member of this body who served in the Vietnam war, but he served there with real distinction. He served with distinction as our FBI Director following the September 11 attacks. He is not conducting a partisan witch hunt. He and the team he leads are striving to find out the truth and, in doing so, help us prevent future attacks on our democracy.

I believe we should be doing everything in our power to allow Special Counsel Mueller and his team to conduct and complete this investigation free from political interference and partisan games.

During the years I was privileged to serve as chairman of the Homeland Security Committee, Bob Mueller was the head of the FBI. I had a chance to work

with him and to get to know him. My wife and I know his wife. He is among the finest people I have ever known in the military, outside of the military, in government service, and outside of government service.

Unfortunately, President Trump does not view political independence as a prerequisite for the job of Attorney General. Instead, he tends to view political independence as a disloyal act, an offense for which one should be fired. Just ask former Acting Attorney General Sally Yates. Just ask former FBI Director Comey, whom I also came to know well during the time I served on the Homeland Security Committee, including as its chairman. Just ask former Attorney General Sessions.

Recall with me, if you will, after the November election, President Trump fired Attorney General Sessions and named the Attorney General's Chief of Staff, Matt Whitaker, as Acting Attorney General. This was a curious decision, as well as a legally questionable decision. Why would the President go outside the line of succession at the Department of Justice? I fear it is because of Mr. Whitaker's public comments regarding the Mueller investigation.

Mr. Whitaker previously likened the special counsel's investigation to a "fishing expedition," and a "witch hunt" and implied that following the truth "could be damaging to the President of the United States and his family—and by extension, to our country."

Really? Could he have been serious in saying that getting to the bottom of all this could be damaging to the President of the United States and his family and, by extension, to our country?

Another President, a long time ago, Thomas Jefferson, used to say these words: If the people know the truth, they won't make a mistake.

Those are hardly the views of our current President. It saddens me to say that.

Despite publicly expressing these views that clearly call into question his impartiality, Mr. Whitaker did not recuse himself from the Mueller investigation when he assumed of the role of Acting Attorney General, even though he received a recommendation to recuse himself from ethics officials at the Department of Justice.

Mr. Whitaker's staggering unfitness for the job is a big part of the reason why my initial reaction was positive when President Trump nominated William Barr to be our Attorney General. After all, Mr. Barr previously served as Deputy Attorney General and Attorney General during the administration of George Herbert Walker Bush, someone I revered. I think many of us revered him.

By all accounts, Mr. Barr is a well-qualified nominee, someone who has been a fine public servant throughout many years of public service. I strongly believe that we need Senate-confirmed leadership at the Department of Justice. I want to make it clear that dur-

ing normal times, I might be inclined to support Mr. Barr's nomination. In fact, I probably would.

But these are not normal times. These are extraordinary times. In addition to firing the Attorney General and the FBI Director for their views on the Russia inquiry, President Trump has reportedly asked those around him why he didn't have an Attorney General who is looking out for his personal interests. According to reports, the President has said, "Where's my Roy Cohn?" during moments of crisis. For those who may not know Roy Cohn, he was President Trump's personal lawyer and fixer, who pushed legal tactics to the limits and also served with Senator Joe McCarthy during a very dark period in our Nation's history and a very dark period in this Senate's history.

This is how President Trump views the role of Attorney General—not as a lawyer to defend the rights of all Americans but as a fixer who will look out for him. Moreover, in his State of the Union address last week, President Trump highlighted what he sees as "ridiculous, partisan investigations." He went on to say: "If there is going to be peace and legislation, there cannot be war and investigations."

It is against this extraordinary backdrop that we must ask ourselves: What are Mr. Barr's views on Presidential power, and what are his views on the investigation led by Robert Mueller?

As it turns out, we don't have to guess what the answer is to that question. In an unsolicited 19-page memo that Mr. Barr sent to Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein and President Trump's personal lawyers, Mr. Barr shares his views, and they are clearly hostile to the special counsel's investigation.

In a memo entitled "Mueller's Obstruction Theory," Mr. Barr raises doubt about the special counsel's ability to follow the truth while going on to defend President Trump's actions and even suggesting that the President has the power to limit the scope of this inquiry.

In that same memo, Mr. Barr states that the special counsel's investigation into obstruction of justice may do "lasting damage to the presidency."

I believe that reasonable people can disagree, as I frequently did with my friend, former Senator, and then-Attorney General, Jeff Sessions.

It is clear to me, however, that despite whatever your views may be toward the special counsel's investigation, the views expressed in his memo not only warrant Mr. Barr's recusal from the special counsel's investigation, but they cry out for it.

Attorney General Sessions did the right thing when confronted with a similar decision. However, despite expressing these biased views from President Trump's own personal lawyers, Mr. Barr says he will not recuse himself from the special counsel's investigation if he is confirmed. To make matters worse, Mr. Barr refuses to

commit to making the special counsel's final report public.

Earlier, I asked for us to consider whether Mr. Barr will be the Attorney General for all Americans or whether Mr. Barr will be the Attorney General for one American. That one American happens to go by another name, Individual 1, which is the legal moniker given to President Trump in the Southern District of New York for directing his personal attorney to violate Federal campaign finance law.

Like Mr. Whitaker's public comments prior to his elevation to Acting Attorney General, I fear that Mr. Barr's memo may have been an audition for the job and that his selection may not have been a coincidence. During his Senate hearing in 1989, Mr. Barr plainly stated that the Attorney General "is the President's lawyer."

Colleagues, these are extraordinary times for our Nation. We must make it clear to the American people that the Attorney General is not the President's lawyer. We need independence at the Department of Justice now more than ever. While I hope I am wrong—very wrong—it is my belief that Trump used this appointment as an opportunity to protect himself rather than to protect the constitutional rights of all Americans.

Ultimately, for all of these reasons I have laid out, I have concluded that despite his earlier service to our Nation—distinguished service in many instances—Mr. Barr does not, in this instance, meet the standard that is necessary to be the Attorney General for our country now.

Sadly, on that note, I yield the floor. **THE PRESIDING OFFICER.** The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, in the next 24 hours, the Senate will do what it should do, which is to actually go through the process of advice and consent with a nominee—this time, for an Attorney General—William Barr.

William Barr is eminently qualified. It has been interesting to hear my colleagues on the other side of the aisle talk all day long today about how qualified William Barr is but then always pause with a "but" and take off on the Mueller investigation.

Let me explain what this means by "eminently qualified." He has had an exceptionally impressive legal career. He serves in one of the top U.S. firms. He began his legal career decades ago as, actually, an analyst and as legislative counsel for the CIA. He worked on domestic policy for Ronald Reagan. He served as the Deputy Attorney General from 1990 to 1991, and then he served as the Attorney General of the United States for George Herbert Walker Bush from 1991 to 1993.

When he was appointed as the Attorney General in 1991, his nomination passed out of the Judiciary Committee with a unanimous vote of 14 to 0. The Judiciary chairman at the time—a gentleman named Joe Biden—called him a fine Attorney General. He was overwhelmingly confirmed by the Senate in

1991—a less partisan time. It was when Democrats and Republicans both looked at his qualifications, not at a political agenda.

We have a unique moment in which to look at someone who was a good Attorney General for the United States, one who served faithfully but then had a season away from that, only to turn around and do it again. How many of us wouldn't want to redo something we did years ago and say: I did it, and it went well, but if I were to have a little more time and could do it over again, I would do things better. We have that chance with William Barr. It is a unique moment for us as a nation to be able to bring somebody like that back again.

What happened under his watch?

During that time period, he believed and still believes that the personal security of the citizens of the United States is the primary, first duty of the government's and of the U.S. Attorney General's. Despite what is being smeared about him on this floor over and over again—with people saying he is being hired to be the President's personal attorney—for those who have actually met with him and talked with him, he speaks openly about law enforcement in the United States. He talks about working with local law enforcement and with U.S. attorneys to actually prosecute crime and go after the issues that distract from American values and that keep the American people from living the American dream.

During his tenure as Attorney General, he spearheaded the initiative called the Weed and Seed Program, which removed violent drug offenders from the streets. Under Attorney General Barr, in the 1990s, violent crime in the United States went down because they were aggressively prosecuting for crime.

He is also the Attorney General who supervised the enforcement and implementation of the Americans with Disabilities Act. It was an incredibly difficult legal process to have gone through and to have implemented nationwide in order to have protected the rights of individuals who had been overlooked in our country for two centuries—those with disabilities. It was a major feature of what he did during that time period.

He brings this unique, important perspective from his dealings with law enforcement, his background, his experience. All of those things look like they would make a slam dunk with which to come to this floor and have wide, bipartisan support except for this—that he is being used as a message in the Mueller investigation. It is not that he said: I am going to stop the Mueller investigation. It is not that he said anything else about that. He did write a 19-page letter as an attorney in the law practice that is helping President Trump get through this process.

He wrote: Hey, as former Attorney General, here are all of the things of

which you should be advised. When you are working with the President, here are the key features.

It seems like a kind thing to do for any President. He wrote the letter with all of that information in it, and he gave those details. Fine.

He has also said over and over again that he is not going to undercut the Mueller investigation. Yet some of my Democratic colleagues have said: No, it has to be more than that. He has to recuse himself like Jeff Sessions did. He has to recuse himself. If he doesn't recuse himself, he can't be there.

May I remind you that the reason Jeff Sessions had to recuse himself was that he was on the campaign team for the President, and when he got into the position of Attorney General, the ethics team from the Department of Justice advised him: Hey, since you were on the campaign team, you can't be the investigator for the campaign team. At that time, Attorney General Jeff Sessions agreed and said that it would violate ethics for a person on the team to help investigate the team, so he recused himself. That was not William Barr. There is all of this talk that he has to recuse himself like Jeff Sessions did, but it is a completely different situation. Why should he recuse himself?

Apparently, people don't want the Mueller investigation to have any supervision, which, again, I find fascinating politically because I distinctly remember, during the Clinton administration, that many of my Democratic colleagues who are still in this Chamber now were furious with Ken Starr. They can't believe Donald Trump would say he is frustrated with the Mueller team, but they had no problem with the Clinton White House's literally saying: We are going to go to war against Ken Starr. The term "witch hunt" is not new. The Clinton administration used that same term against Ken Starr. This is a fascinating side-by-side to me, to be able to look at this.

Here is what I would advise: Let the Mueller investigation finish its job. It has a job. Let it do its job. Quite frankly, the Attorney General shouldn't be in the day-to-day operations of the Mueller investigation. That is why we have a special counsel. Yet, at some point, the special counsel has to turn information over to someone. William Barr is not going to be the one writing all of the information from the special counsel. He should neither have this incredibly high standard nor be held to some standard of doing something that he is not going to do—try to interfere in this process. He has made that very clear.

He has also made it very clear verbally, in committee settings, and in written statements that he is going to release whatever comes out, as under the law, from the Mueller investigation. I think some people believe that the Mueller investigation is going to release a big, giant written report like the Senate Intel Committee will do.

Yet the Mueller investigation's task is not to release some big, giant report; its task is for them, as prosecutors, to go through and recommend indictments. If they choose to write a report, that is up to them. Now, this Congress could try to mandate that, but that is not their requirement. They are a special counsel. This is a group of attorneys that is making recommendations. That is all it is.

Don't judge an Attorney General nominee based on some accusation from some thought of what might happen and what he might do. Judge him on what he actually says and what he has done. Hold him to that standard.

I have also had some folks back in my State say they have heard that William Barr supports the possibility of some States having red flag laws on the Second Amendment. Now, I spoke to William Barr. He came to my office. We spent about 45 minutes together. We went through a whole litany of questions and answers about his background and the issues he has dealt with, his passions, his dealings with local law enforcement, his cooperation with State prisons, consent decrees, religious liberty. We talked of drug trials and processing. We talked about the whole issue of gang violence—on and on and on—including the Second Amendment.

He again reiterated he is supportive of the Second Amendment in every area. If someone loses his Second Amendment rights, it will only be based on due process, which is with a court's being involved. That has always been the standard for us as a country.

I have seen some of the things that have been written about him, one being that he is not supportive of the Second Amendment. That is absolutely false, and I can say those things based on my personal conversation with him after having asked him those questions. See not the things that have been written about him but the things that he has actually written and said about the Second Amendment. He is a protector of our rights under the Constitution. It is one of the things to which he has sworn under oath to protect as the previous Attorney General and would have to swear to again under oath.

This is a simple thing for us. We are looking at a qualified nominee who has an excellent background, the experience, and a passion to protect our country; who has shown a passion for law enforcement, protecting our Nation, and reducing violent crime in our country. I look forward to his stepping in and taking the lead in the Department of Justice.

May I make a side note on this? Again, this nomination reminds me of why it is so important that this Senate fix its nomination process. We have a broken nomination process—period.

If you take the last six Presidents combined, when they were putting their staffs together in their first 2 years of office, it was 25 times that someone in the Senate asked for additional time to debate that person. It

could be any one of 100. For the last six Presidents, it was a total of 25 times that one person asked for additional time to debate. In this body, it was 25 times that somebody said for the last six Presidents combined that we need a little more time to debate this person. They asked for additional what is called postcloture debate time. That is a full intervening day—24 hours—plus an additional 30 hours after that just to debate. That is fine. For highly controversial nominees, it is entirely appropriate.

Yet, in the first 2 years of President Trump's Presidency, that request has been made 128 times—25 times for the last 6 Presidents combined versus 128 times for this President. It is not because they have been all that controversial as nominees, although I am fully aware that President Trump has nominated some folks who have created heated debate on this floor, but it was certainly not 128 times. In fact, many of the times after we had had that postcloture intervening day, plus another 30 hours, those people passed either unanimously or with 90-plus votes. They were not controversial. It was an attempt to shut down this Senate and shut down this President to keep him from hiring his staff. That has never happened before. There has never been a time that the Senate has tried to prevent an elected President from hiring his own team—until now.

In May of 2017, I made a proposal to fix our postcloture vote debate time, seeing what would happen. I continued that conversation over and over again with many of my Democratic colleagues.

The last session, we brought in front of the Rules Committee a proposal that was made by Harry Reid and then was passed under Harry Reid's time and his leadership in the Senate—that is, to limit postcloture debate time to streamline that process.

I brought that exact same proposal back out and said: Republicans voted with Democrats to make sure this process would work in 2013 and 2014. Now will Democrats vote with Republicans on the exact same language? And we will do this together to fix this process.

The Democrats gave me the Heisman at that point and said: No. It was good of you to vote with us, but we are not going to vote with you.

That was all last session.

I brought up another proposal that went through the Rules Committee today. It is a simple proposal. Historically in this body, there hasn't been a lot of postcloture debate time on nominees, especially not on nominees like district court judges or Deputy Assistant Secretaries of some entity.

I met today with the person who will be the IRS counsel, the counsel of the IRS, which I dare guess no one in this room could name right now, and certainly most people in America couldn't, but they have been blocked for a year, so the IRS does not have a

Chief Counsel. Not a controversial nominee—will probably pass unanimously or near unanimously. Just to prevent the IRS from having a counsel, they have been slowed down.

My proposal is simple. We can still have postcloture debate. If anyone in this body wanted to slow down any nominee, they could still do that. They could request a full additional day, 24 hours, and then in the next day, instead of adding an additional 30 hours, it would be just an additional 2 hours. So instead of getting a full day plus 30 hours, they would get a full day plus 2 hours. That is still a lot of time.

Quite frankly, only 25 times in the last six Presidents have there been any requests for any additional time. So that would still allow a long period of time, but it would expedite the process so at least we could go through this.

If we don't fix this now, this will become the habit of the Senate from here on out. When the next Democratic President is elected, I can assure you that we will have the same issue with nominees that President Trump is having because it only takes one Senator to say: No. I want a whole intervening day plus 30 hours for every one of your nominees.

By the way, the President puts 1,200 people through the process of nomination—1,200. So count the times that will happen in the days ahead.

I know this is part of the "resist Trump" movement and to shut down the operation of his Presidency, but it actually is going to shut down the operation of every President from here on out if we don't fix this rule.

I am asking my Democratic colleagues to look long, to not look right in front of us, to look at the future of where this is really headed and what is really happening to this Senate. The precedent that is being set right now on debate will be the standard in the days ahead. Let's fix it now so we can get this resolved long term for the sake of our country and do this right.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I come to the floor this afternoon to express my deep opposition to the nomination of Mr. William Barr to be our Nation's next Attorney General.

His nomination comes at a very trying time for our country. As our own President frequently twists the truth and constantly pushes the limits of the law, the American people deserve to know that the Attorney General—the top law enforcement officer in the country—is committed, above all else, to seeking truth, defending their civil and constitutional rights, administering justice on their behalf, and safeguarding our country against threats to our democracy.

I wish Mr. Barr were the person who could right the ship and stand up for the American people no matter what. I wish he were the person who could help guide our country through this critical

juncture when questions about illegal payments involving both the Trump campaign and the Trump inaugural committee and Russia's interference in our elections and its attempts to influence millions of our friends and families must be fully explained to the public.

We know this is an administration that finds it so difficult to follow the law that it is being investigated in multiple jurisdictions at the Federal level—all of which would be overseen by Mr. Barr.

Sadly, it has become abundantly clear that Mr. Barr is incapable of being the impartial Attorney General people in communities across our country need and deserve and someone who stands up to the President when he is wrong.

Based on what I have seen over the past 2 years and despite the critical time we are in, I don't expect many of my Republican colleagues to join me on the floor today in order to defeat this nomination. Although people across the country have been raising red flags on this nomination, my Republican colleagues have been busy building the glidepath for Mr. Barr's nomination. In fact, just last week, the majority leader, standing here on the Senate floor, left little doubt about whether the majority would try to get this nomination sewn up. The leader referred to Mr. Barr as a "tried and true public servant" and a "proven professional" who was applying for the same job he got in 1991 under President George H. W. Bush. The job description, the majority leader said, "remains exactly the same as it was years ago." But that is the problem. Senate Republicans are still operating as though it is the early 1990s, as if the world around them has not changed, as if what we have experienced for the past 2 years is normal.

Well, on behalf of the American people, I urge us all to wake up. For the past 2 years, we have had a President whose only consistent agenda items are self-preservation and self-dealing, whether that means flouting the law or disregarding ethics, acting with impunity, violating norms and destroying relationships with our allies, firing those who challenge him and bullying those he can't, threatening jail time for political opponents, or changing Federal policy by tweet and based on his current mood.

On top of all that, President Trump faces a number of investigations, including serious questions about whether he has obstructed justice in order to make the special counsel's investigation into Russia's meddling in our elections go away. That is the same special counsel investigation that has already resulted in 34 indictments or guilty pleas to date. Despite what the President would like us to believe, that is far from a witch hunt.

When President Trump's first choice to be the next Attorney General is someone with highly questionable

views on Executive power, we have to be on alert.

When that nominee, Mr. Barr, can't adequately explain why, out of the blue—out of the blue—he sent a memo to the White House in order to criticize the special counsel investigation, absolve the President of questions about obstruction of justice, and make a case for less accountability with this President, we ought to be on alert.

When Mr. Barr writes that President Trump has “complete authority to start or stop a law enforcement proceeding,” we ought to be on alert.

Mr. Barr's memo makes no sense unless it was an audition for this job, and that is absolutely not how any President should select an Attorney General.

When we know that, if confirmed, Mr. Barr would be in charge of the special counsel investigation and would decide what, if anything, the public gets to know about the findings on Russia's 2016 election meddling, we ought to be on alert.

Someone who has written such an obviously flawed analysis of the investigation should not be put in charge of overseeing the investigation. That is just common sense.

People across this country sent us here to Congress not to shield the President from the law but to help restore integrity and independence to the Federal Government and to provide a check on the Executive branch, as outlined in the Constitution. And the idea that any Member of this Senate would support an Attorney General nominee who has openly and unequivocally advocated for less accountability when it comes to President Trump—that is just wrong, and the American people will not stand for it.

So to any of my colleagues who plan to support this nomination, I have a message: Seize this opportunity while you can to make it very clear to Mr. Barr and the Trump administration that you believe the American people deserve to know for sure that the findings on Russia's 2016 election meddling will be made public in order to get them the answers they deserve and that any attempt to cover up or hinder or otherwise muddy the waters around the Mueller investigation would be a serious disservice to the people we represent and will only lead to the further erosion of trust in our institution and our ability to work on their behalf.

The President is not above the law—not in the White House, not in New York, not anywhere. So Mr. Barr may be the Attorney General this President wants—someone to shield him from serious questions about abuse of power, someone who believes the President should be able to do more or less whatever he or she wants—but Mr. Barr is certainly not, in my opinion, the Attorney General this country needs, which is someone who will stand up for the rights of everyone else.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

THE GREEN NEW DEAL

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I came here this afternoon to give my customary weekly climate speech urging that it is time to wake up here, and I was planning to speak about a legal brief that a number of scientists, led by Robert Brulle and Naomi Oreskes, filed in the Ninth Circuit detailing the long history of the oil industry knowing about climate change, doing its own research to confirm what it knows about climate change, telling the public something they knew was false, and yet taking what they knew to be true and using it in their own internal planning. But something even better than that came up, so I come here to react to the—well, for starters, the Wall Street Journal editorial calling for a vote on the Green New Deal.

Let's go back a bit as to what the Wall Street Journal editorial page has been up to for the last, say, 20 years on climate change.

The Wall Street Journal editorial page has been a mouthpiece for the fossil fuel industry's climate denial. The messages of the fossil fuel industry are echoed and amplified through the Wall Street Journal editorial page. All the way up until 2011, if I recall correctly, they were simply denying that this was a problem. They constantly behave like what I would call the one-eyed accountant—looking only at the costs of responding to climate change, never the costs of climate change.

On this subject, for those who may be interested, I would actually like to incorporate by reference two previous climate speeches I gave on this completely bogus effort that has been maintained by the Wall Street Journal editorial page. The first was my speech of April 19, 2016, and then I went back at them again on July 24, 2018. They have been making it up for a very long time, and sure enough, up comes this latest in which just yesterday, February 12, they said: Let's have a vote in Congress on the Green New Deal as soon as possible. Then they went on with a lot of their usual one-eyed accountant stuff, never looking at the costs of climate change, only looking at the costs of preventing those harms, and they concluded: “Let's not hesitate. Take the Green New Deal resolution and put it to a vote forthwith.”

Along the way, they went into some of their usual canards about renewables, saying that “solar costs remain about 20 percent higher than natural gas while offshore wind is two-thirds more expensive” without subsidies—well, unless you look at the subsidy for fossil fuel, which of course they don't, and the subsidy for fossil fuel has been quantified by the International Monetary Fund at \$700 billion per year—\$700 billion per year in the United States—propping up the fossil fuel industry. By contrast, the little tiny tax adjustments that we get for solar and wind, which the fossil fuel industry is always pushing back against, are nothing. There is a monster of a subsidy in the

energy space, and it is the fossil fuel subsidy, but will the dear old Wall Street Journal editorial page ever admit that? Not a chance.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the article be printed in the RECORD at the end of my remarks.

That came out in the Wall Street Journal that morning. Then Leader MCCONNELL went out here to the Ohio Clock for his midday press conference, and guess what he said:

I've noted with great interest the Green New Deal, and we're going to be voting on that in the Senate. That'll give everybody an opportunity to go on record and see how they feel about the Green New Deal.

I am in the habit of pointing out here how the string-pulling takes place and how the fossil fuel industry directs certain things and the mouthpieces say certain things and then we behave certain ways, but this may be the land speed record for a response. The Wall Street Journal says it wants a congressional vote, and that very day the vote gets announced. It is almost funny, if the topic weren't so serious.

The whole idea that this is the Republican response to climate change is really classic. It is really classic. Since the Citizens United decision, which powered up the fossil fuel industry to have real bullying dominance in Congress—at least over the Republican Party—no Senator here today has been on any bill to meaningfully reduce carbon dioxide emissions. It is never a topic. Nobody wants to talk about it. It is like the unwelcome, embarrassing guest at the dinner party: Oh, my gosh. Climate change. No, we can't possibly talk about that.

Never mind that NASA—which, by the way, RIP, Opportunity. The Opportunity has been driving around on the surface of Mars for 15 years, sending back information to us about that planet. NASA scientists built that thing, sent it to Mars, landed it safely on Mars, and has been driving it around for 15 years. My God, what a project that was. What a brilliant thing. So when NASA scientists say, “Oh, and by the way, climate change is serious. You ought to listen,” and we don't, that behavior is hard to explain. When we are listening to the flacks of the fossil fuel industry and not the scientists of NASA—and, by the way, 13 or 14 Federal Agencies in the latest report that came out under the Trump administration—we are way past there being any serious factual or scientific dispute here. There are just political demands by the industry with the biggest conflict of interest ever that we can't bring this up.

For pretty much 10 years, since Citizens United, nobody has brought up a serious piece of legislation to limit carbon dioxide emissions on the Republican side. Not one. Zero. Now, the majority leader is going to break this streak and bring up the first carbon-related bill. It is actually not a real bill. It is a resolution, but he is going to bring it up with the intention of voting

against it. I kid you not. The majority leader has announced the intention of bringing up a resolution with the intention of voting against it. Who does that and why? Who had that brain-storm and where?

We will never understand this until we understand better how the anonymous dark money stuff flows around Washington. We need to clean that up. We need to pass the DISCLOSE Act. We need to make sure people know who is behind spending, who is behind advertising. We have to do all of that, but in the meantime, you do get these amazing moments in which the Wall Street Journal says—the editorial page, by the way. I think their correspondents, their reporters, are totally legitimate, and they do terrific work. It is the editorial page that is the problem child here.

So the Wall Street Journal editorial page says we need to have a vote on the Green New Deal. It takes less than a day for the majority leader to say we are going to have a vote on the Green New Deal, and he is calling up the first piece of climate legislation they have ever called up in the majority here, and they are calling it up to vote against it.

Isn't it finally time to have a real conversation about this? Isn't it finally time for there to be a Republican proposal? It has been nearly 10 years since Citizens United. I get it. The fossil fuel industry has enormous sway, but there comes a time when you even have to tell the biggest influencers in Congress that your day is over. It is time for us to treat with the facts and to work in a bipartisan fashion and to do what the people sent us here to do, which is to legislate.

So where is the Republican proposal? Where is the Republican plan? There isn't one. Nothing. Nada. Zip. Nihil. Nitchevo. They are going to call this up. They are going to call this up for a vote. I can hardly wait for this discussion. Bring it on, please.

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

[From the Wall Street Journal, Feb. 11, 2019]

VOTE ON THE GREEN NEW DEAL

(By The Editorial Board)

Every Member of Congress should step up and be counted.

Democrats rolled out their Green New Deal last week, and by all means let's have a national debate and then a vote in Congress—as soon as possible. Here in one package is what the political left really means when it says Americans need to do something urgently about climate change, so let's see who has the courage of those convictions.

Thanks to the resolution introduced last week by New York Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Massachusetts Sen. Ed Markey, there's already official language. While it's nonbinding, the 14 pages give a clear sense of direction and magnitude in calling for a “10-year national mobilization” to exorcise carbon from the U.S. economy.

President Obama's Clean Power Plan looks modest by comparison. The 10-year Green New Deal calls for generating 100% of power from renewables and removing greenhouse

gas emissions from manufacturing and transportation to the extent these goals are “technologically feasible.” Hint: They're not.

The plan also calls for “upgrading all existing buildings in the United States and building new buildings to achieve maximal energy efficiency, water efficiency, safety, affordability, comfort and durability, including through electrification.” That's all existing buildings, comrade.

Millions of jobs would have to be destroyed en route to this brave new green world, but not to worry. The resolution says the government would also guarantee “a job with a family-sustaining wage, adequate family and medical leave, paid vacations, and retirement security to all people of the United States.” Good that they're starting small.

Sorry to mention unhappy reality, but renewable sources currently make up only 17% of U.S. electric-power generation despite enormous federal and state subsidies. Wind and solar energy have become more competitive over the last decade as costs have plunged. But without subsidies, solar costs remain about 20% higher than natural gas while offshore wind is two-thirds more expensive. The bigger problem is solar and wind don't provide reliable power, so backup plants that burn fossil fuels are required to run on stand-by.

Germany has been gracious enough to show what can go wrong. Despite aggressive emissions goals, Germany's carbon emissions have been flat for most of the last decade as the country had to fall back on coal to balance off-shore wind generation. Last year Germany derived 29% of its power from wind and solar, but 38% from coal.

Meantime, taxes and rising power-generation costs have made Germany's electric rates the highest in Europe, slamming small manufacturers and consumers.

“The drag on competitiveness is particularly severe for small and middle-sized firms,” Eric Schweitzer, President of Germany's Chambers of Commerce, told Bloomberg News last year. German manufacturing has become less competitive due to soaring energy costs. Electric and natural gas prices in Germany are two to three times higher than in the U.S.

By contrast, the U.S. is having a modest manufacturing renaissance as shale drilling has created a cheap source of lower-carbon energy. Natural-gas prices have plunged by half over the last decade as production has increased 50%, mostly in the Marcellus and Utica formations in Pennsylvania, Ohio and West Virginia. Carbon emissions from power generation have fallen by 30% since 2005, mostly due to the substitution of coal with natural gas.

Meantime, oil production in Texas's Permian and North Dakota's Bakken shale deposits has soared 80%. Demand for drills, pipelines and other mining equipment has also boosted U.S. growth.

The Green New Deal means that all of this carbon energy and all of these jobs would have to be purged—at least in the U.S. China would suffer no such limits on its fossil-fuel production. Conservatives have long suspected that progressives want to use climate change to justify a government takeover of the free-market economy, but we never thought they'd be this candid about it.

Yet, remarkably, the Green New Deal has been met with hosannas from liberal interest groups and in Congress. It already has 67 cosponsors in the House and the support of 11 Democrats in the Senate including presidential candidates Kamala Harris, Cory Booker, Elizabeth Warren and Amy Klobuchar.

So let's not hesitate. Take the Green New Deal resolution and put it to a vote forthwith on the House and Senate floor.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. With that, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I also ask unanimous consent that I be able to address the Senate as if in morning business.

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

PRESIDENT RONALD REAGAN AND ALZHEIMER'S

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I wish to speak this afternoon in recognition of our late President, Ronald Reagan. I want to speak also about his wife Nancy, and I want to highlight their honest and passionate work to educate Americans about the real effects of Alzheimer's.

Last Wednesday, February 6, would have been President Reagan's 108th birthday, and we paused then to reflect not only on the life and legacy of President Ronald Reagan, but we also remember the way he carried himself, the vision he set for our country, and the direction he steered our Nation.

Years after he left the White House, the President and Nancy Reagan continued their public service to our Nation with grace and class, and that was true even as President Reagan was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease.

In November of 1994, President Reagan wrote a handwritten letter to Americans announcing this diagnosis that ultimately took his life.

I read lots of biographies, I read lots of history, and this past week I finished a book, “Reagan: An American Journey,” written by Bob Spitz. The story of his circumstance with Alzheimer's captured my attention.

The book quotes President Reagan telling his daughter, Patti: “I have this condition . . . I keep forgetting things.”

The doctors finally put a name to it. On November 4, 1994, a doctor from the Mayo Clinic informed Nancy Reagan that, having had an adequate chance to observe the president, the diagnosis was conclusive: he had Alzheimer's.

According to Fred Ryan, a staff member for the President and Mrs. Reagan, “She was quite upset, emotional.” She spoke at length later that evening: “So we're going to tell him tomorrow,” she said, “and I'd like you to be there.”

The next morning, a Saturday, they gathered in the library, a small, comfortable room at the front of the house where the Reagans typically received guests. The president seemed puzzled when the doctor and Ryan arrived. “Honey, come over here and sit down,” Nancy said, directing him to a couch opposite the two men. “The doctor has something he wants to talk about.”

The doctor didn't beat around the bush. “We think you have Alzheimer's,” he told Reagan.

“Okay,” he responded faintly. “What should I expect?”

“We don’t know much about it,” the doctor admitted. “It’s a degenerative disorder.” He ran down a few of the effects that Alzheimer’s patients experienced while Nancy Reagan struggled to control her emotions. She tried her utmost to be supportive, but was overcome hearing about the devastations of the disease. . . . He acknowledged, quite bluntly, “There is no cure.”

“Can I ask a few questions?” Ryan interjected.

While he and Nancy discussed how to handle the president’s activities—his schedule, office hours, appointments, and appearances—Reagan wandered over to a small round table in a corner and sat down, staring hypnotically into the yard. After a few minutes, he picked up a pen and began to write. When he finished, he handed two sheets of paper filled with his cramped handwriting to [his staffer]. “Why don’t we get this typed up and put it out,” Reagan suggested.

It was a letter dated that November 5, 1994.

My Fellow Americans—

It began—

I have recently been told that I am one of the millions of Americans who will be afflicted with Alzheimer’s disease. . . . At the moment I feel just fine. I intend to live the remainder of the years God gives me on the earth doing things I have always done. . . . Unfortunately, as Alzheimer’s Disease progresses, the family often bears a heavy burden. I only wish I could spare Nancy from this painful experience. When the time comes I am confident that with your help she will face it with faith and courage.

And with faith and courage, indeed, President and Nancy Reagan faced the disease together.

Together, they founded the Ronald and Nancy Reagan Research Institute at the Alzheimer’s Association in Chicago, IL, focused on researching, understanding, and treating Alzheimer’s disease.

Over the past several decades, this research institute has awarded millions of dollars in Alzheimer’s research grants and has continued to see breakthroughs in our understanding of this aggressive and disastrous disease.

Congress has also rightfully come together in a nonpartisan manner to fight this disease head-on. For example, last December, just a few months ago, with legislation that was sponsored by our colleague from Maine, Senator SUSAN COLLINS, Congress passed and the President signed our BOLD Infrastructure for Alzheimer’s Act, which aims to combat Alzheimer’s through a collaborative public health framework. The BOLD Act will create an Alzheimer’s public health infrastructure at the direction of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, which will establish Alzheimer’s centers for excellence across the country, award funding to public health departments to increase early detection and diagnosis, and increase data collection, analysis, and reporting through cooperative agreements with public and nonprofit entities.

I am a member of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Health and Human Services, led by my colleague

from Missouri, Senator BLUNT. I have advocated and successfully worked with my colleague Senator BLUNT and the members of the committee to provide \$2.3 billion for Alzheimer’s disease research in FY 2019, finally reaching the \$2 billion funding goal for research laid out by the National Plan to Address Alzheimer’s.

I am the cochair of the Senate NIH Caucus, and I am optimistic that these funding increases, combined with NIH initiatives to map the human brain and further develop personalized medicine, will, I hope, lead us closer to an Alzheimer’s treatment and a cure.

Eleven years after President Reagan’s death, Nancy Reagan continued her Alzheimer’s advocacy work, helping to dramatically increase the attention and resources paid to the research of this disease. She recognized that degenerative diseases like Alzheimer’s not only pose a financial burden to our Nation and health system but, more importantly and more significantly, these diseases threaten families with significant financial difficulty and tremendous emotional hardship.

As President Reagan’s primary caregiver during his battle with Alzheimer’s, Nancy reminded us of the importance of caretakers and families and the struggles they themselves go through while watching loved ones suffer.

As we continue our work to treat, cure, and prevent Alzheimer’s and other degenerative diseases, we will also continue looking for ways to ease the financial and mental turmoil on caretakers, for they suffer so much as well.

When President Reagan announced his Alzheimer’s disease, he did so much more than just admitting to having the disease. He fought it, and he destigmatized it not only for himself but for those who came after him and for those still to come who may be faced with this same circumstance.

In the closing letter that President Reagan wrote—and, incidentally, when he handed it to the staffer and said, “Type it up and send it out,” they read it and said, “Let’s just send it in your handwriting, Mr. President.” So that is what happened, and in that closing letter, President said this:

Let me thank you, the American people, for giving me the great honor of allowing me to serve as your President. When the Lord calls me home, whenever that may be, I will leave with the greatest love for this country of ours and eternal optimism for its future. I now begin the journey that will lead me into the sunset of my life. I know that for America there will always be a bright dawn ahead.

I, too, believe that America’s best days are ahead of us, and I implore Washington to reflect upon President Reagan’s enduring optimism.

Civil in disagreement and often willing to cross party lines to work toward solutions, I hope we can all remember, like President Reagan, to focus on the real issues facing our Nation, and I hope that all Members of the Congress,

from all walks of life, will be bold in leveraging their life experiences to achieve greatness for our Nation, just as President Reagan and Nancy Reagan did, deepening America’s resolve to fight this terrible disease.

I honor President Reagan and his wife Nancy. I thank them for their service to our country, and I thank them for their attention to this disease, Alzheimer’s. May we also have the courage and will to continue the battle to rid our country, its citizens, and the world of this affliction.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

RECOGNIZING ALASKA

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, as many of my colleagues here on the Senate floor know, tomorrow is Valentine’s Day, and yesterday, my colleague and my good friend, for whom I have so much respect, Senator ERNST from Iowa, was asking Members of this body to come down to the floor and talk about love. Some of you may have seen that.

Now, I have to admit that I am very close to Senator ERNST. I think she is one of the best Senators in the whole body. But I was a little bit leery. To be honest, talking about love on the Senate floor is really not my thing. I am not sure I have done that in 4 years here. As a matter of fact, I know I haven’t done that in 4 years.

Then, I thought, well, you know, it is Valentine’s Day. I thought, of course, immediately about my family and my beautiful wife Julie, the love of my life. I thought I could talk about that. I thought I could talk about my three daughters, all young Alaskan women, strong. They make me proud each and every day.

That was easy, thinking about Valentine’s Day and love that way—Julie, Meghan, Isabella, and Laurel, who, by the way, celebrated her 18th birthday yesterday. They are the loves of my life.

But then my staff told me: Wait a minute. This isn’t that kind of speech. What Senator ERNST wanted us to do was to speak about the love of your State and how we all love our State.

Now, that is easy for everybody here because we all do love our State. Then, I realized, well, you know what, Senator ERNST wanted that. It is Valentine’s Day, and, of course, it is toward the end of the week, and I typically do my “Alaskan of the Week” speech every Thursday or Wednesday.

This is a little bit of a jazzed up Valentine’s Day version of Alaskan of the Week, with the ERNST hashtag “homestatelove,” which is what she put out, and I think some other Senators did.

I thought this would be a combination this evening of a little bit of a love story to Alaska, my constituents, combined with the Alaskan of the Week, and, of course, to support what Senator ERNST wanted a bunch of us to do.

I certainly love coming down to the floor every week to talk about the

Alaskans of the Week. It is one of my favorite things to do. So, today, I just want to say a little bit about some of those Alaskans of the Week, not really one or two but just kind of a combo—literally, dozens and dozens of Alaskans, since I started here in the Senate 4 years ago, where I have had the opportunity to come down and talk about them.

They are as old as 100 and as young as 8. Last week we had an 8-year-old. Boy, was he really a fine young man from Juneau. They come from the Far North, the Arctic, and the misty temperate southeast of Alaska. They live surrounded by tundra, by the churning seas, by mountains, by rainforests. These are all those who have earned the title Alaskan of the Week. They come from what we call urban Alaska and from some of the 200 small communities and villages that dot my State, which are not connected by roads. It is a big challenge we have in Alaska.

They are librarians, artists, former Governors, reporters, healthcare workers, whalers, counselors, pastors, lawyers, athletes, students, teachers, and nearly every profession imaginable. Some of them have retired. Some of them are just starting school and aren't even of working age.

They are a diverse group of people, as you can imagine, but they all have one thing in common. They love Alaska. They love their country. They have the fire, the drive, and the heart to use whatever skills they have, whatever experiences they have to help others.

Isn't that what Valentine's Day is all about, what the hashtag "homestatelove" is all about, and, certainly, what the Alaskan of the Week is all about?

Now, when I talk about the Alaskan of the Week, sometimes these people have seen and gotten and deserve a lot of attention in Alaska and even nationally. Other times, they are less well known but no less impactful. Let me give you a couple of examples: someone who has been picking up trash on the side of the road for years, just doing it every day; helping people to find a pet to love; making meals for the sick; starting and contributing to non-profits; writing beautiful prose; helping people overcome addictions; establishing iconic businesses; working their whole lives to do what they think is right for their community, for their State, and the communities they love.

Of course, they are all inspiring to us, and what I try to do once a week is to come down and not just inspire the pages, who, I know, look forward to this speech, but anyone in America who is listening. By the way, you have to come up to Alaska and you, too, will love, and I mean "love" Alaska when you come up to visit.

Now, they are inspiring to all of us in Alaska, but, as I mentioned, all around the country last year. For example, I got to talk about the Alaska Pacific University's ski team—world renowned, gold medalists, Olympic med-

alists—inspiring young people all across the globe to race faster and race better.

Last year, I had the opportunity to talk about a young teenager from Gambell, Chris Apassingok. He made national headlines for his insistence, despite tremendous backlash from some extreme groups outside of Alaska, to continue his cultural heritage of hunting whales to feed his community through subsistence.

Here is another example that will go straight to the heart of my colleague, Senator ERNST from Iowa. In December, Carol Seppilu from Nome, who has overcome tremendous difficulties and disabilities and pain in her life, ran 85 miles of a 100-mile race in Council Bluffs, IA, and she is training for another race.

That kind of training isn't easy in Nome, where she has to walk through blizzards just to get on a treadmill. Carol has the racing community—the long racing community, 100-mile races—in Alaska and Iowa and, literally, around the country in awe of her, if you know her story, and rooting for her.

Sometimes we have a lot of negative news here in DC. I always say there is a lot more going on bipartisan that our friends in the media, who sit above the Presiding Officer's desk there, don't often report, but it can be negative. I think sometimes it can be easy to forget that we live in the greatest country in the world—no doubt about it—the greatest country in the history of the world, in my view, filled with good people who wake up every morning determined to do what is right, to give back to their communities, whether in Alaska or North Dakota, like the Presiding Officer.

I want to thank Senator ERNST for bringing us down to the floor yesterday and even today to talk a little bit about love—good initiative there for Valentine's Day. I thank all of the people of my State. This is a love story, not just of my wife and daughters but of all these great Alaskans of the Week who have been doing such a great job for Alaska and their country. So, to all of them, Happy Valentine's Day.

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

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

MORNING BUSINESS

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

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

NOMINATION OF DONALD W. WASHINGTON

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I do not object to the nomination of Donald W. Washington, PN202.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, the Committee on Rules and Administration has adopted rules governing its procedures for the 116th Congress. Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 2, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, on behalf of myself and Senator KLOBUCHAR, I ask unanimous consent that a copy of the committee rules be printed in the RECORD.

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

RULES OF PROCEDURE MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEE

Rule 1. The regular meeting dates of the Committee shall be the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month, at 10:00 a.m., in room SR-301, Russell Senate Office Building. Additional meetings of the Committee may be called by the Chairman as he may deem necessary or pursuant to the provision of paragraph 3 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate.

Rule 2. Meetings of the committee, including meetings to conduct hearings, shall be open to the public, except that a meeting or series of meetings by the committee on the same subject for a period of no more than 14 calendar days may be closed to the public on a motion made and seconded to go into closed session to discuss only whether the matters enumerated in subparagraphs (a) through (f) would require the meeting to be closed followed immediately by a recorded vote in open session by a majority of the Members of the committee when it is determined that the matters to be discussed or the testimony to be taken at such meeting or meetings:

(a) will disclose matters necessary to be kept secret in the interests of national defense or the confidential conduct of the foreign relations of the United States;

(b) will relate solely to matters of the committee staff personnel or internal staff management or procedure;

(c) will tend to charge an individual with crime or misconduct, to disgrace or injure the professional standing of an individual, or otherwise to expose an individual to public contempt or obloquy, or will represent a clearly unwarranted invasion of the privacy of an individual;

(d) will disclose the identity of any informer or law enforcement agent or will disclose any information relating to the investigation or prosecution of a criminal offense that is required to be kept secret in the interests of effective law enforcement;

(e) will disclose information relating to the trade secrets or financial or commercial information pertaining specifically to a given person if:

(1) an Act of Congress requires the information to be kept confidential by Government officers and employees; or

(2) the information has been obtained by the Government on a confidential basis, other than through an application by such person for a specific Government financial or other benefit, and is required to be kept secret in order to prevent undue injury to the competitive position of such person; or

(f) may divulge matters required to be kept confidential under the provisions of law or

Government regulations. (Paragraph 5(b) of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules.)

Rule 3. Written notices of committee meetings will normally be sent by the committee's staff director to all Members of the committee at least a week in advance. In addition, the committee staff will telephone or e-mail reminders of committee meetings to all Members of the committee or to the appropriate assistants in their offices.

Rule 4. A copy of the committee's intended agenda enumerating separate items of legislative business and committee business will normally be sent to all Members of the committee and released to the public at least 1 day in advance of all meetings. This does not preclude any Member of the committee from discussing appropriate non-agenda topics.

Rule 5. After the Chairman and the Ranking Minority Member, speaking order shall be based on order of arrival, alternating between Majority and Minority Members, unless otherwise directed by the Chairman.

Rule 6. Any witness who is to appear before the committee in any hearing shall file with the clerk of the committee at least 3 business days before the date of his or her appearance, a written statement of his or her proposed testimony and an executive summary thereof, in such form as the chairman may direct, unless the Chairman and the Ranking Minority Member waive such requirement for good cause.

Rule 7. In general, testimony will be restricted to 5 minutes for each witness. The time may be extended by the Chairman, upon the Chair's own direction or at the request of a Member. Each round of questions by Members will also be limited to 5 minutes.

QUORUMS

Rule 8. Pursuant to paragraph 7(a)(1) of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules, a majority of the Members of the committee shall constitute a quorum for the reporting of legislative measures.

Rule 9. Pursuant to paragraph 7(a)(1) of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules, one-third of the Members of the committee shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business, including action on amendments to measures prior to voting to report the measure to the Senate.

Rule 10. Pursuant to paragraph 7(a)(2) of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules, 2 Members of the committee shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of taking testimony under oath and 1 Member of the committee shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of taking testimony not under oath; provided, however, that in either instance, once a quorum is established, any one Member can continue to take such testimony.

Rule 11. Under no circumstances may proxies be considered for the establishment of a quorum.

VOTING

Rule 12. Voting in the committee on any issue will normally be by voice vote.

Rule 13. If a third of the Members present so demand a roll call vote instead of a voice vote, a record vote will be taken on any question by roll call.

Rule 14. The results of roll call votes taken in any meeting upon any measure, or any amendment thereto, shall be stated in the committee report on that measure unless previously announced by the committee, and such report or announcement shall include a tabulation of the votes cast in favor of and the votes cast in opposition to each such measure and amendment by each Member of the committee. (Paragraph 7(b) and (c) of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules.)

Rule 15. Proxy voting shall be allowed on all measures and matters before the committee. However, the vote of the committee

to report a measure or matter shall require the concurrence of a majority of the Members of the committee who are physically present at the time of the vote. Proxies will be allowed in such cases solely for the purpose of recording a Member's position on the question and then only in those instances when the absentee committee Member has been informed of the question and has affirmatively requested that he be recorded. (Paragraph 7(a)(3) of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules.)

AMENDMENTS

Rule 16. Provided at least five business days' notice of the agenda is given, and the text of the proposed bill or resolution has been made available at least five business days in advance, it shall not be in order for the Committee to consider any amendment in the first degree proposed to any measure under consideration by the Committee unless such amendment has been delivered to the office of the Committee and by at least 5:00 p.m. the day prior to the scheduled start of the meeting and circulated to each of the offices by at least 6:00 pm.

Rule 17. In the event the Chairman introduces a substitute amendment or a Chairman's mark, the requirements set forth in Rule 16 shall be considered waived unless such substitute amendment or Chairman's mark has been made available at least five business days in advance of the scheduled meeting.

Rule 18. It shall be in order, without prior notice, for a Member to offer a motion to strike a single section of any bill, resolution, or amendment under consideration.

Rule 19. This section of the rule may be waived by agreement of the Chairman and the Ranking Minority Member.

DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY TO COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

Rule 20. The Chairman is authorized to sign himself or by delegation all necessary vouchers and routine papers for which the committee's approval is required and to decide on the committee's behalf all routine business.

Rule 21. The Chairman is authorized to engage commercial reporters for the preparation of transcripts of committee meetings and hearings.

Rule 22. The Chairman is authorized to issue, on behalf of the committee, regulations normally promulgated by the committee at the beginning of each session.

DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY TO COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND RANKING MINORITY MEMBER

Rule 23. The Chairman and Ranking Minority Member, acting jointly, are authorized to approve on behalf of the committee any rule or regulation for which the committee's approval is required, provided advance notice of their intention to do so is given to Members of the committee.

ARMS SALES NOTIFICATION

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

In keeping with the committee's intention to see that relevant information is available to the full Senate, I

ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the notifications which have been received. If the cover letter references a classified annex, then such annex is available to all Senators in the office of the Foreign Relations Committee, room SD-423.

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

DEFENSE SECURITY
COOPERATION AGENCY,
Arlington, VA.

Hon. JAMES E. RISCH,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 19-05 concerning the Army's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Israel for defense articles and services estimated to cost \$238 million. After this letter is delivered to your office, we plan to issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale.

Sincerely,

CHARLES W. HOOPER,
Lieutenant General, USA, Director.
Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 19-05

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

(i) Prospective Purchaser: Government of Israel.

(ii) Total Estimated Value:
Major Defense Equipment* \$0 million.
Other \$238 million.
Total \$238 million.

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

Major Defense Equipment (MDE): None.
Non-MDE:

Two hundred forty (240) Namer Armored Personnel Carrier (APC-MT883) Power Packs, Less Transmission (NPPLT) in Full Configuration.

Thirty (30) Namer Armored Personnel Carrier (APC-MT883) Power Pack, Less Transmission (NPPLT) in Light Configuration.

One hundred seventy-nine (179) Control and Diagnostic Systems (CDS).

Also included is an Integrated Logistics Support package that includes: special tools for C-Level maintenance; oil spray nozzle test bench; preservation and packaging; containers; configuration management; technical manuals, spare parts catalogs, other documentation and publications, and other related elements of logistics and program support.

(iv) Military Department: Army (IS-BZZD).

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

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

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology Contained in the Defense Article or Defense Services Proposed to be Sold: None.

(viii) Date Report Delivered to Congress: February 12, 2019.

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

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

Israel—Namer Armored Personnel Carrier (APC-MT883) Power Packs Less Transmissions (NPPLT) and Integrated Logistics Support

The Government of Israel has requested to buy two hundred forty (240) Namer Armored Personnel Carrier (APC-MT883) Power Packs, Less Transmission (NPPLT) in Full

Configuration; thirty (30) Namer Armored Personnel Carrier (APC-MT883) Power Packs, Less Transmission (NPPLT) in Light Configuration; and one hundred seventy-nine (179) Control and Diagnostic Systems (CDS). Also included is an Integrated Logistics Support package that includes: special tools for C-Level maintenance; oil spray nozzle test bench; preservation and packaging; containers; configuration management; technical manuals, spare parts catalogs, other documentation and publications, and other related elements of logistics and program support. The total estimated program cost is \$238 million.

The United States is committed to the security of Israel, and it is vital to U.S. national interests to assist Israel to develop and maintain a strong and ready self-defense capability. This proposed sale is consistent with those objectives.

The proposed sale will improve Israel's capability to meet current and future threats in the defense of its borders. These upgraded power packs will be used on their Armored Personnel Carriers (APC-MT883) that were fielded in 2008. Israel will have no difficulty absorbing this equipment into its armed forces.

The proposed equipment and support will not alter the basic military balance in the region.

The prime contractor will be MTU America, Novi, MI. MTU America is the North American subsidiary of Rolls Royce Power Systems. There are no known offset agreements proposed in connection with this potential sale.

Implementation of this proposed sale will not require the assignment of any additional U.S. Government or contractor representatives to Israel.

There will be no adverse impact on U.S. defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale.

TRIBUTE TO ALFRED K. NEWMAN

Mr. UDALL. Mr. President, today I wish to pay tribute to Alfred K. Newman, one of last remaining Navajo code talkers, who passed away on January 13 of this year.

Mr. Newman was born in Coolidge, NM, on July 21, 1924. He was Naaneesht'ézhi Dine'é—Zuni Clan—and born for Tsi'naajinii—Black Streak Wood People Clan. One of six children, his mother wove rugs that were sold at the Coolidge Trading Post and his stepfather worked as a silversmith there.

When Mr. Newman was about 8 years old, his family sent him to the Reho-both Mission School, where he boarded during the 9 month school year and rarely saw his parents. During the summers, he herded sheep. At one point, they had a herd of 200, and the young shepherd loved watching the lizards, birds, and bugs that surrounded him as he herded.

Mr. Newman grew up knowing both Navajo and English. However, the boarding students were not allowed to speak Navajo at the school. One time, when he spoke in Navajo, in order to help another Navajo student who knew no English, he was punished by having to write "I must not speak Navajo" 500 times.

While the missionaries at the Reho-both Mission School forbade Mr. Newman and other Navajo students from

speaking their language, as did Federal Government Indian boarding schools, the U.S. military came to greatly appreciate the strategic advantage the unwritten Dine language held.

Mr. Newman enlisted in the Marines, in 1943, when he was 18, inspired to defend the Nation in light of the attack on Pearl Harbor. He, along with an estimated 44,000 other Native Americans, served in World War II, even though they couldn't vote in U.S. elections and faced discrimination within the military.

Soon after Mr. Newman enlisted, he was assigned to a secret mission, as part of the Navajo code talkers. He attended code school, learning the complex code by memory, and learned how to operate communications equipment. Serving in the 1st Battalion, 21st Marine Regiment, 3rd Marine Division, Alfred was stationed in New Caledonia, Guadalcanal, Bougainville Island, Guam, and Iwo Jima, among other duty stations. He saw battle at the latter three locations and was stationed in Iwo Jima during 28 days of the famous battle and was there the day the Americans raised the flag over Mount Suribachi. Mr. Newman was honorably discharged with the rank of corporal in December 1945.

After his discharge, he came back to New Mexico, and married his sweetheart, Betsy Eleanore Denetson. He worked as an ammunition inspector at Fort Wingate and then at an open-pit mine overseeing blasting at Kirkland Field. Together, he and Betsy have 5 children, 13 grandchildren, and 3 great-grandchildren and were married 69 years before his passing.

The Japanese famously never broke the Navajos' code, and Navajo code talkers are credited with playing a decisive role in key World War II battles, including Iwo Jima. The Navajo code talker mission was kept secret until 1968, when it was declassified. In 2000, Congress awarded the Congressional Silver Medal to the Navajo code talkers. Like so many others, Mr. Newman was humble about his bravery in service and modest about his medals. During a 2010 interview for an oral history project, Mr. Newman was asked, "How did [the war] change you?" He replied that, "Before the war, I was just going just like any other non-Navajo. Peaceful, no worries. Doing what I like. But when the war came, it was a different story. So I had to do what needed to be done."

We are forever grateful to Mr. Newman and all his fellow courageous code talkers for doing "what needed to be done" to defend our country. We will always honor and will never forget their service and sacrifice to the Nation.

150TH ANNIVERSARY OF WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, today, Wyoming Governor Mark Gordon will sign a joint resolution of the

Wyoming Legislature recognizing December 10, 2019, as Wyoming Women's Suffrage Day.

On December 10, 1869, the Wyoming Territory passed the first law in U.S. history granting women the right to vote and hold public office. This right became so important to the people of Wyoming that, when the State sought statehood, it refused to enter the Union if this right was not protected.

In 2015, I came to the floor to speak in honor of the 125th anniversary of Wyoming statehood. I shared with the Senate the challenge Wyoming faced from Congress in its quest to become a member of the Union. I believe it is timely to share that story again.

The debate in Congress was contentious, with the arguments centering on one of our most proud accomplishments: a decision made long before Wyoming became a State. On December 10, 1869, the Wyoming Territory was the first in the United States to grant women the right to vote.

Efforts to attain statehood finally came to fruition 20 years later. It was incumbent on our delegate to the U.S. House of Representatives, Joseph M. Carey, to convince his colleagues to support the statehood bill.

On March 26, 1890, the day of the statehood bill debate, Joseph Carey spoke passionately about Wyoming. His words still hold true today. He said that Wyoming was rich in agricultural possibilities. He explained Wyoming was one of nature's great storehouses of minerals. Joseph Carey also talked about grazing development, educational leadership, widespread railway construction, the model Constitution, and the unique opportunities for women.

Yet opponents to our statehood did not support women having the right to vote. On the same day as Joseph Carey's impassioned speech, Representative William Oates of Alabama argued against our admittance to the Union. He said, "Mr. Speaker, I do not hesitate to say that in my judgment the franchise has been too liberally extended. Should we ever reach universal suffrage this Government will become practically a pure democracy and then the days of its existence are numbered."

The U.S. House of Representatives narrowly passed Wyoming's statehood bill with a vote of 139 to 127. The U.S. Senate passed the bill on June 27, 1890. Wyoming officially became the 44th State on July 10, 1890, and became the first state to allow women the right to vote and hold public office.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD Enrolled Joint Resolution No. 1 of the Sixty-Fifth Legislature of the State of Wyoming recognizing December 10, 2019, as Wyoming Women's Suffrage Day.

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

ENROLLED JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 1, SENATE
SIXTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF
WYOMING

2019 GENERAL SESSION

A Joint Resolution recognizing December 10, 2019 as Wyoming Women's Suffrage Day.
1Whereas, Wyoming is often referred to as the "Cowboy State," its more apt sobriquet is the "Equality State"; and

Whereas, women, like all persons, have always inherently held the right to vote and participate in their government; and

Whereas, Wyoming was the first government to explicitly acknowledge and affirm women's inherent right to vote and to hold office; and

Whereas, this inherent right, at the founding of the United States, was inhibited; and

Whereas, women, at the founding of the United States, were also prevented from holding office; and

Whereas, women's suffrage—the basic enfranchisement of women—began to burgeon in the United States in the 1840s and continued to gain momentum over the next decades, despite the oppressive atmosphere in which women were not allowed to divorce their husbands or show their booted ankles without risk of public scandal or worse; and

Whereas, during the 1850s, activism to support women's suffrage gathered steam, but lost momentum when the Civil War began; and

Whereas, in the fall of 1868, three (3) years after the American Civil War had ended, Union Army General Ulysses S. Grant was elected President, and chose John Campbell to serve as Governor of the Wyoming Territory; and

Whereas, Joseph A. Carey, who was thereafter appointed to serve as Attorney General of the Wyoming Territory, issued a formal legal opinion that no one in Wyoming could be denied the right to vote based on race; and

Whereas, the first Wyoming Territorial Legislature, comprised entirely of men, required consistent and persistent inveigling to warm to the notion of suffrage; and

Whereas, abolitionist and woman suffrage activist, Esther Hobart Morris, was born in Tioga County, New York, on August 8, 1812, and later became a successful milliner and businesswoman; and

Whereas, Esther Hobart Morris, widowed in 1843, moved to Peru, Illinois, to settle the property in her late husband's estate and experienced the legal hardships faced by women in Illinois and New York; and

Whereas, Esther Hobart Morris married John Morris, a prosperous merchant, and in 1869 moved to the gold rush camp at South Pass City, a small valley situated along the banks of Willow Creek on the southeastern end of the Wind River Mountains in the Wyoming Territory just north of the Oregon Trail; and

Whereas, William Bright, a saloonkeeper, also from the once bustling frontier mining town South Pass City, was elected to serve in the Territorial Legislature and was elected as president of the Territorial Council; and

Whereas, the Territorial Legislature met in 1869 in Cheyenne and passed bills and resolutions formally enabling women to vote and hold property and formally assuring equal pay for teachers; and

Whereas, William Bright introduced a bill to recognize the right of Wyoming women to vote; and

Whereas, no records were kept of the debate between Wyoming territorial lawmakers, although individuals likely asserted a myriad of motivations and intentions in supporting women's suffrage; and

Whereas, the Wyoming Territory population at the time consisted of six adult men

for every adult woman, some lawmakers perchance hoped suffrage would entice more women to the state; and

Whereas, some lawmakers may have believed that women's suffrage was consistent with the goals articulated in post-Civil War Amendment XV to the United States Constitution guaranteeing the "right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude"; and

Whereas, some lawmakers inherently knew that guaranteeing the right of women to vote was, simply, the right thing to do; and

Whereas, the Territorial Legislature advanced a suffrage bill stating, "That every woman of the age of twenty-one years, residing in this territory, may, at every election to be holden under the laws thereof, cast her vote. And her rights to the elective franchise and to hold office shall be the same under the election laws of the territory, as those of electors" and that "This act shall take effect and be in force from and after its passage"; and

Whereas, when invited to join the Union, demanding that women's suffrage be revoked, the Wyoming Legislature said, "We will remain out of the Union one hundred years rather than come in without the women"; and

Whereas, in July 1890, Esther Hobart Morris presented the new Wyoming state flag to Governor Francis E. Warren during the statehood celebration, making Wyoming the 44th state to enter the Union and the first with its women holding the right to vote and serve in elected office; and

Whereas, the United States did not endorse women's suffrage until 1920 with the ratification of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution; and

Whereas, despite the passage of the 19th Amendment, women of color continued to face barriers with exercising their right to vote, as American Indian men and women were not recognized as United States citizens permitted to vote until the passage of the Indian Citizenship Act of 1924, and ongoing racial discrimination required the passage and implementation of the Voting Rights Act of 1965; and

Whereas, achieving voting rights for all women required firm and continuing resolve to overcome reluctance, and even fervent opposition, toward this rightful enfranchisement; and

Whereas, Wyoming, the first to recognize women's suffrage, blazed a trail of other noteworthy milestones, such as Louisa Swain, of Laramie, casting the first ballot by a woman voter in 1870; and

Whereas, in 1870 the first jury to include women was in Wyoming and was sworn in on March 7 in Laramie; and

Whereas, Esther Hobart Morris was appointed to serve as justice of the peace in February 1870, making her the first woman to serve as a judge in the United States; and

Whereas, Wyoming women become the first women to vote in a presidential election in 1892; and

Whereas, in 1894 Wyoming elected Estelle Reel to serve as the state superintendent of public instruction, making her one of the first women in the United States elected to serve in a statewide office; and

Whereas, the residents of the town of Jackson in 1920 elected a city council composed entirely of women – dubbed the "petticoat government" by the press – making it the first all-women government in the United States; and

Whereas, in 1924 Wyoming elected Nellie Tayloe Ross to serve as governor of the great state of Wyoming, making her the first woman to be sworn in as governor in these United States; and

Whereas, all these milestones illuminate and strengthen Wyoming's heritage as the "Equality State"; and

Whereas, December 10, 2019 marks the 150th anniversary of the date women's suffrage became law.

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the members of the Legislature of the State of Wyoming:

Section 1. That the Wyoming legislature commemorates 2019 as a year to celebrate the one hundred fiftieth (150th) anniversary of the passage of women's suffrage.

Section 2. That the Wyoming legislature is proud of its heritage as the first state to recognize the right of women to vote and hold office, hereby affirming its legacy as the "Equality State."

Section 3. That the Secretary of State of Wyoming transmit a copy of this resolution to the National Women's Hall of Fame in support of Esther Hobart Morris' induction into the Women of the Hall.

Section 4. That the Wyoming legislature encourages its citizens and invites its visitors to learn about the women and men who made women's suffrage in Wyoming a reality, thereby blazing a trail for other states, and eventually the federal government, to recognize the inherent right of men and women alike to elect their leaders and hold office.

RECOGNIZING OLD GLORY HONOR FLIGHT

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. President, today I rise to recognize the Old Glory Honor Flight organization, as it makes its maiden flight to Vietnam to bring 53 veterans back to the place where they risked their lives for our Nation. I am honored to pay tribute to this important first flight and to honor their sacrifices.

The all-volunteer organization, Old Glory Honor Flight, was founded in 2009 by individuals who had a dream of creating an honor flight experience for military veterans in northeast Wisconsin. A dedicated board of volunteers launched the first official flight on October 27, 2009, when they hosted 95 World War II veterans on a trip to our Nation's Capital to experience firsthand the national memorials honoring American military servicemembers.

The honor flight's mission is to create a safe and memorable experience for veterans who call Wisconsin home. Until now, each honor flight has taken place within a single day, sending veterans to Washington, DC, to thank them for all they sacrificed to keep our Nation safe and free. Since its inception, Old Glory Honor Flight has flown more than 3,500 veterans on more than 40 missions.

Through the generous support of individuals and businesses, Old Glory Honor Flight has grown tremendously in the past decade. This month, for the first time in its 10-year existence, the organization is sending 53 veterans who served in Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, and Thailand back to Vietnam for 2 weeks.

Wisconsinites owe a debt of gratitude to these servicemembers who answered our country's call to serve and defend the United States. These veterans served with honor and endured the horrors of war. When they returned home,

they were shunned and denied their rightful hero's welcome. We must vow to never let this happen again and to always honor those who serve in our Armed Forces. Let this flight be a reminder that we can all do our part to keep the sacred trust we have with our veterans. Let it be a reminder that there is still more work to do to honor their service, and let us be inspired by their selfless and heroic service to a grateful nation.

I am honored to recognize the very first Wisconsin Honor Flight to Vietnam and I commend Old Glory Honor Flight on this extraordinary mission to honor our Wisconsin military veterans. It is my sincere hope that this momentous trip will bring some peace to these brave men traveling back to Vietnam.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING PHIL BATT

● Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, along with my colleagues Senator JAMES E. RISCH, Representative MIKE SIMPSON, and Representative RUSS FULCHER, I pay tribute to former Idaho Governor Phil Batt for his immense service to our State.

As his last official act in the Governor's Ceremonial Office in the Idaho State Capitol, outgoing Idaho Governor C.L. Butch Otter co-presented, with current Idaho Governor Brad Little, the 2019 Idaho Medal of Achievement to Governor Phil Batt for his many accomplishments and years of service to the State of Idaho. The award is considered the highest civilian honor bestowed by the State. Phil Batt is the third recipient of this great honor, for which many nominations from across our State have been made by the public.

Governor Batt has an extensive career of service to our State and Nation. He served as our State's 29th Governor from 1995 to 1999. Prior to his service as Governor, he served as Idaho Republican Party Chairman, Lieutenant Governor of Idaho, and president pro tempore of the Idaho Senate. He served in the Idaho Senate for approximately 15 years after serving in the Idaho House of Representatives from 1965 to 1967. He also served in the U.S. Army from 1945 to 1946 after growing up on a farm in Wilder, ID.

Idaho has benefited greatly from Governor Phil Batt's sensible voice, commitment to service, and outstanding leadership. Governor Batt's principal role in advancing human rights in Idaho is among his many achievements on behalf of Idahoans. He led efforts to establish a Commission on Human Rights and pushed for benefits for Idaho farmworkers.

Governor Batt, you have much to be proud of and reflect on for your outstanding service over your exemplary life. You have stood against inequities and, in so doing, helped make others' paths better. Your mentorship, encour-

agement, and guidance have been instrumental in helping current and future leaders in our great State get a start. Thank you for your leadership, friendship, humor, and extraordinary service to our State and Nation.●

REMEMBERING BILL BURGESS

● Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I am here to speak today with a heavy heart from the sudden and untimely passing of my dear friend and confidant, Bill Burgess of Lawton, OK.

Bill spent his entire life in service to Oklahoma and the Nation, and his loss will be felt throughout the State.

Bill was a talented attorney, businessman, and civic leader. Among many different titles Bill held throughout his career, he served the State he loved on the Oklahoma Board of Regents for Higher Education and the University of Oklahoma Board of Regents.

Bill was widely recognized and respected as one of Oklahoma's outstanding leaders, and he was inducted into both the Oklahoma Hall of Fame and the Oklahoma Higher Education Hall of Fame.

As a businessman who developed the largest software engineering company in Oklahoma and the owner and publisher of the Lawton Constitution, Bill was admired for his entrepreneurial ability and success. A tireless advocate for Oklahoma business, he served stints as chairman of both the Oklahoma State Chamber of Commerce and the Oklahoma Business Roundtable.

I worked closely with Bill in his role as civilian aide to the Secretary to the Army and am so thankful to have a man of such integrity, character, and grit in this position.

If you spent any time at all around Bill, you were sure to know that he was the son of a sergeant major, the "backbone of the Army." Friends say that growing up in the house of a non-commissioned officer gave him a love not only for the Army but also for the enlisted men and women who serve their country.

Bill was incredibly proud of his dad's service to our Nation and continued that tradition of service. No one loved, admired, and supported our men and women in uniform more than Bill.

Kay and I are praying for Bill's family, friends, and many loved ones in this extremely hard time. Bill was an exceptional leader, a loving father, and an incomparable friend.

I am blessed to have known him, and he will be sorely missed by myself and the rest of Oklahoma.●

RECOGNIZING JL MARINE SYSTEMS, INC.

● Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, it is my privilege to honor a Florida small business that exemplifies innovation and how thinking outside of the box to solve problems can create techno-

logical breakthroughs. As chairman of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, each week I recognize a small business that embodies the unique American entrepreneurial spirit. This week, it is my distinct privilege to honor JL Marine Systems, Inc., as the Senate Small Business of the Week.

Located in Tampa, FL, JL Marine Systems is known in fishing communities throughout the country as the manufacturer of the Power-Pole shallow water anchor. John Oliverio, the creator of the Power-Pole, has been an angler for all his life and used this experience to create a more practical approach to shallow water fishing. As a flats fisherman, he was frustrated that bringing his boat to a stop with a push pole or an anchor required him to lose sight of fish. In 1998, John devised the concept for an anchor that he could lower from anywhere, allowing him to keep his eyes on fish. Today, the Power-Pole is a premier shallow water anchor, featuring sophisticated technology for more effective shallow water fishing.

JL Marine Systems' Power-Pole technology is available in five different models, at more than 3,500 dealers, manufacturers, and retailers. These quality products have helped JL Marine Systems to build strong partnerships in the boating and fishing industries and has earned accolades at professional fishing tournaments, in magazines, and on television shows. The Power-Pole won Best New Boating Accessory at the International Convention of Allied Sportsfishing Trades in 2011, 2012, and 2013 and won awards for its electronics at the International Boatbuilders Exhibition and Conference in 2017.

JL Marine Systems' commitment to a higher standard is not only seen in their innovative products and customer service, but also in how the company gives back to its community. JL Marine Systems is a proud supporter of the Florida Aquarium, the Coastal Conservation Association, the National Pediatric Cancer Foundation, and numerous other organizations. The company also supports its community by hosting hurricane relief fundraisers and by sponsoring Tampa-area youth sports teams and high school and college fishing teams.

John Oliverio's work to develop and produce the Power-Pole shallow water anchor represents the innovation that Floridian entrepreneurs are known so well for. Through hard work and perseverance, John and his team at JL Marine Systems have revolutionized the shallow water anchor and have set an excellent example of ingenuity. I would like to congratulate John and the entire team at JL Marine Systems for being named the Senate Small Business of the Week. I wish them good luck and look forward to watching their continued growth and success.●

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bill was read the second time, and placed on the calendar:

S. 464. A bill to require the treatment of a lapse in appropriations as a mitigating condition when assessing financial considerations for security clearances, and for other purposes.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bill was read the first time:

S. 483. A bill to enact into law a bill by reference.

The following joint resolution was read the first time:

S.J. Res. 8. Joint resolution recognizing the duty of the Federal Government to create a Green New Deal.

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-315. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to operation of the Exchange Stabilization Fund (ESF) for fiscal year 2018; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-316. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; Indiana; Negative Declarations for Commercial and Industrial Solid Waste Incineration and Sewage Sludge Incineration Units for Designated Facilities and Pollutants" (FRL No. 9989-36-Region 5) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 12, 2019; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-317. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; Indiana; Reasonable Further Progress Plan and Other Plan Elements for the Chicago Nonattainment Area for the 2008 Ozone Standard" (FRL No. 9989-33-Region 5) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 12, 2019; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-318. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; North Carolina; Ozone NAAQS Update" (FRL No. 9989-38-Region 4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 12, 2019; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-319. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; OR: Lane County Outdoor Burning and Enforcement Procedure Rules" (FRL No. 9989-56-Region 10) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 12, 2019; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-320. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule en-

titled "Attainment Plan for the Lake County SO2 Nonattainment Area" (FRL No. 9989-48-Region 5) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 12, 2019; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-321. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to section 36(c) and (d) of the Arms Export Control Act, the certification of a proposed license for the manufacture of significant military equipment and the export of firearms, parts, and components, including technical data and defense services, abroad controlled under Category I of the U.S. Munitions Lists to Brazil to support the manufacture of components for sporting handguns and rifles in the amount of \$1,000,000 or more (Transmittal No. DDTC 18-017); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-322. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to section 36(c) and (d) of the Arms Export Control Act, the certification of a proposed license for the manufacture of significant military equipment and the export of defense articles, including technical data and defense services, abroad to Italy, Turkey, and the Netherlands to support the manufacture of the F-35 Lightning II's Center Fuselage and related assemblies, subassemblies, and components associated with all variants of the F-35 Aircraft in the amount of \$100,000,000 or more (Transmittal No. DDTC 17-076); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-323. A communication from the Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, Federal Election Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Commission's competitive sourcing efforts during fiscal year 2018; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

EC-324. A communication from the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department of Veterans Affairs Vehicle Fleet Report on Alternative Fuel Vehicles for fiscal year 2018; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

EC-325. A communication from the Deputy Chief, Enforcement Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendment of Section 1.80(b) of the Commission's Rules; Forfeiture Proceedings" (DA 18-1272) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 12, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-326. A communication from the Program Analyst, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Federal Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention Standard, Final Listing of the 2017 Light Duty Truck Lines Subject to the Requirements of This Standard and Exempted Vehicle Lines for Model Year 2017" (RIN2127-AL72) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-327. A communication from the Regulatory Ombudsman, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Commercial Learner's Permit Validity" (RIN2126-AB98) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-328. A communication from the Regulatory Ombudsman, Federal Motor Carrier

Safety Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fees for the Unified Carrier Registration Plan Agreement" ((RIN2126-AC12) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-329. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Establishment of Class E Airspace; Maurice, IA" ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2018-0671)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-330. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Establishment of Class E Airspace; Hardinsburg, KY" ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2018-0486)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-331. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Removal of Class E Airspace; Mercury, NV" ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2017-1148)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-332. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendment of Class E Airspace; Leitchfield, KY" ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2018-0485)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-333. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendment of Class E Airspace; Pago Pago, American Samoa" ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2018-0082)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-334. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendment of Class E Airspace; Mesquite, NV" ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2018-0007)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-335. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendment of Class E Airspace; Bethel, ME" ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2018-0883)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-336. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal

Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendment of Class D Airspace; Appleton, WI" ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2018-0006)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-337. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendment of Class D and E Airspace; Casper, WY" ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2017-0223)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-338. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendment of Class D and E Airspace; Moses Lake, WA" ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2017-1033)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-339. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendment of Class D and E Airspace; Aspen, CO" ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2018-0016)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-340. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendment of Class D and E Airspace, and Revocation of Class E Airspace; Jackson, MI" ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2017-1187)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-341. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendment of Class D and E Airspace, and Removal of Class E Airspace; Lompoc, CA" ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2017-1146)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-342. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Part 95 Instrument Flight Rules; Miscellaneous Amendments; Amendment No. 543" ((RIN2120-AA63) (Docket No. 31228)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-343. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2018-1066)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of

the Senate on February 8, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS

The following petition or memorial was laid before the Senate and was referred or ordered to lie on the table as indicated:

POM-5. A petition from a citizen of the State of Texas relative to an amendment to the United States Constitution; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. BLUNT, from the Committee on Rules and Administration, without amendment:

S. Res. 50. A resolution improving procedures for the consideration of nominations in the Senate.

S. Res. 70. An original resolution authorizing expenditures by committees of the Senate for the periods March 1, 2019 through September 30, 2019, October 1, 2019 through September 30, 2020, and October 1, 2020 through February 28, 2021.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. WICKER for the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

*Janice Miriam Hellreich, of Hawaii, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting for a term expiring January 31, 2024.

*Robert A. Mandell, of Florida, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting for a term expiring January 31, 2022.

*Don Munce, of Florida, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting for a term expiring January 31, 2024.

*Bruce M. Ramer, of California, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting for a term expiring January 31, 2024.

*Coast Guard nomination of Alexander C. Foos, to be Captain.

By Mr. JOHNSON for the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

*Julia Akins Clark, of Maryland, to be a Member of the Merit Systems Protection Board for the term of seven years expiring March 1, 2021.

*Dennis Dean Kirk, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Merit Systems Protection Board for the term of seven years expiring March 1, 2023.

*Dennis Dean Kirk, of Virginia, to be Chairman of the Merit Systems Protection Board.

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first

and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. WARNER (for himself, Mr. CARDIN, Mrs. SHAHEEN, and Ms. BALDWIN):

S. 466. A bill to provide that certain guidance related to waivers for State innovation under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act shall have no force or effect; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. WARREN (for herself, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. UDALL, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Ms. SMITH, Mr. KING, Mr. TESTER, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, and Ms. ROSEN):

S. 467. A bill to amend section 520E of the Public Health Service Act to require States and their designees receiving grants for development and implementation of statewide suicide early intervention and prevention strategies to collaborate with each Federally recognized Indian tribe, tribal organization, urban Indian organization, and Native Hawaiian health care system in the State; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. CORNYN (for himself, Mr. WARNER, Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina, and Mr. BENNET):

S. 468. A bill to amend title II of the Higher Education Act of 1965 to provide for teacher, principal, and other school leader quality enhancement; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. CORTEZ MASTO (for herself, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. WYDEN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Ms. SMITH, Mr. BROWN, Mr. CASEY, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. MENENDEZ, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. KAINE, and Ms. ROSEN):

S. 469. A bill to allow penalty-free distributions from retirement accounts in the case of certain Federal contractors impacted by Federal Government shutdowns; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. STABENOW (for herself, Mr. BROWN, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. CARDIN, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. HARRIS, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. PETERS, Mr. REED, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. SMITH, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, and Mr. HEINRICH):

S. 470. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for an option for any citizen or permanent resident of the United States age 50 to 64 to buy into Medicare; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. SASSE):

S. 471. A bill to amend title 28, United States Code, to increase transparency and oversight of third-party litigation funding in certain actions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. MARKEY (for himself and Mr. BLUMENTHAL):

S. 472. A bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to ensure that revenues collected from passengers as aviation security fees are used to help finance the costs of aviation security screening by repealing a requirement that a portion of such fees be credited as offsetting receipts and deposited in the general fund of the Treasury; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. BOOKER (for himself and Mr. PORTMAN):

S. 473. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to include certain Federal positions within the definition of law enforcement officer for retirement purposes, and for

other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. WYDEN (for himself, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. CARPER, Mr. COONS, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. MENENDEZ, Ms. STABENOW, and Mr. TESTER):

S. 474. A bill to amend title XI of the Social Security Act to require drug manufacturers to publicly justify unnecessary price increases; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. WYDEN (for himself, Mr. BENNET, Mr. CARDIN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. MERKLEY, and Mr. WHITEHOUSE):

S. 475. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to prevent catastrophic out-of-pocket spending on prescription drugs for seniors and individuals with disabilities; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. WYDEN (for himself, Mr. BROWN, Mr. CARPER, and Mr. TESTER):

S. 476. A bill to amend title XI and XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide greater transparency of discounts provided by drug manufacturers; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MARKEY (for himself, Ms. HARRIS, Ms. WARREN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. MERKLEY, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. WYDEN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. CARDIN, Ms. HIRONO, and Mr. LEAHY):

S. 477. A bill to authorize the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to establish a Climate Change Education Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. SANDERS (for himself, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. BOOKER, and Ms. HARRIS):

S. 478. A bill to enhance Social Security benefits and ensure the long-term solvency of the Social Security program; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. TOOMEY (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, and Mr. DURBIN):

S. 479. A bill to revise section 48 of title 18, United States Code, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. RUBIO (for himself, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. COTTON):

S. 480. A bill to require an unclassified interagency report on the political influence operations of the Government of China and the Communist Party of China with respect to the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

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

S. 481. A bill to encourage States to require the installation of residential carbon monoxide detectors in homes, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. GRAHAM (for himself, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. CARDIN, and Mrs. SHAHEEN):

S. 482. A bill to strengthen the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, to combat international cybercrime, and to impose additional sanctions with respect to the Russian Federation, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. ROBERTS (for himself, Ms. STABENOW, and Mr. UDALL):

S. 483. A bill to enact into law a bill by reference; read the first time.

By Ms. CORTEZ MASTO (for herself, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. WARREN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, and Mr. UDALL):

S. 484. A bill to require additional disclosures relating to donations to the Presidential Inaugural Committee, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. MCCONNELL:

S.J. Res. 8. A joint resolution recognizing the duty of the Federal Government to create a Green New Deal; read the first time.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. BURR (for himself and Mr. MANCHIN):

S. Res. 68. A resolution designating April 5, 2019, as "Gold Star Wives Day"; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BURR (for himself and Mr. MANCHIN):

S. Res. 69. A resolution designating March 29, 2019, as "Vietnam Veterans Day"; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BLUNT:

S. Res. 70. An original resolution authorizing expenditures by committees of the Senate for the periods March 1, 2019 through September 30, 2019, October 1, 2019 through September 30, 2020, and October 1, 2020 through February 28, 2021; from the Committee on Rules and Administration; placed on the calendar.

By Mr. BOOZMAN (for himself and Mr. COTTON):

S. Con. Res. 3. A concurrent resolution recognizing the rich history, heritage, and strategic importance of the Republic of the Marshall Islands and the Marshallese population residing in the United States; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 22

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 22, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for coverage of dental services under the Medicare program.

S. 63

At the request of Mr. WHITEHOUSE, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 63, a bill to implement the recommendations of the Joint Select Committee on Budget and Appropriations Process Reform.

S. 74

At the request of Mr. DAINES, the names of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. HASSAN) and the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BRAUN) were added as cosponsors of S. 74, a bill to prohibit paying Members of Congress during periods during which a Government shutdown is in effect, and for other purposes.

S. 91

At the request of Mr. GARDNER, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 91, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize per diem payments under comprehensive service programs for homeless veterans to furnish care to dependents of homeless veterans, and for other purposes.

S. 135

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) 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. 152

At the request of Mr. COTTON, the names of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. KENNEDY) and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) were added as cosponsors of S. 152, a bill to direct the President to impose penalties pursuant to denial orders with respect to certain Chinese telecommunications companies that are in violation of the export control or sanctions laws of the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 172

At the request of Mr. GARDNER, the names of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) and the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CRAMER) were added as cosponsors of S. 172, a bill to delay the reimposition of the annual fee on health insurance providers until after 2021.

S. 175

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 175, a bill to improve agricultural job opportunities, benefits, and security for aliens in the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 178

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 178, a bill to condemn gross human rights violations of ethnic Turkic Muslims in Xinjiang, and calling for an end to arbitrary detention, torture, and harassment of these communities inside and outside China.

S. 186

At the request of Ms. ERNST, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BRAUN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 186, a bill to ensure timely completion of the concurrent resolution on the budget and regular appropriations bills, and for other purposes.

S. 201

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 201, a bill to amend title 13, United States Code, to make clear that each decennial census, as required for the apportionment of Representatives in Congress among the several States, shall tabulate the total number of persons in each State, and to provide that no information regarding United States citizenship or immigration status may be elicited in any such census.

S. 225

At the request of Mr. ISAKSON, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 225, a bill to provide for partnerships among State and local governments, regional entities, and the private sector to preserve, conserve, and

enhance the visitor experience at nationally significant battlefields of the American Revolution, War of 1812, and Civil War, and for other purposes.

S. 266

At the request of Mr. REED, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 266, a bill to provide for the long-term improvement of public school facilities, and for other purposes.

S. 285

At the request of Ms. ERNST, the names of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. KENNEDY) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. LANKFORD) were added as cosponsors of 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.

S. 287

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, the name of the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 287, 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 to impair national security, and for other purposes.

S. 293

At the request of Mr. CASSIDY, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. KENNEDY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 293, a bill to enhance border security to reduce drug trafficking and related money laundering.

S. 296

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN) was added as a cosponsor of 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.

S. 362

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 362, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reform taxation of alcoholic beverages.

S. 380

At the request of Mr. JOHNSON, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA) was added as a cosponsor of S. 380, a bill to increase access to agency guidance documents.

S. 415

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 415, a bill to provide immigration status for certain battered spouses and children.

S. 459

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 459, a bill to protect the American people from undetectable ghost guns, and for other purposes.

S. CON. RES. 1

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. Con. Res. 1, a concurrent resolution calling for credible, transparent, and safe elections in Nigeria, and for other purposes.

S. RES. 65

At the request of Mr. JOHNSON, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 65, a resolution congratulating the Hellenic Republic and the Republic of North Macedonia on ratification of the Prespa Agreement, which resolves a long-standing bilateral dispute and establishes a strategic partnership between the 2 countries.

S. RES. 66

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 66, a resolution rejecting the use of Government shutdowns.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. MCCONNELL:

S.J. Res. 8. A joint resolution recognizing the duty of the Federal Government to create a Green New Deal; read the first time.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the joint resolution be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the joint resolution was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S.J. RES. 8

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. FINDINGS.

Congress finds that—

(1) the October 2018 report entitled “Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5 C” by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the November 2018 Fourth National Climate Assessment report found that—

(A) human activity is the dominant cause of observed climate change over the past century;

(B) a changing climate is causing sea levels to rise and an increase in wildfires, severe storms, droughts, and other extreme weather events that threaten human life, healthy communities, and critical infrastructure;

(C) global warming at or above 2 degrees Celsius beyond pre-industrialized levels will cause—

(i) mass migration from the regions most affected by climate change;

(ii) more than \$500,000,000,000 in lost annual economic output in the United States by the year 2100;

(iii) wildfires that, by 2050, will annually burn at least twice as much forest area in the western United States than was typically burned by wildfires in the years preceding 2019;

(iv) a loss of more than 99 percent of all coral reefs on Earth;

(v) more than 350,000,000 more people to be exposed globally to deadly heat stress by 2050; and

(vi) a risk of damage to \$1,000,000,000,000 of public infrastructure and coastal real estate in the United States; and

(D) global temperatures must be kept below 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrialized levels to avoid the most severe impacts of a changing climate, which will require—

(i) global reductions in greenhouse gas emissions from human sources of 40 to 60 percent from 2010 levels by 2030; and

(ii) net-zero global emissions by 2050;

(2) because the United States has historically been responsible for a disproportionate amount of greenhouse gas emissions, having emitted 20 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions through 2014, and has a high technological capacity, the United States must take a leading role in reducing emissions through economic transformation;

(3) the United States is currently experiencing several related crises, with—

(A) life expectancy declining while basic needs, such as clean air, clean water, healthy food, and adequate health care, housing, transportation, and education, are inaccessible to a significant portion of the United States population;

(B) a 4-decade trend of wage stagnation, deindustrialization, and anti-labor policies that has led to—

(i) hourly wages overall stagnating since the 1970s despite increased worker productivity;

(ii) the third-worst level of socioeconomic mobility in the developed world before the Great Recession;

(iii) the erosion of the earning and bargaining power of workers in the United States; and

(iv) inadequate resources for public sector workers to confront the challenges of climate change at local, State, and Federal levels; and

(C) the greatest income inequality since the 1920s, with—

(i) the top 1 percent of earners accruing 91 percent of gains in the first few years of economic recovery after the Great Recession;

(ii) a large racial wealth divide amounting to a difference of 20 times more wealth between the average White family and the average Black family; and

(iii) a gender earnings gap that results in women earning approximately 80 percent as much as men, at the median;

(4) climate change, pollution, and environmental destruction have exacerbated systemic racial, regional, social, environmental, and economic injustices (referred to in this section as “systemic injustices”) by disproportionately affecting indigenous peoples, communities of color, migrant communities, deindustrialized communities, depopulated rural communities, the poor, low-income workers, women, the elderly, the unhoused, people with disabilities, and youth (referred to in this section as “frontline and vulnerable communities”);

(5) climate change constitutes a direct threat to the national security of the United States—

(A) by impacting the economic, environmental, and social stability of countries and communities around the world; and

(B) by acting as a threat multiplier;

(6) the Federal Government-led mobilizations during World War II and the New Deal created the greatest middle class that the United States has ever seen, but many members of frontline and vulnerable communities were excluded from many of the economic and societal benefits of those mobilizations; and

(7) a new national, social, industrial, and economic mobilization on a scale not seen since World War II and the New Deal era is a historic opportunity—

(A) to create millions of good, high-wage jobs in the United States;

(B) to provide unprecedented levels of prosperity and economic security for all people of the United States; and

(C) to counteract systemic injustices.

SEC. 2. GREEN NEW DEAL POLICY.

It is the policy of the United States that—

(1) it is the duty of the Federal Government to create a Green New Deal—

(A) to achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions through a fair and just transition for all communities and workers;

(B) to create millions of good, high-wage jobs and ensure prosperity and economic security for all people of the United States;

(C) to invest in the infrastructure and industry of the United States to sustainably meet the challenges of the 21st century;

(D) to secure for all people of the United States for generations to come—

(i) clean air and water;

(ii) climate and community resiliency;

(iii) healthy food;

(iv) access to nature; and

(v) a sustainable environment; and

(E) to promote justice and equity by stopping current, preventing future, and repairing historic oppression of indigenous peoples, communities of color, migrant communities, deindustrialized communities, depopulated rural communities, the poor, low-income workers, women, the elderly, the unhoused, people with disabilities, and youth (referred to in this section as “frontline and vulnerable communities”);

(2) the goals described in subparagraphs (A) through (E) of paragraph (1) (referred to in this section as the “Green New Deal goals”) should be accomplished through a 10-year national mobilization (referred to in this section as the “Green New Deal mobilization”) that will require the following goals and projects—

(A) building resiliency against climate change-related disasters, such as extreme weather, including by leveraging funding and providing investments for community-defined projects and strategies;

(B) repairing and upgrading the infrastructure in the United States, including—

(i) by eliminating pollution and greenhouse gas emissions as much as technologically feasible;

(ii) by guaranteeing universal access to clean water;

(iii) by reducing the risks posed by climate impacts; and

(iv) by ensuring that any infrastructure bill considered by Congress addresses climate change;

(C) meeting 100 percent of the power demand in the United States through clean, renewable, and zero-emission energy sources, including—

(i) by dramatically expanding and upgrading renewable power sources; and

(ii) by deploying new capacity;

(D) building or upgrading to energy-efficient, distributed, and “smart” power grids, and ensuring affordable access to electricity;

(E) upgrading all existing buildings in the United States and building new buildings to achieve maximum energy efficiency, water efficiency, safety, affordability, comfort, and durability, including through electrification;

(F) spurring massive growth in clean manufacturing in the United States and removing pollution and greenhouse gas emissions from manufacturing and industry as much as is technologically feasible, including by expanding renewable energy manufacturing and investing in existing manufacturing and industry;

(G) working collaboratively with farmers and ranchers in the United States to remove pollution and greenhouse gas emissions from the agricultural sector as much as is technologically feasible, including—

(i) by supporting family farming;

(ii) by investing in sustainable farming and land use practices that increase soil health; and

(iii) by building a more sustainable food system that ensures universal access to healthy food;

(H) overhauling transportation systems in the United States to remove pollution and greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation sector as much as is technologically feasible, including through investment in—

(i) zero-emission vehicle infrastructure and manufacturing;

(ii) clean, affordable, and accessible public transit; and

(iii) high-speed rail;

(I) mitigating and managing the long-term adverse health, economic, and other effects of pollution and climate change, including by providing funding for community-defined projects and strategies;

(J) removing greenhouse gases from the atmosphere and reducing pollution by restoring natural ecosystems through proven low-tech solutions that increase soil carbon storage, such as land preservation and afforestation;

(K) restoring and protecting threatened, endangered, and fragile ecosystems through locally appropriate and science-based projects that enhance biodiversity and support climate resiliency;

(L) cleaning up existing hazardous waste and abandoned sites, ensuring economic development and sustainability on those sites;

(M) identifying other emission and pollution sources and creating solutions to remove them; and

(N) promoting the international exchange of technology, expertise, products, funding, and services, with the aim of making the United States the international leader on climate action, and to help other countries achieve a Green New Deal;

(3) a Green New Deal must be developed through transparent and inclusive consultation, collaboration, and partnership with frontline and vulnerable communities, labor unions, worker cooperatives, civil society groups, academia, and businesses; and

(4) to achieve the Green New Deal goals and mobilization, a Green New Deal will require the following goals and projects—

(A) providing and leveraging, in a way that ensures that the public receives appropriate ownership stakes and returns on investment, adequate capital (including through community grants, public banks, and other public financing), technical expertise, supporting policies, and other forms of assistance to communities, organizations, Federal, State, and local government agencies, and businesses working on the Green New Deal mobilization;

(B) ensuring that the Federal Government takes into account the complete environmental and social costs and impacts of emissions through—

(i) existing laws;

(ii) new policies and programs; and

(iii) ensuring that frontline and vulnerable communities shall not be adversely affected;

(C) providing resources, training, and high-quality education, including higher education, to all people of the United States, with a focus on frontline and vulnerable communities, so that all people of the United States may be full and equal participants in the Green New Deal mobilization;

(D) making public investments in the research and development of new clean and renewable energy technologies and industries;

(E) directing investments to spur economic development, deepen and diversify industry and business in local and regional economies, and build wealth and community ownership, while prioritizing high-quality job creation

and economic, social, and environmental benefits in frontline and vulnerable communities, and deindustrialized communities, that may otherwise struggle with the transition away from greenhouse gas intensive industries;

(F) ensuring the use of democratic and participatory processes that are inclusive of and led by frontline and vulnerable communities and workers to plan, implement, and administer the Green New Deal mobilization at the local level;

(G) ensuring that the Green New Deal mobilization creates high-quality union jobs that pay prevailing wages, hires local workers, offers training and advancement opportunities, and guarantees wage and benefit parity for workers affected by the transition;

(H) guaranteeing a job with a family-sustaining wage, adequate family and medical leave, paid vacations, and retirement security to all people of the United States;

(I) strengthening and protecting the right of all workers to organize, unionize, and collectively bargain free of coercion, intimidation, and harassment;

(J) strengthening and enforcing labor, workplace health and safety, antidiscrimination, and wage and hour standards across all employers, industries, and sectors;

(K) enacting and enforcing trade rules, procurement standards, and border adjustments with strong labor and environmental protections—

(i) to stop the transfer of jobs and pollution overseas; and

(ii) to grow domestic manufacturing in the United States;

(L) ensuring that public lands, waters, and oceans are protected and that eminent domain is not abused;

(M) obtaining the free, prior, and informed consent of indigenous peoples for all decisions that affect indigenous peoples and their traditional territories, honoring all treaties and agreements with indigenous peoples, and protecting and enforcing the sovereignty and land rights of indigenous peoples;

(N) ensuring a commercial environment where every businessperson is free from unfair competition and domination by domestic or international monopolies; and

(O) providing all people of the United States with—

(i) high-quality health care;

(ii) affordable, safe, and adequate housing;

(iii) economic security; and

(iv) clean water, clean air, healthy and affordable food, and access to nature.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 68—DESIGNATING APRIL 5, 2019, AS “GOLD STAR WIVES DAY”

Mr. BURR (for himself and Mr. MANCHIN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 68

Whereas the Senate honors the sacrifices made by the spouses and families of the fallen members of the Armed Forces of the United States;

Whereas Gold Star Wives of America, Inc. represents the spouses and families of the members and veterans of the Armed Forces of the United States who have died on active duty or as a result of a service-connected disability;

Whereas the primary mission of Gold Star Wives of America, Inc. is to provide services, support, and friendship to the spouses of the fallen members and veterans of the Armed Forces of the United States;

Whereas, in 1945, Gold Star Wives of America, Inc. was organized with the help of Eleanor Roosevelt to assist the families left behind by the fallen members and veterans of the Armed Forces of the United States;

Whereas the first meeting of Gold Star Wives of America, Inc. was held on April 5, 1945;

Whereas April 5, 2019, marks the 74th anniversary of the first meeting of Gold Star Wives of America, Inc.;

Whereas the members and veterans of the Armed Forces of the United States bear the burden of protecting the freedom of the people of the United States; and

Whereas the sacrifices of the families of the fallen members and veterans of the Armed Forces of the United States should never be forgotten: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates April 5, 2019, as “Gold Star Wives Day”;

(2) honors and recognizes—

(A) the contributions of the members of Gold Star Wives of America, Inc.; and

(B) the dedication of the members of Gold Star Wives of America, Inc. to the members and veterans of the Armed Forces of the United States; and

(3) encourages the people of the United States to observe Gold Star Wives Day to promote awareness of—

(A) the contributions and dedication of the members of Gold Star Wives of America, Inc. to the members and veterans of the Armed Forces of the United States; and

(B) the important role that Gold Star Wives of America, Inc. plays in the lives of the spouses and families of the fallen members and veterans of the Armed Forces of the United States.

SENATE RESOLUTION 69—DESIGNATING MARCH 29, 2019, AS “VIETNAM VETERANS DAY”

Mr. BURR (for himself and Mr. MANCHIN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 69

Whereas the Vietnam War was fought in the Republic of Vietnam from 1955 to 1975 and involved regular forces from the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and Viet Cong guerrilla forces in armed conflict with the Armed Forces of the United States, the armed forces of allies of the United States, and the armed forces of the Republic of Vietnam;

Whereas the Armed Forces of the United States became involved in Vietnam because the United States Government wanted to provide direct support by the Armed Forces to the Government of the Republic of Vietnam to defend against the growing threat of Communism from the Democratic Republic of Vietnam;

Whereas members of the Armed Forces of the United States began serving in an advisory role to the Government of South Vietnam in 1955;

Whereas, as a result of the incidents in the Gulf of Tonkin on August 2 and 4, 1964, Congress approved the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution (Public Law 88-408) by an overwhelming majority on August 7, 1964, which provided to the President of the United States the authority to use armed force to assist the Republic of Vietnam in the defense of its freedom against the Democratic Republic of Vietnam;

Whereas, in 1965, ground combat units of the Armed Forces of the United States arrived in the Republic of Vietnam to join approximately 23,000 personnel of the Armed Forces who were already present there;

Whereas, by September 1965, between 150,000 and 190,000 troops of the Armed Forces of the United States were in Vietnam, and by 1969, the number of such troops reached a peak of approximately 549,500, including members of the Armed Forces who were supporting the combat operations from Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, and aboard Navy vessels;

Whereas, on January 27, 1973, the Agreement on Ending the War and Restoring Peace in Viet-Nam (commonly known as the “Paris Peace Accords”) was signed, which required the release of all prisoners-of-war of the United States held in North Vietnam and the withdrawal of all Armed Forces of the United States from South Vietnam;

Whereas, on March 29, 1973, the Armed Forces of the United States completed the withdrawal of combat units and combat support units from South Vietnam;

Whereas, on April 30, 1975, North Vietnamese regular forces captured Saigon, the capital of South Vietnam, effectively placing South Vietnam under Communist control;

Whereas more than 58,000 members of the Armed Forces of the United States lost their lives in the Vietnam War, and more than 300,000 members of the Armed Forces of the United States were wounded in Vietnam;

Whereas, in 1982, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial was dedicated in the District of Columbia to commemorate the members of the Armed Forces of the United States who died or were declared missing-in-action in Vietnam;

Whereas the Vietnam War was an extremely divisive issue among the people of the United States and a conflict that caused a generation of veterans to wait too long for the public of the United States to acknowledge and honor the efforts and services of those veterans;

Whereas members of the Armed Forces who served bravely and faithfully for the United States during the Vietnam War were often wrongly criticized for the decisions of policymakers that were beyond the control of those members; and

Whereas designating March 29, 2019, as “Vietnam Veterans Day” would be an appropriate way to honor the members of the Armed Forces of the United States who served in South Vietnam and throughout Southeast Asia during the Vietnam War: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates March 29, 2019, as “Vietnam Veterans Day”;

(2) honors and recognizes the contributions of the veterans of the Armed Forces of the United States who served in Vietnam during war and during peace;

(3) encourages States and local governments to designate March 29, 2019, as “Vietnam Veterans Day”; and

(4) encourages the people of the United States to observe Vietnam Veterans Day with appropriate ceremonies and activities that—

(A) provide the appreciation that veterans of the Vietnam War deserve;

(B) demonstrate the resolve that the people of the United States shall never forget the sacrifices and service of a generation of veterans who served in the Vietnam War;

(C) promote awareness of the faithful service and contributions of the veterans of the Vietnam War—

(i) during service in the Armed Forces of the United States; and

(ii) to the communities of the veterans since returning home;

(D) promote awareness of the importance of entire communities empowering veterans and the families of veterans in helping the veterans readjust to civilian life after service in the Armed Forces; and

(E) promote opportunities for veterans of the Vietnam War—

(i) to assist younger veterans returning from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan in rehabilitation from wounds, both seen and unseen; and

(ii) to support the reintegration of younger veterans into civilian life.

SENATE RESOLUTION 70—AUTHORIZING EXPENDITURES BY COMMITTEES OF THE SENATE FOR THE PERIODS MARCH 1, 2019 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 30, 2019, OCTOBER 1, 2019 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 30, 2020, AND OCTOBER 1, 2020 THROUGH FEBRUARY 28, 2021

Mr. BLUNT submitted the following resolution; which was from the Committee on Rules and Administration; placed on the calendar:

S. RES. 70

Resolved,

SECTION 1. AGGREGATE AUTHORIZATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of carrying out the powers, duties, and functions under the Standing Rules of the Senate, and under the appropriate authorizing resolutions of the Senate, there is authorized for the period March 1, 2019 through September 30, 2019, in the aggregate of \$62,440,527, for the period October 1, 2019 through September 30, 2020, in the aggregate of \$107,021,881, and for the period October 1, 2020 through February 28, 2021, in the aggregate of \$44,592,452, in accordance with the provisions of this resolution, for standing committees of the Senate, the Special Committee on Aging, the Select Committee on Intelligence, and the Committee on Indian Affairs.

(b) AGENCY CONTRIBUTIONS.—There are authorized to be paid from the appropriations account for “Expenses of Inquiries and Investigations” of the Senate such sums as may be necessary for agency contributions related to the compensation of employees of the committees for the period March 1, 2019 through September 30, 2019, for the period October 1, 2019 through September 30, 2020, and for the period October 1, 2020 through February 28, 2021.

(c) EXPENSES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), expenses of each standing committee of the Senate, the Special Committee on Aging, the Select Committee on Intelligence, and the Committee on Indian Affairs under this resolution shall be paid from the contingent fund of the Senate upon vouchers approved by the chairman of the applicable committee.

(2) VOUCHERS NOT REQUIRED.—Vouchers shall not be required for—

(A) the disbursement of salaries of employees paid at an annual rate;

(B) the payment of telecommunications provided by the Office of the Sergeant at Arms and Doorkeeper;

(C) the payment of stationery supplies purchased through the Keeper of the Stationery;

(D) payments to the Postmaster of the Senate;

(E) the payment of metered charges on copying equipment provided by the Office of the Sergeant at Arms and Doorkeeper;

(F) the payment of Senate Recording and Photographic Services; or

(G) the payment of franked and mass mail costs by the Sergeant at Arms and Doorkeeper.

SEC. 2. COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION, AND FORESTRY.

(a) GENERAL AUTHORITY.—In carrying out its powers, duties, and functions under the

Standing Rules of the Senate, in accordance with its jurisdiction under rule XXV of the Standing Rules of the Senate, including holding hearings, reporting such hearings, and making investigations as authorized by paragraphs 1 and 8 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry is authorized from March 1, 2019 through February 28, 2021, in its discretion—

(1) to make expenditures from the contingent fund of the Senate;

(2) to employ personnel; and

(3) with the prior consent of the Government department or agency concerned and the Committee on Rules and Administration, to use on a reimbursable, or nonreimbursable, basis the services of personnel of any such department or agency.

(b) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2019.—The expenses of the committee for the period March 1, 2019 through September 30, 2019 under this section shall not exceed \$2,758,627, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed \$200,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed \$40,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(c) EXPENSES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020 PERIOD.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2019 through September 30, 2020 under this section shall not exceed \$4,729,075, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed \$200,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed \$40,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(d) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING FEBRUARY 28, 2021.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2020 through February 28, 2021 under this section shall not exceed \$1,970,448, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed \$200,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed \$40,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

SEC. 3. COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES.

(a) GENERAL AUTHORITY.—In carrying out its powers, duties, and functions under the Standing Rules of the Senate, in accordance with its jurisdiction under rule XXV of the Standing Rules of the Senate, including holding hearings, reporting such hearings, and making investigations as authorized by paragraphs 1 and 8 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee on Armed Services is authorized from March 1, 2019 through February 28, 2021, in its discretion—

(1) to make expenditures from the contingent fund of the Senate;

(2) to employ personnel; and

(3) with the prior consent of the Government department or agency concerned and the Committee on Rules and Administration, to use on a reimbursable, or nonreimbursable, basis the services of personnel of any such department or agency.

(b) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2019.—The expenses of the com-

mittee for the period March 1, 2019 through September 30, 2019 under this section shall not exceed \$4,162,229, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed \$51,333 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed \$19,250 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(c) EXPENSES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020 PERIOD.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2019 through September 30, 2020 under this section shall not exceed \$7,135,250, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed \$88,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed \$33,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(d) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING FEBRUARY 28, 2021.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2020 through February 28, 2021 under this section shall not exceed \$2,973,021, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed \$36,667 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed \$13,750 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

SEC. 4. COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS.

(a) GENERAL AUTHORITY.—In carrying out its powers, duties, and functions under the Standing Rules of the Senate, in accordance with its jurisdiction under rule XXV of the Standing Rules of the Senate, including holding hearings, reporting such hearings, and making investigations as authorized by paragraphs 1 and 8 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs is authorized from March 1, 2019 through February 28, 2021, in its discretion—

(1) to make expenditures from the contingent fund of the Senate;

(2) to employ personnel; and

(3) with the prior consent of the Government department or agency concerned and the Committee on Rules and Administration, to use on a reimbursable, or nonreimbursable, basis the services of personnel of any such department or agency.

(b) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2019.—The expenses of the committee for the period March 1, 2019 through September 30, 2019 under this section shall not exceed \$3,243,919, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed \$11,666 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed \$875 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(c) EXPENSES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020 PERIOD.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2019 through September 30, 2020 under this section shall not exceed \$5,561,004, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed \$20,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of indi-

vidual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed \$1,500 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(d) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING FEBRUARY 28, 2021.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2020 through February 28, 2021 under this section shall not exceed \$2,317,085, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed \$8,334 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed \$625 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

SEC. 5. COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET.

(a) GENERAL AUTHORITY.—In carrying out its powers, duties, and functions under the Standing Rules of the Senate, in accordance with its jurisdiction under rule XXV of the Standing Rules of the Senate, including holding hearings, reporting such hearings, and making investigations as authorized by paragraphs 1 and 8 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee on the Budget is authorized from March 1, 2019 through February 28, 2021, in its discretion—

(1) to make expenditures from the contingent fund of the Senate;

(2) to employ personnel; and

(3) with the prior consent of the Government department or agency concerned and the Committee on Rules and Administration, to use on a reimbursable, or nonreimbursable, basis the services of personnel of any such department or agency.

(b) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2019.—The expenses of the committee for the period March 1, 2019 through September 30, 2019 under this section shall not exceed \$3,534,372, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed \$15,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed \$18,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(c) EXPENSES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020 PERIOD.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2019 through September 30, 2020 under this section shall not exceed \$6,058,924, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed \$40,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed \$30,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(d) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING FEBRUARY 28, 2021.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2020 through February 28, 2021 under this section shall not exceed \$2,524,552, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed \$10,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed \$10,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of

such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

SEC. 6. COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION.

(a) GENERAL AUTHORITY.—In carrying out its powers, duties, and functions under the Standing Rules of the Senate, in accordance with its jurisdiction under rule XXV of the Standing Rules of the Senate, including holding hearings, reporting such hearings, and making investigations as authorized by paragraphs 1 and 8 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation is authorized from March 1, 2019 through February 28, 2021, in its discretion—

(1) to make expenditures from the contingent fund of the Senate;

(2) to employ personnel; and

(3) with the prior consent of the Government department or agency concerned and the Committee on Rules and Administration, to use on a reimbursable, or nonreimbursable, basis the services of personnel of any such department or agency.

(b) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2019.—The expenses of the committee for the period March 1, 2019 through September 30, 2019 under this section shall not exceed \$4,155,132, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed \$50,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed \$50,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(c) EXPENSES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020 PERIOD.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2019 through September 30, 2020 under this section shall not exceed \$7,104,057, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed \$50,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed \$50,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(d) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING FEBRUARY 28, 2021.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2020 through February 28, 2021 under this section shall not exceed \$2,960,024, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed \$50,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed \$50,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

SEC. 7. COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES.

(a) GENERAL AUTHORITY.—In carrying out its powers, duties, and functions under the Standing Rules of the Senate, in accordance with its jurisdiction under rule XXV of the Standing Rules of the Senate, including holding hearings, reporting such hearings, and making investigations as authorized by paragraphs 1 and 8 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources is authorized from March 1, 2019 through February 28, 2021, in its discretion—

(1) to make expenditures from the contingent fund of the Senate;

(2) to employ personnel; and

(3) with the prior consent of the Government department or agency concerned and the Committee on Rules and Administration, to use on a reimbursable, or nonreimbursable, basis the services of personnel of any such department or agency.

(b) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2019.—The expenses of the committee for the period March 1, 2019 through September 30, 2019 under this section shall not exceed \$3,348,303, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed \$17,500 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed \$8,750 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(c) EXPENSES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020 PERIOD.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2019 through September 30, 2020 under this section shall not exceed \$5,739,948, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed \$30,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed \$15,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(d) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING FEBRUARY 28, 2021.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2020 through February 28, 2021 under this section shall not exceed \$2,391,645, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed \$12,500 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed \$6,250 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

SEC. 8. COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS.

(a) GENERAL AUTHORITY.—In carrying out its powers, duties, and functions under the Standing Rules of the Senate, in accordance with its jurisdiction under rule XXV of the Standing Rules of the Senate, including holding hearings, reporting such hearings, and making investigations as authorized by paragraphs 1 and 8 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee on Environment and Public Works is authorized from March 1, 2019 through February 28, 2021, in its discretion—

(1) to make expenditures from the contingent fund of the Senate;

(2) to employ personnel; and

(3) with the prior consent of the Government department or agency concerned and the Committee on Rules and Administration, to use on a reimbursable, or nonreimbursable, basis the services of personnel of any such department or agency.

(b) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2019.—The expenses of the committee for the period March 1, 2019 through September 30, 2019 under this section shall not exceed \$3,183,482, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed \$4,666 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed \$1,166 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(c) EXPENSES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020 PERIOD.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2019 through September 30, 2020 under this section shall not exceed \$5,457,399, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed \$8,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed \$2,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(d) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING FEBRUARY 28, 2021.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2020 through February 28, 2021 under this section shall not exceed \$2,273,917, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed \$3,334 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed \$834 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

SEC. 9. COMMITTEE ON FINANCE.

(a) GENERAL AUTHORITY.—In carrying out its powers, duties, and functions under the Standing Rules of the Senate, in accordance with its jurisdiction under rule XXV of the Standing Rules of the Senate, including holding hearings, reporting such hearings, and making investigations as authorized by paragraphs 1 and 8 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee on Finance is authorized from March 1, 2019 through February 28, 2021, in its discretion—

(1) to make expenditures from the contingent fund of the Senate;

(2) to employ personnel; and

(3) with the prior consent of the Government department or agency concerned and the Committee on Rules and Administration, to use on a reimbursable, or nonreimbursable, basis the services of personnel of any such department or agency.

(b) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2019.—The expenses of the committee for the period March 1, 2019 through September 30, 2019 under this section shall not exceed \$5,119,003, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed \$17,500 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed \$5,833 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(c) EXPENSES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020 PERIOD.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2019 through September 30, 2020 under this section shall not exceed \$8,775,434, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed \$30,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed \$10,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(d) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING FEBRUARY 28, 2021.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2020 through February 28, 2021 under this section shall not exceed \$3,656,431, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed \$12,500 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed \$4,166 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

SEC. 10. COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS.

(a) GENERAL AUTHORITY.—In carrying out its powers, duties, and functions under the Standing Rules of the Senate, in accordance with its jurisdiction under rule XXV of the Standing Rules of the Senate, including holding hearings, reporting such hearings, and making investigations as authorized by paragraphs 1 and 8 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized from March 1, 2019 through February 28, 2021, in its discretion—

(1) to make expenditures from the contingent fund of the Senate;

(2) to employ personnel; and

(3) with the prior consent of the Government department or agency concerned and the Committee on Rules and Administration, to use on a reimbursable, or nonreimbursable, basis the services of personnel of any such department or agency.

(b) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2019.—The expenses of the committee for the period March 1, 2019 through September 30, 2019 under this section shall not exceed \$4,224,651, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed \$150,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed \$20,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(c) EXPENSES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020 PERIOD.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2019 through September 30, 2020 under this section shall not exceed \$7,242,259, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed \$150,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed \$20,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(d) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING FEBRUARY 28, 2021.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2020 through February 28, 2021 under this section shall not exceed \$3,017,608, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed \$150,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed \$20,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

SEC. 11. COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS.

(a) GENERAL AUTHORITY.—In carrying out its powers, duties, and functions under the Standing Rules of the Senate, in accordance with its jurisdiction under rule XXV of the Standing Rules of the Senate, including holding hearings, reporting such hearings, and making investigations as authorized by paragraphs 1 and 8 of rule XXVI of the

Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions is authorized from March 1, 2019 through February 28, 2021, in its discretion—

(1) to make expenditures from the contingent fund of the Senate;

(2) to employ personnel; and

(3) with the prior consent of the Government department or agency concerned and the Committee on Rules and Administration, to use on a reimbursable, or nonreimbursable, basis the services of personnel of any such department or agency.

(b) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2019.—The expenses of the committee for the period March 1, 2019 through September 30, 2019 under this section shall not exceed \$5,451,418, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed \$75,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed \$25,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(c) EXPENSES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020 PERIOD.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2019 through September 30, 2020 under this section shall not exceed \$9,345,288, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed \$75,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed \$25,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(d) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING FEBRUARY 28, 2021.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2020 through February 28, 2021 under this section shall not exceed \$3,893,870, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed \$75,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed \$25,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

SEC. 12. COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS.

(a) GENERAL AUTHORITY.—In carrying out its powers, duties, and functions under the Standing Rules of the Senate, in accordance with its jurisdiction under rule XXV of the Standing Rules of the Senate and S. Res. 445, agreed to October 9, 2004 (108th Congress), including holding hearings, reporting such hearings, and making investigations as authorized by paragraphs 1 and 8 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs is authorized from March 1, 2019 through February 28, 2021, in its discretion—

(1) to make expenditures from the contingent fund of the Senate;

(2) to employ personnel; and

(3) with the prior consent of the Government department or agency concerned and the Committee on Rules and Administration, to use on a reimbursable, or nonreimbursable, basis the services of personnel of any such department or agency.

(b) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2019.—The expenses of the committee for the period March 1, 2019 through September 30, 2019 under this section shall not exceed \$5,591,653, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed \$75,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed \$20,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(c) EXPENSES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020 PERIOD.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2019 through September 30, 2020 under this section shall not exceed \$9,585,691, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed \$75,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed \$20,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(d) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING FEBRUARY 28, 2021.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2020 through February 28, 2021 under this section shall not exceed \$3,994,038, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed \$75,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed \$20,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(e) INVESTIGATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The committee, or any duly authorized subcommittee of the committee, is authorized to study or investigate—

(A) the efficiency and economy of operations of all branches of the Government including the possible existence of fraud, misfeasance, malfeasance, collusion, mismanagement, incompetence, corruption or unethical practices, waste, extravagance, conflicts of interest, and the improper expenditure of Government funds in transactions, contracts, and activities of the Government or of Government officials and employees and any and all such improper practices between Government personnel and corporations, individuals, companies, or persons affiliated therewith, doing business with the Government, and the compliance or noncompliance of such corporations, companies, or individuals or other entities with the rules, regulations, and laws governing the various governmental agencies and the Government's relationships with the public;

(B) the extent to which criminal or other improper practices or activities are, or have been, engaged in the field of labor-management relations or in groups or organizations of employees or employers, to the detriment of interests of the public, employers, or employees, and to determine whether any changes are required in the laws of the United States in order to protect such interests against the occurrence of such practices or activities;

(C) organized criminal activity which may operate in or otherwise utilize the facilities of interstate or international commerce in furtherance of any transactions and the manner and extent to which, and the identity of the persons, firms, or corporations, or other entities by whom such utilization is being made, and further, to study and investigate the manner in which and the extent to which persons engaged in organized criminal

activity have infiltrated lawful business enterprise, and to study the adequacy of Federal laws to prevent the operations of organized crime in interstate or international commerce, and to determine whether any changes are required in the laws of the United States in order to protect the public against such practices or activities;

(D) all other aspects of crime and lawlessness within the United States which have an impact upon or affect the national health, welfare, and safety, including investment fraud schemes, commodity and security fraud, computer fraud, and the use of offshore banking and corporate facilities to carry out criminal objectives;

(E) the efficiency and economy of operations of all branches and functions of the Government with particular reference to—

(i) the effectiveness of present national security methods, staffing, and processes as tested against the requirements imposed by the rapidly mounting complexity of national security problems;

(ii) the capacity of present national security staffing, methods, and processes to make full use of the Nation's resources of knowledge and talents;

(iii) the adequacy of present intergovernmental relations between the United States and international organizations principally concerned with national security of which the United States is a member; and

(iv) legislative and other proposals to improve these methods, processes, and relationships;

(F) the efficiency, economy, and effectiveness of all agencies and departments of the Government involved in the control and management of energy shortages including their performance with respect to—

(i) the collection and dissemination of accurate statistics on fuel demand and supply;

(ii) the implementation of effective energy conservation measures;

(iii) the pricing of energy in all forms;

(iv) coordination of energy programs with State and local government;

(v) control of exports of scarce fuels;

(vi) the management of tax, import, pricing, and other policies affecting energy supplies;

(vii) maintenance of the independent sector of the petroleum industry as a strong competitive force;

(viii) the allocation of fuels in short supply by public and private entities;

(ix) the management of energy supplies owned or controlled by the Government;

(x) relations with other oil producing and consuming countries;

(xi) the monitoring of compliance by governments, corporations, or individuals with the laws and regulations governing the allocation, conservation, or pricing of energy supplies; and

(xii) research into the discovery and development of alternative energy supplies; and

(G) the efficiency and economy of all branches and functions of Government with particular references to the operations and management of Federal regulatory policies and programs.

(2) EXTENT OF INQUIRIES.—In carrying out the duties provided in paragraph (1), the inquiries of this committee or any subcommittee of the committee shall not be construed to be limited to the records, functions, and operations of any particular branch of the Government and may extend to the records and activities of any persons, corporation, or other entity.

(3) SPECIAL COMMITTEE AUTHORITY.—For the purposes of this subsection, the committee, or any duly authorized subcommittee of the committee, or its chairman, or any other member of the committee or subcommittee designated by the chairman

is authorized, in its, his, her, or their discretion—

(A) to require by subpoena or otherwise the attendance of witnesses and production of correspondence, books, papers, and documents;

(B) to hold hearings;

(C) to sit and act at any time or place during the sessions, recess, and adjournment periods of the Senate;

(D) to administer oaths; and

(E) to take testimony, either orally or by sworn statement, or, in the case of staff members of the Committee and the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, by deposition in accordance with the Committee Rules of Procedure.

(4) AUTHORITY OF OTHER COMMITTEES.—Nothing contained in this subsection shall affect or impair the exercise of any other standing committee of the Senate of any power, or the discharge by such committee of any duty, conferred or imposed upon it by the Standing Rules of the Senate or by the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946.

(5) SUBPOENA AUTHORITY.—All subpoenas and related legal processes of the committee and any duly authorized subcommittee of the committee authorized under S. Res. 62, agreed to February 28, 2017 (115th Congress) are authorized to continue.

SEC. 13. COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY.

(a) GENERAL AUTHORITY.—In carrying out its powers, duties, and functions under the Standing Rules of the Senate, in accordance with its jurisdiction under rule XXV of the Standing Rules of the Senate, including holding hearings, reporting such hearings, and making investigations as authorized by paragraphs 1 and 8 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee on the Judiciary is authorized from March 1, 2019 through February 28, 2021, in its discretion—

(1) to make expenditures from the contingent fund of the Senate;

(2) to employ personnel; and

(3) with the prior consent of the Government department or agency concerned and the Committee on Rules and Administration, to use on a reimbursable, or nonreimbursable, basis the services of personnel of any such department or agency.

(b) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2019.—The expenses of the committee for the period March 1, 2019 through September 30, 2019 under this section shall not exceed \$6,280,596, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed \$116,667 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed \$11,667 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(c) EXPENSES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020 PERIOD.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2019 through September 30, 2020 under this section shall not exceed \$10,766,736, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed \$200,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed \$20,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(d) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING FEBRUARY 28, 2021.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2020 through February 28, 2021 under this section shall not exceed \$4,486,140, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed \$83,333 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed \$8,333 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(e) ADDITIONAL COMMITTEE AUTHORITY.—For the purposes of carrying out its investigative powers, duties, and functions under the Standing Rules of the Senate and in accordance with Committee Rules of Procedure, the committee is authorized to require by subpoena the attendance of witnesses at depositions of the committee, which may be conducted by designated staff.

SEC. 14. COMMITTEE ON RULES AND ADMINISTRATION.

(a) GENERAL AUTHORITY.—In carrying out its powers, duties, and functions under the Standing Rules of the Senate, in accordance with its jurisdiction under rule XXV of the Standing Rules of the Senate, including holding hearings, reporting such hearings, and making investigations as authorized by paragraphs 1 and 8 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee on Rules and Administration is authorized from March 1, 2019 through February 28, 2021, in its discretion, to—

(1) make expenditures from the contingent fund of the Senate;

(2) employ personnel; and

(3) with the prior consent of the Government department or agency concerned and the Committee on Rules and Administration, use on a reimbursable or nonreimbursable basis the services of personnel of any such department or agency.

(b) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2019.—The expenses of such committee for the period March 1, 2019 through September 30, 2019 under this section shall not exceed \$1,589,010, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed \$43,750 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed \$7,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(c) EXPENSES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020 PERIOD.—The expenses of such committee for the period October 1, 2019 through September 30, 2020 under this section shall not exceed \$2,724,017, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed \$75,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed \$12,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(d) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING FEBRUARY 28, 2021.—The expenses of such committee for the period October 1, 2020 through February 28, 2021 under this section shall not exceed \$1,135,007, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed \$31,250 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed \$5,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

SEC. 15. COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP.

(a) **GENERAL AUTHORITY.**—In carrying out its powers, duties, and functions under the Standing Rules of the Senate, in accordance with its jurisdiction under rule XXV of the Standing Rules of the Senate, including holding hearings, reporting such hearings, and making investigations as authorized by paragraphs 1 and 8 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship is authorized from March 1, 2019 through February 28, 2021, in its discretion—

(1) to make expenditures from the contingent fund of the Senate;

(2) to employ personnel; and

(3) with the prior consent of the Government department or agency concerned and the Committee on Rules and Administration, to use on a reimbursable, or nonreimbursable, basis the services of personnel of any such department or agency.

(b) **EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2019.**—The expenses of the committee for the period March 1, 2019 through September 30, 2019 under this section shall not exceed \$1,708,807, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed \$25,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed \$10,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(c) **EXPENSES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020 PERIOD.**—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2019 through September 30, 2020 under this section shall not exceed \$2,929,383, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed \$25,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed \$10,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(d) **EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING FEBRUARY 28, 2021.**—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2020 through February 28, 2021 under this section shall not exceed \$1,220,576, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed \$25,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed \$10,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

SEC. 16. COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS.

(a) **GENERAL AUTHORITY.**—In carrying out its powers, duties, and functions under the Standing Rules of the Senate, in accordance with its jurisdiction under rule XXV of the Standing Rules of the Senate, including holding hearings, reporting such hearings, and making investigations as authorized by paragraphs 1 and 8 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee on Veterans' Affairs is authorized from March 1, 2019 through February 28, 2021, in its discretion—

(1) to make expenditures from the contingent fund of the Senate;

(2) to employ personnel; and

(3) with the prior consent of the Government department or agency concerned and the Committee on Rules and Administration, to use on a reimbursable, or nonreimburs-

able, basis the services of personnel of any such department or agency.

(b) **EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2019.**—The expenses of the committee for the period March 1, 2019 through September 30, 2019 under this section shall not exceed \$1,633,522, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed \$4,100 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed \$16,500 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(c) **EXPENSES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020 PERIOD.**—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2019 through September 30, 2020 under this section shall not exceed \$2,800,323, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed \$7,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed \$28,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(d) **EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING FEBRUARY 28, 2021.**—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2020 through February 28, 2021 under this section shall not exceed \$1,166,801, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed \$3,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed \$11,700 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

SEC. 17. SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING.

(a) **GENERAL AUTHORITY.**—In carrying out its powers, duties, and functions imposed by section 104 of S. Res. 4, agreed to February 4, 1977 (95th Congress), and in exercising the authority conferred on it by such section, the Special Committee on Aging is authorized from March 1, 2019 through February 28, 2021, in its discretion—

(1) to make expenditures from the contingent fund of the Senate;

(2) to employ personnel; and

(3) with the prior consent of the Government department or agency concerned and the Committee on Rules and Administration, to use on a reimbursable, or nonreimbursable, basis the services of personnel of any such department or agency.

(b) **EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2019.**—The expenses of the committee for the period March 1, 2019 through September 30, 2019 under this section shall not exceed \$1,516,667, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed \$1,500 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed \$3,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(c) **EXPENSES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020 PERIOD.**—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2019 through September 30, 2020 under this section shall not exceed \$2,600,000, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed \$3,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual

consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed \$3,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(d) **EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING FEBRUARY 28, 2021.**—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2020 through February 28, 2021 under this section shall not exceed \$1,083,333, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed \$1,250 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed \$1,500 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

SEC. 18. SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE.

(a) **GENERAL AUTHORITY.**—In carrying out its powers, duties, and functions under S. Res. 400, agreed to May 19, 1976 (94th Congress), as amended by S. Res. 445, agreed to October 9, 2004 (108th Congress), in accordance with its jurisdiction under sections 3(a) and 17 of such S. Res. 400, including holding hearings, reporting such hearings, and making investigations as authorized by section 5 of such S. Res. 400, the Select Committee on Intelligence is authorized from March 1, 2019 through February 28, 2021, in its discretion—

(1) to make expenditures from the contingent fund of the Senate;

(2) to employ personnel; and

(3) with the prior consent of the Government department or agency concerned and the Committee on Rules and Administration, to use on a reimbursable, or nonreimbursable, basis the services of personnel of any such department or agency.

(b) **EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2019.**—The expenses of the committee for the period March 1, 2019 through September 30, 2019 under this section shall not exceed \$3,707,448, of which not to exceed \$10,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))).

(c) **EXPENSES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020 PERIOD.**—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2019 through September 30, 2020 under this section shall not exceed \$6,355,625, of which not to exceed \$17,144 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))).

(d) **EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING FEBRUARY 28, 2021.**—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2020 through February 28, 2021 under this section shall not exceed \$2,648,177, of which not to exceed \$7,143 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))).

SEC. 19. COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS.

(a) **GENERAL AUTHORITY.**—In carrying out its powers, duties, and functions imposed by section 105 of S. Res. 4, agreed to February 4, 1977 (95th Congress), and in exercising the authority conferred on it by that section, the Committee on Indian Affairs is authorized from March 1, 2019 through February 28, 2021, in its discretion—

(1) to make expenditures from the contingent fund of the Senate;

(2) to employ personnel; and

(3) with the prior consent of the Government department or agency concerned and the Committee on Rules and Administration, to use on a reimbursable, or nonreimbursable, basis the services of personnel of any such department or agency.

(b) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2019.—The expenses of the committee for the period March 1, 2019 through September 30, 2019 under this section shall not exceed \$1,231,690, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed \$20,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed \$20,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(c) EXPENSES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020 PERIOD.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2019 through September 30, 2020 under this section shall not exceed \$2,111,468, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed \$20,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed \$20,000 may be expended for training consultants of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(d) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING FEBRUARY 28, 2021.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2020 through February 28, 2021 under this section shall not exceed \$879,778, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed \$20,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed \$20,000 may be expended for training consultants of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

SEC. 20. SPECIAL RESERVE.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Within the funds in the account “Expenses of Inquiries and Investigations”, there is authorized to be established a special reserve to be available to any committee funded by this resolution as provided in subsection (b) of which amount—

(1) for the period March 1, 2019 through September 30, 2019, an amount shall be available, not to exceed 7 percent of the amount equal to $\frac{1}{12}$ th of the appropriations for the account that are available for the period October 1, 2018 through September 30, 2019;

(2) for the period October 1, 2019 through September 30, 2020, an amount shall be available, not to exceed 7 percent of the appropriations for the account that are available for that period; and

(3) for the period October 1, 2020 through February 28, 2021, an amount shall be available, not to exceed 7 percent of the amount equal to $\frac{1}{12}$ th of the appropriations for the account that are available for the period October 1, 2020 through September 30, 2021.

(b) AVAILABILITY.—The special reserve authorized in subsection (a) shall be available to any committee—

(1) on the basis of special need to meet unpaid obligations incurred by that committee during the periods referred to in paragraphs (1), (2), and (3) of subsection (a); and

(2) at the request of a Chairman and Ranking Member of that committee subject to the approval of the Chairman and Ranking Member of the Committee on Rules and Administration.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 3—RECOGNIZING THE RICH HISTORY, HERITAGE, AND STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS AND THE MARSHALLESE POPULATION RESIDING IN THE UNITED STATES

Mr. BOOZMAN (for himself and Mr. COTTON) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources:

S. CON. RES. 3

Whereas the Republic of the Marshall Islands—

(1) is a sovereign country in free association with the United States under the Compact of Free Association between the Government of the United States and the Government of the Republic of the Marshall Islands (referred to in this preamble as the “Compact”), approved in the Compact of Free Association Act of 1985 (Public Law 99-239; 99 Stat. 1770) and amended by the Compact of Free Association Amendments Act of 2003 (Public Law 108-188; 117 Stat. 2720), which authorizes economic assistance, through Federal grants and programs, to persons in the Republic of the Marshall Islands; and

(2) has full authority and responsibility over security and defense matters relating to the Republic of the Marshall Islands;

Whereas, under the Compact, eligible citizens of the Republic of the Marshall Islands may reside, work, and study in the United States without a visa and may serve in the Armed Forces of the United States;

Whereas an estimated $\frac{1}{3}$ of the population of the Republic of the Marshall Islands has relocated to the United States; and

Whereas Marshallese individuals who live in the United States—

(1) offer positive economic and cultural benefits to the communities in which those individuals live;

(2) pay Federal and State taxes but are not eligible for benefits under—

(A) the Medicare program established under title XVIII of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395 et seq.); or

(B) the Medicaid program established under title XIX of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.); and

(3) were undercounted in the 2010 census and, as a result, areas where those individuals live are underserved by the Federal Government: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That Congress—

(1) commends—

(A) the rich history and heritage of the Republic of the Marshall Islands; and

(B) citizens of the Republic of the Marshall Islands who live in the United States for the contributions of those individuals to—

(i) the communities in which those individuals live; and

(ii) the national defense of the United States through their service in the Armed Forces of the United States;

(2) recognizes the strategic importance of the Republic of the Marshall Islands; and

(3) encourages a continued commitment to improve census data to better serve citizens of the Republic of the Marshall Islands who live in the United States.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mrs. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I have 9 requests for committees to meet

during today’s session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority leaders.

Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today’s session of the Senate:

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

The Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, February 13, 2019, at 9:30 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled “Briefing on cyber operations to defend the midterm elections.”

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

The Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, February 13, 2019, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing on the following nominations: Janice Miriam Hellreich, of Hawaii, Robert A. Mandell, of Florida, Don Munce, of Florida, and Bruce M. Ramer, of California, each to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, and a routine list in the Coast Guard.

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

The Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, February 13, 2019, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled, “America’s infrastructure needs: keeping pace with a growing economy.”

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

The Committee on Environment and Public Works is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, February 13, 2019, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled “The invasive species threat: protecting wildlife, public health, and infrastructure.”

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

The Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, February 13, 2019, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing on pending legislation and the following nominations: Dennis Dean Kirk, of Virginia, to be Chairman, and Julia Akins Clark, of Maryland, and Andrew F. Maunz, of Ohio, both to be a Member, all of the of the Merit Systems Protection Board, and Ronald D. Vitiello, of Illinois, to be an Assistant Secretary of Homeland Security.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

The Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, February 13, 2019, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing on pending legislation and the following nominations: Michael H. Park, of New York, and Joseph F. Bianco, of New York, both to be a United States Circuit Judge for the Second Circuit,

Greg Girard Guidry, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Louisiana, Michael T. Liburdi, to be United States District Judge for the District of Arizona, and Peter D. Welte, to be United States District Judge for the District of North Dakota.

COMMITTEE ON RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

The Committee on Rules and Administration is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, February 13, 2019, at 10:30 a.m., to conduct a business meeting.

COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS AND
ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, February 13, 2019, at 10:30 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled, "Oversight of the U.S. Small Business Administration."

SUBCOMMITTEE ON READINESS AND
MANAGEMENT SUPPORT

The Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support of the Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, February 13, 2019, at 2 p.m., to conduct a hearing entitled

"Conditions of the military housing privatization initiative."

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME
EN BLOC

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I understand there are two items at the desk, and I ask for their first reading en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the title of the bills en bloc.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 483) to enact into law a bill by reference.

A joint resolution (S.J. Res. 8) recognizing the duty of the Federal Government to create a Green New Deal.

Mr. McCONNELL. I now ask for a second reading, and I object to my own request, all en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection having been heard, the bills will be read for the second time on the next legislative day.

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY,
FEBRUARY 14, 2019

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the

Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m., Thursday, February 14; further, that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed; further, that following leader remarks, the Senate proceed to executive session and resume consideration of the Barr nomination; finally, that at a time to be determined by the majority leader in consultation with the Democratic leader, the Senate vote on confirmation of the Barr nomination.

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

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M.
TOMORROW

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 6:35 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, February 14, 2019, at 10 a.m.