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No. 63

House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Friday, April 12, 2019, at 2:30 p.m.

Senate

THURSDAY, APRIL 11, 2019

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 Savior, the way, the truth and the light, shed Your light today upon the pathway of our Senators. Be for them a source of light, life, and wisdom, as You use them for Your purposes. Lord, keep them on the road of integrity, guiding their thoughts, words, and deeds. As they walk the straight and narrow path, may they not stumble or slip. Give them the wisdom and grace to be worthy stewards of Your mercy, grace, and love. Keep their hearts in warm fellowship with their colleagues and their ears open to the voices of the people they serve.

We pray in Your wonderful 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 (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

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 David Bernhardt, of Virginia, to be Secretary of the Department of Interior.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 2 minutes as in morning business.

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

MEDICARE

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, some officials are proposing radical changes to our healthcare system. These proposals include Medicare for All, Medicare Buy-in, Medicaid for All, and expansion of the Affordable Care Act. All of these are versions of government-run healthcare.

These are, of course, better campaign slogans than serious solutions to the problems facing Americans.

On a certain level, I have found that most people would rather have control over their own healthcare than have the government make those decisions

for them. A single-payer healthcare system would be devastating for our seniors, people with disabilities, and people with preexisting conditions.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

NOMINATION OF DAVID BERNHARDT

Mr. McCONNELL. Today the Senate will vote to confirm the President's choice to serve as Secretary of the Interior. As I have discussed this week, David Bernhardt is no stranger to the Department. He has served twice before. In fact, this body has confirmed him twice before. Each time his professionalism and dedication proved us right. As Solicitor and as Deputy Secretary, Mr. Bernhardt has offered capable leadership and a firm grasp on the complex policy environment surrounding our Nation's public lands.

His expertise has not gone unnoticed. Praise for Mr. Bernhardt has poured in from a list of more than 40 stakeholder organizations; from agriculture, trade, conservation, and Native American organizations.

They describe him as a leader whose "experience is sorely needed." They laud his commitment to "make the lands he manages accessible to the recreating public."

So we have before us an opportunity to confirm a well-qualified steward of our Nation's public lands and resources. Yesterday, a bipartisan majority of our colleagues voted to end debate on his nomination, and I hope each will join me in voting yes once more later today.

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



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S2399

Of course, confirming Mr. Bernhardt will be just the latest in a series of many Executive Calendar accomplishments. Following on the heels of last week's turn back toward the Senate's historic tradition concerning nominations, we have been able to approve a number of the President's nominees at a much more reasonable pace in the last several days.

I have noted, with particular interest that, for all the breathless warnings my Democratic colleagues issued about the kinds of people we would be confirming, these unobjectionable nominees have actually mostly coasted through on a bipartisan basis.

We saw support from both sides of the aisle for Roy Altman to the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Florida, and for Daniel Domenico to the District of Colorado.

We saw an overwhelming bipartisan vote in favor of confirming GEN John Abizaid to serve as Ambassador to Saudi Arabia and a voice-voted confirmation for Jeffrey Kessler to serve as Assistant Secretary of Commerce.

These are not lightning-rod people whom my Democratic colleagues would have eagerly debated and investigated for an additional 30 hours. They are the kind of thoroughly qualified public servants who used to sail briskly through the Senate without opposition.

Now, even as my Democratic colleagues continue to require us to file cloture on individuals whom they actually go on to support, we are able to fill out the President's team at a more reasonable clip. There are still many empty seats left to fill, but this week's progress marks a great new beginning not just for the administration that needs its personnel but for the health of this institution.

TAX REFORM

Madam President, on another matter, over the past year or so, I have dedicated a large part of my time on the floor to discussing the performance of the U.S. economy, and at no point have I struggled to find things to say.

Seemingly every day, we have been greeted by headlines that tell the same story: Under the political policies of a pro-growth, pro-opportunity Republican agenda, Americans are experiencing a remarkable economic moment.

More than 1 year ago, I mentioned on the floor that weekly jobless claims had reached their lowest level since 1969. Last week, the Labor Department reported that by this measure, the U.S. economy has set yet another new record. What was already a nearly 49-year low has now dipped further to a nearly 50-year low.

My colleagues and I have been busy highlighting the American stories behind these numbers—stories of recovery and prosperity being written in all sorts of communities, in all corners of our country.

More than 1 year since a generational overhaul of the Federal Tax Code lifted burdens from American job creators,

entrepreneurs, and working families, the headlines are continuing to pour in.

With Tax Day just around the corner, millions of working families have filed for the first time under a law that has allowed, according to nonpartisan analysts, the vast majority of Americans to keep more of their money. They have pocketed higher take-home pay, wage increases, and special bonuses, and they benefited from the booming job market these policies have helped ignite.

But old habits die hard. The Washington Democrats who were content to watch as the Obama era piled up 75 percent of new jobs and 90 percent of population growth to the biggest metropolitan areas are back to their same old tricks.

In recent months, we have seen a steady drip of leftist daydreams making their way into press conferences, resolutions, and out on the 2020 campaign trail: a massive rewrite of American election laws and a power grab on an individual's right to exercise political speech, a mandatory, one-size-fits-all government-run replacement for private healthcare for over 180 million Americans, and an estimated \$93 trillion in taxpayers' money to be spent testing out new Federal social planning schemes and abolishing the affordable energy sources American families rely on. Tax Day seems like an especially fitting day to tell Washington Democrats no thanks—no thanks.

The Kentuckians I represent prefer to keep more of their own hard-earned money. They prefer to make their own decisions about their own families instead of ceding more power to bureaucrats.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

H.R. 268

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, Members of the Senate, if you look at the poster I just put up, you know what I am going to talk about—the devastating floods in Iowa and the Midwest.

In Western Iowa, we still have areas underwater from flooding on the Missouri river and its tributaries. In the east, we are dealing with the Mississippi River and tributary flooding. Unfortunately, the weather isn't cooperating with additional storms and rain throughout the Upper Midwest, as I speak, that could exacerbate flooding and hinder cleanup and repairs.

This flooding is still a very active event, but as we move to recovery, we know the original damage estimates in Iowa are increasing. I can say that for Nebraska as well. Many roads are still closed; levy damage is extensive; towns are devastated; and many individuals lost their homes and businesses.

In just 6 of our 99 counties in Iowa, 416,000 acres of cropland was flooded. Much of that cropland is still underwater. These farmers are facing the challenge of not being able to plant this year. Unfortunately, many of

these farmers' fields were just recovering from previous years of major flooding. In this area of Iowa, that would have been in 2011.

This is compounded by many losing their previous harvest through having their on-the-farm storage bins destroyed, as you can see here.

Throughout the Midwest area that had severe flooding, 832 on-farm storage bins have been identified as being like these, destroyed. We don't have a complete estimate of that, but I think 832 on-the-farm storage bins would be at least a figure up to a certain date.

These bins hold an estimated 5 to 10 million bushels of corn or soybeans, so, collectively, that would be a loss of worth between \$17 million and \$34 million.

There is an existing program that goes by the acronym WHIP in the Department of Agriculture that is designed to address agricultural losses not covered by crop insurance and other programs. I reached out to the U.S. Department of Agriculture to see if this program could be used for losses such as those seen here, particularly in Iowa and Nebraska, for corn and soybeans.

I was told because the WHIP program was designed for other commodities affected by hurricanes and wildfires, they needed a few words added to the law to extend the same help to these problems we now have in the Midwest. I asked what those words were, and I spoke to Senator SHELBY, who manages this bill on the floor of the Senate, and to Senator PERDUE, who has a great deal of interest in the bill because of agricultural losses in Georgia. These two Senators agreed to work with me. These two Senators agreed to work with me. So I filed a shorter amendment of a disaster bill along with Senator ERNST and several of my colleagues from the Midwest to make sure that devastation like this is covered. I am optimistic that this simple fix, which will mean so much to farmers facing such unusual catastrophic losses, can be included as the disaster bill moves forward through the Senate.

Yesterday, as another way of helping more than just this type of farmer but, generally, other disaster victims, I joined Senators FISCHER, ERNST, and SASSE in introducing a tax bill that goes by the title of the Disaster Tax Relief Act of 2019. This bill includes a series of disaster tax relief provisions that will help American families and businesses recover from the terrible disasters that have occurred so far in 2019, including the Midwest flooding.

On February 28 I introduced a bipartisan bill with Senator WYDEN that included the same tax relief provisions that would assist the victims of disasters that occurred in 2018. So I view the Fischer bill and the Grassley-Wyden bill as complementary, providing disaster tax relief with respect to the disasters that occurred last year, as well as this year. The bill that I introduced in February also includes extensions of

a series of tax provisions that almost every Member of this Senate would like to see passed. These are the tax provisions that expired in 2017 and 2018. We labeled all 25 or 26 of these as tax extenders. These are things that, over the last two decades, have been extended almost automatically after they have sunset, and we need to get those provisions enacted, just like the disaster tax relief provisions.

I encourage the House Democrats to send the Senate a bill that addresses both tax extenders and disaster tax relief provisions. When I say House Democrats, people listening are going to say: He is being partisan.

No, I am being constitutional. The Constitution says that all tax bills have to start in the House of Representatives. The House of Representatives is controlled by the Democrat majority. So that is why I am saying to the House Democrats: Get these bills over here to us so we can help not only the people that benefit from what we call tax extenders but, more importantly, those who with the urgency of the disaster that we are facing.

The importance of passing these bills is because Americans need certainty as they file their taxes in 2018, and they need the tax relief as they recover from these natural disasters. They really need the House Democrats, under the Constitution, to pass a tax bill because we can't act on these tax bills before. The custom around here is that the Constitution says that all tax bills have to start in the House of Representatives. If we pass even a simple tax bill—let's say we pass it as part of an appropriations bill—and we send it over to the House, they don't accept it. That has been the tradition around here for centuries. That is why I am calling on the House Democrats to move that bill.

The disaster relief provisions included in the bill that we have introduced reduce penalties and make it easier to access retirement funds so individuals and families can get back up on their feet and rebuild their lives. In other words, these are retirement funds that people have set aback and that the law doesn't allow them to access for disasters. It is just a simple thing. If somebody is hurt by this disaster and wants to go to their retirement fund and borrow on it for a certain period of time to help them get relief, it is a pretty simple thing. Maybe, momentarily you could say it costs the Federal Government something, but they are still going to owe these taxes regardless of whenever they start drawing for retirement.

These bills also make it easier for disaster victims to claim personal casualty losses, and they suspend certain limitations on charitable contributions to encourage more donations for this disaster relief. For businesses affected by these disasters, this tax relief is available to help them retain employees while businesses get back up and running.

Let's continue the bipartisan tradition of helping our fellow Americans with disasters. When these disasters strike, we ought to do it by enacting this tax relief for both 2018 and 2019, so that disaster victims don't have to wait any longer to access this important assistance and continue to get back on their feet.

It may sound like I am talking about something new. I don't know whether this just started with Hurricane Katrina in 2005 or before, but I remember being chairman of the Finance Committee then. We passed similar legislation to help the victims of hurricanes. So this is really nothing new. Since it is nothing new and we have done it before, what is wrong with doing it now?

The Democrats in the House of Representatives can get this bill over to us so we can get it enacted over here and get it to the President. We want to provide the certainty that taxpayers deserve by enacting extensions of not only those disasters but also the expired tax provisions. I encourage the House Democrats to move swiftly. The Senate and the American people are waiting.

On another point about flooding, generally, not just dealing with this flood, this flood brings to attention something we have to deal with, with the Army Corps of Engineers.

Next week the Environment and Public Works Committee is holding a field hearing in Southwest Iowa to provide oversight on the Army Corps of Engineers management of the 2019 Missouri River flooding. Senator ERNST, my colleague from Iowa, will be chairing this hearing, and I am going to be participating.

Flood control should be the No. 1 priority of the Corps in its management of the Missouri River. I hope that tomorrow, when I get to travel with Vice President PENCE as he views the same area that I viewed 2 weeks ago—the same area covered here—we have the Army Corps of Engineers there so that we can talk to them about the issue of the Missouri River Master Manual authorizing eight purposes as they control the water up and down the Missouri River. They do that through the dams on the Missouri River.

It happens that seven of these can be at cross purposes with the eighth one—flood control. I hope flood control is No. 1 and not No. 8. We need to discuss with them how to prevent massive flooding and how to act to ensure that folks in Nebraska, Iowa, Missouri, and Kansas are not faced with devastation every few years. Eventually, this water ends up in the Gulf of Mexico. So States below Missouri are going to eventually be affected by it.

I appreciate the stamina and determination of Iowans whom I have seen out there, not only in this flood of 2019 but in the flood of 2011. The one of 2019 was much more devastating. I think we have great resiliency. We will come back and pull together to get the job

done, but there is a very long recovery ahead of all of these Iowans affected by it and Nebraskans and, maybe to some extent, Kansas and quite a bit in Missouri.

I will continue to do everything I can at the Federal level to help the State of Iowa, Iowa communities, and, more importantly, in fact, as individual Iowans are affected, I am going to help them to recover and to rebuild.

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. GARDNER. Madam 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 DAVID BERNHARDT

Mr. GARDNER. Madam President, it is an exciting day for Colorado. I have known David Bernhardt, our nominee for Secretary of the Interior—and the seventh Secretary of the Interior from Colorado should he be confirmed today—personally and professionally for over two decades. His roots are deep on both sides of Colorado—in the High Plains and on the Western Slope.

We share a lot of common interests in rural development and in saving our small towns. My experience stems from growing up in the agricultural community of Yuma, CO, in the Eastern Plains, and Mr. Bernhardt's formative years were spent on the Western Slope of Colorado—an area that is a microcosm of all of the things that we cherish about our great public lands. We both began our public service only 1 year apart when we worked for Colorado State Representative Russell George, who would later go on to become speaker of the Colorado House. That is when I first met David. Mr. Bernhardt worked with Jaime, my wife, at the Department of the Interior during the George W. Bush administration under another Colorado Secretary of the Interior.

His personal background and public and private sector professional experiences prove he is a strong voice for the West and is extremely well-qualified for the nomination to be the Secretary. In fact, there are few others who have the kind of experience that he has that enables him to be qualified to be Secretary. Which Secretary of the Interior has had more experience than David Bernhardt or has been more qualified to become the Secretary of the Interior? He has extensive insight on Western water policy, natural resources policy, and on Indian affairs, just to name a few.

Those who have worked with Mr. Bernhardt commend him for his integrity and wealth of knowledge on the issues under the Department of the Interior's jurisdiction.

In 2008, after the Department of the Interior reached the largest Indian

water rights settlement in our Nation's history, Secretary Kempthorne personally acknowledged Mr. Bernhardt's work as then-Solicitor and stated: "His effective coordination—both within Interior as well as with the local, tribal, state and congressional leaders—was essential to the success we celebrate today."

More recently, he worked to accommodate many Western States' requests for more flexibility under the Greater Sage-Grouse RMP Amendment. John Swartout, who as a senior policy adviser ran point on this issue for Colorado's Democratic Governor John Hickenlooper, had this to say in December 2018 once that process was completed:

David Bernhardt is an honest man who puts all his cards on the table and keeps his word. I have worked with DOI for 25 years, and David is one of the finest people I have ever worked with.

That didn't come from a partisan Republican or a partisan Democrat; that came from a person in the Democratic Governor's office who worked with him on natural resource issues.

Dale Hall, the CEO of Ducks Unlimited, which is hardly a partisan Republican or Democratic organization but is an organization that does more real conservation work on the ground than most of the groups that have the word "conservation" in their names, had this to say when Mr. Bernhardt's nomination for Secretary was announced:

I have known and worked with David Bernhardt for more than a decade, and we are excited to continue to work with him as the new Secretary of the Interior. His integrity in following the law is beyond reproach. David Bernhardt is a champion of conservation and the right person for the job. We urge the Senate to swiftly confirm him.

Colleagues of his from his time spent working for Representative Scott McInnis, who represented Mr. Bernhardt's hometown in Colorado, swore he worked 40 hours a day, 8 days a week. Notably, during Mr. Bernhardt's tenure in his office, Representative McInnis was the House author of the bill that led to the designation of the Great Sand Dunes as being a national park. Having now worked at very senior levels in the Department of the Interior over the course of many years, there is zero question Mr. Bernhardt is qualified to do this job.

Along with Mr. Bernhardt's professional career, I believe it is important to fully understand his background and the foundation of his interest in public lands, which further qualifies him for this role.

Mr. Bernhardt is originally from the outskirts of the small town of Rifle, located on Colorado's Western Slope. Few places more fully embody the spirit and mission of the Agency he has been nominated to lead as Secretary with that understanding of this public land. Growing up in rural Colorado has instilled in him Western values and interests, and to this day, Mr. Bernhardt enjoys hunting, recreation, the outdoors, and fishing.

Rifle is located in Garfield County, an area in which about 60 percent of the lands are public lands. Rifle was founded as a ranching community along the Colorado River, and it retains that heritage today, along with tremendous opportunities for outdoor recreation, including fishing, hiking, skiing, rafting, and rock climbing. It also sits at the edge of the Piceance Basin, an area in Colorado that has vast amounts of natural gas.

Mr. Bernhardt grew up in the oil shale boom and bust and has said that the boom and bust "has made [him] more sensitive to the potential benefits and the potential impacts, both environmental and social" of energy development. In the 1980s, Rifle was hit by the State's oil shale crash, and he personally experienced some of the hard times that the Nation's rural communities often face in those boom and bust moments.

Much like the Department of the Interior itself, Rifle is a community that is a product of its public lands and Western heritage. It is centrally located within a few miles of the iconic Grand Mesa—the world's largest flat-topped mountain—the Flat Tops Wilderness, and the Roan Plateau. It represents a home base among these public lands with there being virtually unmatched access to world-class outdoor experiences, which is why Mr. Bernhardt has such a passion for these issues.

His previous experience at the Department of the Interior allowed him to fix a problem for Colorado that I was told for 8 years, under the Obama administration, was simply not fixable. As a result, in 2018, revenue that had been sitting in an account in the Federal Government for over a decade that had been owed to three counties in Colorado were distributed back to these Colorado counties and to the taxpayers who had been owed this money. How did this get solved after a decade of saying it could not be solved? It is because David Bernhardt believes you don't just push the problems that are on your front porch onto somebody else's; you find a solution and you fix it.

Prior to his current position, his previous experience includes being tapped to be the Solicitor of the Department of the Interior. In 2006, by voice vote in the U.S. Senate, Mr. Bernhardt was confirmed to be Solicitor. In the last Congress, he earned bipartisan support during his confirmation process to be Deputy Secretary.

His integrity and ability are assets that should bolster the case for his nomination, not detract from it. Yet, over the course of the last couple of months, the Washington, DC, political smear machine has been working overtime to sully a good man's name. None of what we have seen or heard in the pages of the New York Times and in other places has been new information. I guess the hope is that we will take it more seriously because this time

around, the New York Times is the one writing about it.

Mr. Bernhardt has undergone two separate and extensive FBI reviews for both his nomination to be Deputy Secretary and his nomination to be Secretary. These reviews occurred after the allegations were first raised, and he was cleared for both positions, which is probably something people didn't read in the New York Times. In understanding that these claims had been reviewed previously to the Senate's committee's satisfaction, Mr. Bernhardt's nomination was reported out last week by a bipartisan vote of 14 to 6.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD Chairman MURKOWSKI's and Ranking Member MANCHIN's committee statements.

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

STATEMENTS FROM SENATORS MURKOWSKI AND MANCHIN FROM THE BUSINESS MEETING TO CONSIDER PENDING NOMINATIONS (04/04/2019)

SENATOR MURKOWSKI: (21:01)

Good morning everyone. The Committee will come to order. We're meeting this morning to consider three nominations. This is for the nomination of David Bernhardt to be Secretary of Department of Interior; Susan Combs to be assistant Secretary of Interior for Policy, Management and Budget; and Aimee Jorjani to be chair of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. I believe that all three of these nominees are well-qualified and encourage all members to vote to report them favorably this morning.

As I noted last week Mr. Bernhardt, I believe, has the right background. He's got the right experience to be an excellent Secretary of the Interior. He has twice been confirmed to positions at Interior with bipartisan support. First, to be Solicitor in 2006 and then to be Deputy Secretary in 2017. He's most recently served as Acting Secretary since January of 2019. I understand that Mr. Bernhardt has the second most prior experience at the Department out of any nominee for secretary, is from the West—I like that—he has great familiarity with issues that will come before him, and he's proven that he can ably lead the Department.

So, what everybody's talking about this morning. There is—there are accusations about his ethics. We had this conversation last—or two weeks ago when—when his name was before us. I think it's very clear you got some pretty well funded groups that are working very hard, very energetically against his nomination. We saw new allegations last week and then this morning there is—is yet another report. And this is all—this is all coming despite—despite the government scientists involved saying that there was nothing amiss when we had that conversation last week, Senator Gardner, you certainly raised that. This week we're starting to see—we're again seeing new reporting on old allegations. I don't think that this is a coincidence, that we are seeing this kind of a roundup of reporting on old stories—and I think nonstories—just as we're approaching the markup here.

Interior's Inspector General has reviewed the matter as part of its due diligence. It has not opened an investigation. In fact, our staff checked with the Inspector General's office. We were told that there are no open investigations into Mr. Bernhardt. We have had as a committee I believe ample time to review all of these allegations. I am aware of

no substantiation of them whatsoever and frankly I would be—I would be stunned if they were to be substantiated. I would remind members that both the Office of Government Ethics and the Designated Agency Ethics Official have found Mr. Bernhardt to be in good standing.

So, again, there—there will probably be a question this morning, I would imagine, on—the New York Times article that is out there this morning, but I would remind colleagues or ask you to look into these. These allegations again contain no new information. This is recycled. It's been repackaged. They're now focusing on an invoice from Mr. Bernhardt's prior Law Firm. The law firm has said that it was labeled incorrectly. Others have said it was labeled incorrectly. It didn't concern lobbying services. We have known about this previous work that he has had at Westlands. We knew it back in 2017 when we confirmed him as Deputy Secretary. And at that time this work was not deemed lobbying. So, just because it's in the New York Times this morning doesn't mean that it's correct. It's my hope that as a committee we will—will move forward in affirming Mr. Bernhardt to be Secretary of the Interior. And then the full Senate will confirm him coming up here. I think the sooner we have a permanent Secretary at Interior, the better.

SENATOR MANCHIN: (30:50)

Thank you Madam Chairman and I appreciate the committee—ensuring this committee moves forward on important nominations. We have two of those nominations before us this morning that I'm glad that we are reporting from this committee and—the nominations of Susan Combs, Assistant Secretary of Interior of Policy, Management, and Budget and the nomination of Aimee Jorjani to chair The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. I think Madam Chairman gave a good overview of that. Committee voted to—to report both of these nominations during the last Congress, but unfortunately the Senate didn't vote to confirm them before at adjourned. Each time, the committee approved the nomination by voice vote and I previously supported of both nominations and I intend to do so again this morning.

On David Bernhardt. As a former governor and those who have served in executive positions, that I understand it, we've had to ask our state senators and our Oversight committees about putting in our teams together. And I've always been differential to allowing an executive to put their team together as long as the person is qualified and meets the ethical standards. There's concerns and I respect those concerns. Mr. Bernhardt, in my estimation met the test. He's clearly qualified. I think we all know that. He has the knowledge and experience to serve as Secretary, knows the Interior Department inside and out—that might be a blessing to some, maybe a concern—and he is well-versed in all the issues that come before him.

I spoke with him several times before this business meeting regarding his nomination. I've reviewed his follow-up questions for the record following his hearing. He has answered all of our questions in a timely manner. We received them back and I think it's all been made record. I even talked to him earlier this week by phone again. I questioned him again, extensively, about his willingness to be a good steward of our nation's greatest natural resources, our national parks, our monuments, and all of our historical sites. I questioned him about his responsibility to balance our resource needs with environmental protection in fairness to the owners of our public lands, which is all of the American people. I spoke to him about

the need to make sure that those who are granted the privilege of using our public lands leave them in better condition than what they found them in, which is not always the case and we've got to change that. And I had extensive conversation with Mr. Bernhardt regarding compliance and ethics—ethics laws and regulations, as well as his potential conflict of interest. I was very much concerned about that. Based on my extensive discussions with Mr. Bernhardt and the assurances that he has given me, I'm prepared to vote for him this morning, but I will note that I expect him and the Department, now I've put them on notice, hold them—hold them to the highest ethical standards. And I've told him that. I said because I surely will. I surely will hold him to be accountable for his actions. He must work to ensure committee and a commitment to ethical and scientific integrity and I intend to work with him and his staff persistently to ensure that this is the case. Our parks and public lands, our scenic beauty, our fish and wildlife resources are important to all of us here, to the people we represent, and my state, and in your states. And West Virginians count on the Secretary of Interior, as they do in your States also, as the guardian of our public lands. . . . I intend to work with Mr. Bernhardt these important issues. I've made it clear to him that I expect him to put his extensive experience and knowledge of these issues to work for the American people and not to people used to work for. And to execute his responsibilities in the manner that ensures that our public lands are not just being maintained, but improved. Improved for the benefit of generations to come. Thank you Madam Chair.

Mr. GARDNER. Madam President, let's talk about that story and ethics for a second.

Mr. Bernhardt has spent more than 15 years of a 25-year career in public service, and most of that time has been spent at the Department of the Interior. While in his private law practice, he never lobbied the Department of the Interior—not once. During his time as Deputy Secretary, he has focused on the fundamental transformation of the Department and Bureau-level ethics programs to ingrain a culture of ethical compliance and reduce workplace misconduct.

The reality is that the ethics program throughout the Department of the Interior had been, sadly, neglected by the previous administration. The Office of Inspector General and the Departmental Ethics Office had recommended significant resource changes that had fallen on deaf ears under the previous administration. Under Mr. Bernhardt's direction, the Department has hired a total of 42 career professional ethics advisers. By the end of fiscal year 2019, they will have doubled the number of career ethics officials that the previous administration had hired in its entire 8 years.

The record shows that he has actively sought and consulted with the Department's designated Agency ethics officials regarding compliance with his ethics obligations recusals.

In addition, he has installed a robust screening process to ensure that he does not meet with or engage in particular matters benefiting the former clients from which he is recused. Every

proposed meeting is reviewed by career professionals to ensure compliance with not only his ethics agreement but ethics laws and to make sure his ethics pledge to the President is upheld.

His work in natural resources law prior to joining the administration and related ethics agreements are very similar in scope and substance to the private work and ethics agreements of senior Interior officials who came before him in previous administrations. Let me say that again. The same kinds of ethics agreements and obligations that basically he is doing are what previous administrations did as well.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a letter from the Department of the Interior Designated Agency Ethics Official dated March 25, 2019.

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

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF
THE INTERIOR, OFFICE OF
THE SOLICITOR,
Washington, DC, March 25, 2019.

Hon. ELIZABETH WARREN,

U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

Hon. RICHARD BLUMENTHAL,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR WARREN AND SENATOR BLUMENTHAL: Thank you for your letter of February 26, 2019 regarding your expressed concerns of the actions of the Acting Secretary of the Department of the Interior (Department or DOI). Your letter references an article published by the New York Times on February 12, 2019 discussing the Acting Secretary's legal practice prior to joining the Department as Deputy Secretary in August 2017. Specifically, you asked about the Acting Secretary's involvement with the Central Valley Project (CVP) in California and whether his actions, "violated his ethics pledge and federal conflict of interest regulations by participating in decisions that directly affect a former client." As discussed below, we have found the Acting Secretary's actions have complied with all applicable ethics laws, rules and other obligations, including the requirements of President Trump's Executive Order 13770 entitled, "Ethics Commitments by Executive Branch Appointees" (Jan. 28, 2017) (Ethics Pledge).

As an initial matter, I would like to take this opportunity to inform you and your colleagues of recent developments and improvements with the DOI ethics program that will enhance our ability to prevent conflicts of interest at all levels of the Department. Since our arrival at the Department in April 2018, Deputy Director Heather Gottry and I have overhauled an ethics office that was previously characterized by both DOI employees and numerous Inspector General reports as passive and ineffectual. With the strong support of the Acting Secretary, we have spearheaded a long-overdue build-out of the Departmental Ethics Office (DEO) as well as the ethics programs of the various Bureaus and Offices throughout the Department.

Our top priority as non-partisan, career ethics officials, is to prevent conflicts of interest at the DOI and ensure that DOI employees are aware of and comply with all applicable ethics laws and standards. We understand the importance of our program in helping the American people have trust and confidence in the lawful and proper administration of the Department.

Please know that my office takes all credible allegations of potential ethics violations by any DOI employee very seriously and allegations against senior officials are an extremely high priority. Consequently, when the New York Times published its article, I immediately sought to understand the facts and carefully analyzed the applicable legal authorities. We note that the Acting Secretary also immediately requested that my office look into this matter and to examine the prior ethics advice and counsel he had received.

Of critical importance, we note that the Acting Secretary does not have any financial conflicts of interest related to either his former client, Westlands Water District, or the CVP generally. As reflected in his Ethics Agreement, dated May 1, 2017, and his Ethics Recusal memorandum, dated August 15, 2017, the Acting Secretary was required under 5 C.F.R. § 2635.502 to recuse for one year (until August 3, 2018) from participating personally and substantially in any “particular matters involving specific parties” in which Westlands Water District was a party or represented a party. Because Westlands Water District is an agency or entity of a state or local government it is excluded from the requirements of paragraph 6 of the Ethics Pledge. Additionally, consistent with U.S. Office of Government Ethics (OGE) guidance, it was determined that the law the Acting Secretary had lobbied on for Westlands Water District, Public Law 114-322, should not be categorized as a “particular matter” because the law addressed a broad range of issues and topics. Therefore, because he did not lobby on a “particular matter” for Westlands Water District, he was not required to recuse himself under paragraph 7 of the Ethics Pledge either from “particular matters” or “specific issue areas” related to Public Law 114-322. Accordingly, the Acting Secretary’s recusal related to Westlands Water District ended on August 3, 2018, and was limited in scope to “particular matters involving specific parties” under 5 C.F.R. § 2635.502.

I have enclosed the transmittal e-mail from me to the Acting Secretary with a detailed memorandum attached wherein the DEO consolidates and memorializes prior ethics advice and guidance on certain issues involving the CVP. Of particular importance for a legal analysis of the scope of the Acting Secretary’s recusals related to Westlands Water District, the memorandum analyzed and categorized certain issues involving the CVP and related State Water Project as “matters,” “particular matters of general applicability,” and “particular matters involving specific parties.” As I state in the transmittal e-mail, these legal categorizations are critical in determining whether an official complies with the various ethics rules. As reflected in the memorandum, we determined that both the Notice of Intent to Prepare a Draft EIS and the development of a 2019 Biological Assessment are appropriately categorized as “matters,” not “particular matters.” Our determinations are supported by Federal law and OGE opinions and though the matters involved may sound like “particular matters” or “specific issue areas,” they are legally broad matters outside the scope of 5 C.F.R. § 2635.502. As noted above, the Acting Secretary’s lobbying on behalf of Westlands Water District on Public Law 114-322 was not categorized as a “particular matter” and did not require an additional recusal under paragraph 7 of the Ethics Pledge. Therefore, the Acting Secretary was not required under either 5 C.F.R. § 2635.502 or the Ethics Pledge to recuse from participation in either the Notice of Intent to Prepare a Draft EIS or the development of a 2019 Biological Assessment. Attached, for

your convenience, please find the legal reference materials addressed in the memorandum—I believe our interpretation and application of the relevant legal authorities is both reasonable and prudent.

I have advised the Acting Secretary, at his request, that he and his staff should continue to consult with the DEO prior to participating in any matter that is potentially within the scope of his Ethics Agreement, Ethics Recusal memorandum, the Ethics Pledge, or any other ethics law or regulation. Additionally, to eliminate any potential for miscommunication, I have instructed my staff that all ethics guidance to the Acting Secretary be in writing prior to his participation in a decision or action that reasonably appears to come within the purview of his legal ethics obligations.

In closing, and to be responsive to your final requests, the DEO has not issued any authorizations or ethics waivers to the Acting Secretary or other Interior officials on the topics you raised, nor have we referred any matters to the IG on these topics. It is worth noting that the Acting Secretary meets with me and my senior staff frequently and that I have a standing meeting with him once a week to discuss any significant ethics issues at the DOI. Pursuant to the Acting Secretary’s direction, my senior staff also meets with his scheduling staff and other top officials twice a week, at a minimum, to ensure we are aware of who the Acting Secretary is meeting with and the issues he will be discussing. These efforts, supported by the Acting Secretary and his staff, are designed to ensure his compliance with applicable ethics rules and protect the integrity of the Department’s programs and operations. My experience has been that the Acting Secretary is very diligent about his ethics obligations and he has made ethics compliance and the creation of an ethical culture a top priority at the Department.

If you have any other questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

SCOTT A. DE LA VEGA,
*Director, Departmental Ethics
Office and Designated Agency Ethics Official.*
Enclosure.

Mr. GARDNER. This letter is in response to a letter from Senators WARREN and BLUMENTHAL and states that the Ethics Office has found that Mr. Bernhardt’s actions as Deputy Secretary and Acting Secretary “have complied with all applicable ethics laws, rules, and other obligations, including the requirements of President Trump’s executive order 13770, entitled ‘Ethics Commitments by Executive Branch Appointees.’”

This letter from the career head of the Department of Interior ethics professionals who served at the White House during the previous administration goes on to say:

My experience has been that the Acting Secretary is very diligent about his ethics obligations and he has made ethics compliance and the creation of an ethical culture a top priority at the Department.

That wasn’t in the New York Times, either, but I think it should be.

This is not about Mr. Bernhardt’s ethics or his integrity or his qualifications; it is about the fact that he has been and will be effective at implementing an agenda that the other side doesn’t agree with because they know he will be effective in protecting our great outdoors and our public lands.

I am thankful there are qualified people out there like Mr. Bernhardt and his family who are still willing to wade through the muck and serve the people of the United States, knowing that they will be called a liar in front of their children at a U.S. Senate committee hearing despite letters from top officers in charge of our ethics laws at the Department of Interior saying otherwise.

I am thankful for David, and I look forward to working with him and his team at the Department of the Interior. I hope my colleagues will see through the partisan rancor, see through the lens of blue or red, of party politics, and confirm a man who—if you go back to Colorado and talk to people like Russell George, you will learn that he has the greatest respect not only for our public lands but for the people of Colorado, and for that, I am grateful for him and my colleagues who will confirm him today.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

HONORING STATE PATROL CORPORAL DANIEL
HOWARD GROVES

Mr. GARDNER. Madam President, I rise today to honor an officer of the Colorado State Patrol who was killed in the line of duty on March 13.

As other Members of this Chamber know, many parts of the country were hit hard by a bomb cyclone storm system last month. Again today, we are going through another spring storm. That storm caused flooding in much of the Midwest, as we have seen across the national news, and extremely hazardous road conditions in my State, which led to thousands of stranded drivers.

State Patrol Corporal Daniel Howard Groves, like many first responders that day, was attempting to aid a driver in the Eastern Plains of Colorado on I-76 who had slid off the road, and he was struck by a passing vehicle.

Corporal Groves was 52 years old. He leaves behind a large and loving family, including his parents, his partner Eddie, his four siblings, and many more. We know that his family will continue to honor his sacrifice and ensure that his legacy lives on.

Corporal Groves joined the Colorado State Patrol in 2007 after leaving a career in the technology services industry in Chicago. His family and friends remember him as a man with a tremendous capacity to love and care for others. He was a man of humor who wasn’t afraid to crack a joke just to make people smile. According to a fellow officer, he once arrived at training wearing pajamas instead of the required police sweats.

At a memorial service honoring his life, a longtime friend spoke about the encouragement and advice that Dan was known for. He always encouraged others to follow their dreams, no matter how big. He often spoke of the importance of family and friendship and the need to make time to enjoy life with others.

His fellow officers remembered him as a man who was drawn to service because of his desire to help, someone who always knew the risks inherent in the job but never let that deter him from doing what needed to be done.

One colleague who spoke at the memorial remembered Corporal Groves as someone who frequently asked, where do you need me to be? He always wanted to be in the spot where he could be most effective, no matter the danger involved.

Even on the morning of March 13, as the weather was taking a turn for the worse, Corporal Groves knew there were drivers on the road who needed his help, and, as many law enforcement officers did that day, he bravely ventured out to offer assistance. This quality makes for a great law enforcement officer but is sadly the quality that we most often take for granted.

We owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to Dan and to all first responders who are willing to put their lives on the line to assist those in times of need and a debt of gratitude to their families as well.

I know my colleagues in the Senate will join me in offering our thoughts and prayers to the family and friends of Corporal Groves and all those who defend that thin blue line.

As I have done too many times in this Chamber, I remember the words of LTC Dave Grossman, who said: "American law enforcement is the loyal and brave sheep dog, always standing watch for the wolf that lurks in the dark."

I drive by the spot where Corporal Groves was killed at least two or three times a week, and he will always be in my prayers, along with his family, for his sacrifice.

It is my hope that the thoughts and prayers that we offer to those who wear the blue uniform will bring them comfort as they carry out their solemn duties.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCOTT of Florida). Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

ATTORNEY GENERAL WILLIAM BARR

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, well, if anyone wonders whether Attorney General Barr is a straight shooter, this week, we got our answer.

Yesterday, at the Senate Appropriations Committee, the country saw another disconcerting performance by the Attorney General. In the face of serious questions surrounding the release of the Mueller report, the Attorney General did exactly what President

Trump wanted: He dodged questions, peddled a conspiracy theory, and, like the President, lobbed baseless accusations. It is clear that for Mr. Barr, the title he holds is far less important than the boss he serves.

What he did not say is that Russia attacked our democracy, as all 17 Agencies of our intelligence community have confirmed. What he did not say is that the intelligence community concluded that the Russians infiltrated our democracy to help Donald Trump. What he also didn't say is why he continues to wait on releasing the Mueller report. It took him less than 48 hours to summarize over 300 pages but over 2 weeks, and counting, to release the report itself.

Instead of giving straight answers, Mr. Barr seems to be nothing more than a spokesperson for the President's campaign. He seems more like the President's Press Secretary than the Attorney General. He is even using the President's own tactics: Admit nothing. Deny everything. Make counter-accusations.

Many of us tried to give Mr. Barr a chance, but after this week's performance, it is clear as day he and the President are working off the same playbook and planning to withhold crucial facts from the American people.

What is really important is this: When Attorney General Barr issues his report, his objectivity will be in total doubt. No one will believe, when he redacts large parts of the report, that it was done on the merits; people will believe he redacted parts of the report to help President Trump. How will the American people be able to trust Mr. Barr, and how will the American people be able to believe that his version of the report is the real version when he has been so, so partisan and was willing to peddle FOX News conspiracy theories before the Appropriations Committee yesterday?

When Mr. Barr was first nominated as Attorney General, the question posed to him was, would he be part of the Trump legal team or an independent agent of the law? I think we have our answer, as we watch him echo President Trump's statements and enable President Trump's worst instincts. Whether it is defending the administration's dangerous healthcare lawsuit or perpetuating conspiracy theories, Mr. Barr is acting more like a member of the President's campaign than the independent Attorney General he is supposed to be.

Mr. Barr is letting down thousands—tens of thousands—of hard-working people at the Justice Department. They are doing their job. When someone is given real information that Russia interfered with our elections, of course they are supposed to look into it. That is part of their job. For Mr. Barr to label this as spying, echoing some of the worst conspiracy theorists in the country, he loses all credibility, and that credibility is vital because he will be issuing a report with redactions.

When Mr. Barr issues his report, in terms of what should be redacted and what shouldn't, his objectivity will be in total doubt because of his performance yesterday.

Again, how will the American people be able to trust that the Attorney General has given them the most information he can rather than the least and that he has given them a full view of what happened rather than protecting the President? People are just not going to believe it.

The bottom line is that yesterday's performance calls into complete question the objectivity and even the judgment of the Attorney General. He does not seem to be an independent actor pursuing the rule of law. Rather, he seems to be somebody simply ready to help the President no matter what the price.

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Mr. President, on another matter, disaster relief, it is an absolute travesty that this Chamber is recessing without a compromise on much needed funding for disaster relief.

From the start, Democrats have supported an "all of the above" approach to helping every part of America that is struggling from natural disasters. We need to help everyone hurt last year and everyone hurt this year—everyone hurt in Puerto Rico, everyone hurt in the Midwest, everyone hurt in Florida, and everyone hurt in Texas, Alabama, Mississippi, and Georgia. In the American tradition, everyone comes together when we have disasters, and we help everyone.

Our Republican friends seem to have a different view. They want disaster relief that explicitly denies Puerto Rico the help it needs, even though they are American citizens like everybody else. They heard President Trump's temper tantrum at their lunch a few Tuesdays back, and they have obeyed. This is un-American. We should not be picking and choosing who gets disaster relief.

When Americans suffer, we all step in. We all help. President Trump does not believe that, but where are our Senators who are standing up for this principle? The compassion of the American people is much greater than President Trump's small-minded contempt for the people of Puerto Rico. The Senate, particularly Senators from the disaster States who need that money, ought to have the courage to resist it instead of making up stories and pointing fingers of blame.

Republicans have refused to present a serious solution that can pass the House and the Senate. We all know that if Puerto Rico is not treated equally, it will not be seen on the floor of the House. We all know that the Governor of Puerto Rico has said that the solution Republicans are supporting is not adequate for Puerto Rico. We all know that.

It is a tragedy that the Republican leadership in this Chamber has refused to help American citizens before going into recess. They own the mess they

are creating across America, and with each passing day, the American people see it.

TAX REFORM

Mr. President, tax day is coming up, and we have seen another travesty of the Republican Senate.

When the Republicans pushed their tax scam, it was sold as a “middle-class miracle.” They promised it would prioritize middle-class families. President Trump and others promised Americans would get a \$4,000 raise every year. That is what President Trump promised about his tax cuts. He said that his tax cuts for the very wealthy and the big corporations would benefit every American to the tune of \$4,000 a year. Unsurprisingly, this Republican tax scam has now defaulted on its promise to lift up average American families.

For too many Americans expecting a tax refund, they have gotten nothing or worse. After this tax season, the jig is up.

In fairness, there is one part of America that has made a killing—the very wealthy. Indeed, 83 percent of the benefits in the Republican tax bill will eventually go to the top 1 percent of earners, and the American people know it. A recent poll shows more than 60 percent of Americans believe the wealthy and corporations—big corporations—have been helped by the tax law. They are right.

Unfortunately, corporations aren’t using their windfalls as our Republican friends promised. They are not boosting worker pay, by and large, or increasing benefits or creating jobs. According to a recent survey, 84 percent of companies say they have not changed their plans because of the tax law.

What are they doing with the money they got? They are spending billions in windfall on record corporate stock buybacks, not benefiting their workers, not benefiting their community but benefiting the CEOs of the corporations, because the shares generally go up, and benefiting the top 10 percent of America who own 85 percent of all the stocks.

Unfortunately, this story doesn’t end in making the rich richer. American workers are suffering while those same corporate executives and the very wealthy shareholders cash in.

Take the case of CSX, a freight rail company spending billions of dollars on stock buybacks after benefiting from the tax law. Just last week, we heard CSX announce that they are laying off 100 workers in Kentucky. Leader MCCONNELL’s own backyard—not a \$4,000 raise but a pink slip. You would think with all of these tax benefits that workers would benefit. It doesn’t seem to be happening. That story that happened in Kentucky can be repeated throughout the country.

It is hard to look at these examples with a straight face and say that the middle class factored at all into the Republican tax bill. It was a trick—no trickle down, just a trick.

As Americans finish their filings this year, they will know exactly who to blame if they see their taxes go up. They will know who to blame if they don’t get a refund or if they owe the IRS.

The tax bill is already a stunningly unpopular piece of legislation. I don’t recall a single Republican campaigning on it. It shows they weren’t proud of it. After this tax season, the Republican tax bill will be even further crystalized in the minds of everyday Americans as a scam that left them out to dry while soaking the ultrawealthy with even more wealth.

NOMINATION OF DAVID BERNHARDT

Mr. President, on Mr. Bernhardt, yesterday, I sat down with David Bernhardt, President Trump’s choice for Secretary of the Interior, and I pressed him on some things that we should all know before we vote on his confirmation.

I asked Mr. Bernhardt: Do you agree that climate change is real, caused by humans, and that we must act? I asked Mr. Bernhardt if he will commit to not opening up the waters off our coasts to harmful drilling, even off the coasts of States opposed to such drilling, and what he will do about his well-documented web of conflicting interests. I got no answers to these questions.

I remind all of my colleagues on the Atlantic coast that, again, I asked him to at least commit that he will not do drilling off the shores of States that didn’t want drilling off their shores. He would not commit to that, and there is word that there is a plan in the Interior Department to allow that to happen.

This is the same administration that promised to clean the swamp and rid Washington of corruption. Yet it is a twisted parody to think that President Trump wants an oil and gas lobbyist to lead the Department of the Interior. What a contradiction. What a betrayal.

It doesn’t stop there. Bernhardt reportedly participated in efforts to launch a White House climate denial panel, the sole purpose of which was to rebuke accepted science. We cannot allow the work of our Federal Agencies to fall into the hands of people like this.

It is hard to imagine someone whose background is so at odds with the Department’s mission as Bernhardt’s. In good conscience, I cannot vote in favor of his confirmation. For the same reasons, I urge all of my fellow Senators, particularly those along the coasts, to vote against this nomination to protect their shoreline and their beaches.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Carolina.

REMEMBERING FRITZ HOLLINGS

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak on behalf of Senator Hollings’ passing, along with my colleague Senator SCOTT from South Carolina.

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

Mr. GRAHAM. Thank you.

Mr. President, Senator SCOTT and I have come to the floor today to recognize a legend in South Carolina and this body, Senator Fritz Hollings, who passed away on April 6 in Isle of Palms, SC. He was 97. He loved Isle of Palms. That was his place to be.

He was born in Charleston, SC, in 1922. He graduated from the Citadel in 1942. He attended the University of South Carolina School of Law. He served as an artillery officer in World War II, earned a Bronze Star, and finished with the rank of captain.

He was in the State house of representatives from 1949 to 1954. He became our Governor in 1958 at age 36. He shepherded South Carolina through the turbulent times of the civil rights movement. He urged the legislature to follow the law after *Brown v. Board of Education*.

He established the best technical college system in the country. We say that with great pride. It was Fritz Hollings who was the father of the South Carolina technical college system, which has resulted in thousands of jobs being created and educational opportunity for millions in our State.

When he was a Senator, they called him the Senator from central casting. He looked the part, he acted the part, and he sounded the part. He was the junior Senator for 36 years, I think, in South Carolina, with Senator Thurmond being the senior Senator. When Senator Thurmond retired, I was honored to be able to take his place, and Fritz was my senior Senator for 2 years.

I just want to thank him and recognize what he did for me to become established in the Senate. He was kind. He was gracious. We did not agree on policy, but he could not have been a better friend.

I spent half of my time trying to interpret what he was saying on the floor. I caught about every third word. He has this Charleston accent that even I couldn’t understand at times.

Nobody enjoyed their job more than Senator Hollings. Nobody was ever better at it. When it came to South Carolina, Senator Hollings was able to move mountains. He was the chairman of the Commerce Committee and the Budget Committee.

He was one of the great environmentalists of our time. The ACE Basin in South Carolina is a beautiful place along the coast where three major rivers come together. It was Senator Hollings who established that, now and forever to be preserved. He helped establish NOAA, which has done so much for our oceans.

He was part of the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings Balanced Budget Act. He was always trying to keep our fiscal house in order.

He was a champion of the military. Being a World War II veteran himself, he always looked out for those in uniform. Senator Thurmond and Hollings were giants of their time, and they

really made a difference for our State and for the country as a whole.

When it comes to his distinguished career in the Senate, Fritz Hollings was at the top of anybody's list. He served for 38 years.

He was a tireless advocate for the hungry—for hunger. He was trying to combat hunger and poverty before it was cool. He traveled all over this world to try to spread the good news about America.

After Senate life, he established the Hollings Center for International Dialogue to create exchanges in dialogue between the United States and mostly Muslim populations. He was ahead of his time there. For us to win this war on terror, we have to side with people in the faith who reject radical Islam, which the overwhelming majority of people reject, and Fritz understood that.

He was a great husband, father, grandfather, and great-grandfather. He was my friend.

He had the eighth longest tour of duty in the U.S. Senate in the history of the body. Yesterday, with Senator SCOTT's help, we passed a resolution unanimously—every Senator signed on—honoring the service of Senator Hollings.

There are so many friends of his in this body. The staff and former Senators all will tell you that Fritz was a force of nature. He had strong opinions. He would share them with you whether you asked him or not. He knew what he was talking about. He was prepared. He was a fighter for his causes. He was willing to die for his country. Now he has passed, and the legacy for the people of South Carolina will be enduring.

Our beaches and our oceans and our mountains and our rivers are better off for his service. Our educational system stands out on the technical school side because of his vision. He shepherded us through very turbulent times during the civil rights movement, where other States were literally on fire. South Carolina had problems, but they paled in comparison to most because of Senator Hollings' leadership.

He was a lawyer. He loved the law. He was my friend. Senator SCOTT is from Charleston, and both of us have a tough act to follow when it comes to being Senators in South Carolina. Senator Hollings' way was to fight for your causes, work across the aisle, know what you are talking about before you speak, and try to do it with good humor. What more can you say? From the time he was a young man in Charleston until he passed away on April 6, he was always fighting for his causes. He loved his State. He delivered for the people of South Carolina.

When it comes to the Senate, he was a legend. His presence was felt up here. His legacy is enduring. He fought the good fight. He was a faithful servant, and now he will enjoy an eternal rest. To his family, I know you are grieving, but you have much to be proud of. To the people of South Carolina, it is not

about being a Republican or a Democrat in terms of service; it is about how much you love your State. No Republican and no Democrat ever loved South Carolina more than Fritz Hollings, and no Senator has ever made more of a difference than Senator Hollings.

So Senator SCOTT and I will do our best to keep up this good man's legacy. We will have different policy choices, and we will go down a different political path, but we will be ever mindful of the way we do our job. The way we do our job matters as much as what you do. Let it be said that when it came to doing his job, Fritz Hollings did it professionally, effectively, and with love and passion.

I now yield to Senator SCOTT of South Carolina.

Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina. Mr. President, I thank Senator GRAHAM for yielding to me. Without any question, I think Senator GRAHAM did such a great job of distilling the life and some of the accomplishments of Senator Hollings. Without any question, I cannot imagine Mr. GRAHAM spending 36 years or so as a junior Senator from the great State of South Carolina because of the long tenure of the senior Senator, Strom Thurmond, whose seat you have. I have the privilege of being in the seat of Senator Hollings, who, of course, is from Charleston, as I am from Charleston. I think of the commonalities we all share as South Carolinians, and certainly ones who are not—all of us from South Carolina understand how hard it is to understand those folks who speak in the old Charleston brogue, the language of Senator Hollings and folks like our cousin, Arthur Ravenel, who shares the same inflection in his voice. Senator GRAHAM brought back some very fond memories with his thoughts.

To the family, the Hollings family, we certainly extend our condolences. I had the chance to speak with Michael, his son, just the other day, and the family is doing well. The family is encouraged by the outpouring of love and support from so many folks from the Senate and throughout the country because Senator Hollings was not only a South Carolina Senator, he was America's Senator. He spent a lot of time doing a lot of things that made a significant difference.

I do want to put a little meat on the bones. As Senator GRAHAM has covered so much of what I would have said, I will not say it twice. I will, perhaps, drill into a few of the times of service Senator Hollings had.

As we think through the 1960s and as we read through the 1960s, we read through a time of volatility, a time where our Nation is clashing with one another, where the races were so divided. In the Deep South, we perhaps led in that direction of conflict. We have a provocative history on race in South Carolina. Without any question, Senator Hollings did what so many others did not do, which is, he led for a peaceful integration of what is today

one of America's great public universities, Clemson University. I say that as a South Carolina fan, without any question, but it is no doubt that Harvey Gantt, being the first African American in Clemson to graduate from Clemson, was a monumental shift in southern education, one we can all celebrate today.

I went to church with Harvey Gantt's family for 20-plus years at Morris Street Baptist Church in Charleston, SC, and I will say that, perhaps as a part of the springboard of controversy and challenge and conflict, it led to a level of greatness in Harvey Gantt's life as he took arrows that most of us are unfamiliar with. Senator Hollings—then-Governor Hollings—took arrows that some would be unfamiliar with in making the decision to ask for and to encourage and support a peaceful transition in a State at the time broiled in controversy. Harvey Gantt went on, of course, to be the first African-American mayor of the city of Charlotte, NC.

In thinking about Senator GRAHAM's comments as it relates to the technical college system in South Carolina, how Senator Hollings birthed that for our State, that may sound like a good accomplishment, but for a State that faced extinction from an economic standpoint, when industries were leaving our State, the technical college system became the springboard, once again, for the great city of South Carolina to see a rebirth of our economic systems. What we have today is a manufacturing haven whose foundation is the technical college system. When we think about companies like BMW, Boeing, Volvo, Mercedes, Bosch, Michelin, Bridgestone, all these companies became a part of the corporate family in South Carolina because we had a healthy, thriving technical college system born because of the leadership of Senator Hollings.

Senator Hollings not only succeeded in public life, but he also succeeded in his private life. I will tell you that I cannot imagine the reunion between Senator Hollings and his wife, Peatsy, of over 40 years. I can't imagine the celebration that is happening in Heaven as those two are being reunited and spending time talking about what has occurred over their lifetimes and the things they had to see.

There is an amazing Greek proverb that I want to end with, as it relates to Senator Hollings, that says that a society grows when old men plant trees whose shade they know they will never sit under.

Senator GRAHAM and I, the youngsters, comparatively speaking to Senator Hollings and Senator Thurmond—we are sitting under the shade of that tree. Our Nation benefits from people who have the wisdom to look forward, beyond their lifetime, and create a country where we all benefit.

TAX REFORM

Mr. President, before I yield the floor, I do want to spend a few minutes

talking about what is an obvious day in our near future—tax day. Americans from coast to coast are thrilled with the opportunity to finish their taxes. I say that with the poorest tongue in cheek. I will say that without any question I am excited about this tax season because of the success of our tax reform in December 2017. It is exciting to think about the benefits to so many families throughout this country because of the successful passage of the tax reform bill in December 2017.

I stood on the floor and listened to other speakers talk about how perhaps the tax reform package has not delivered consistent with the promises made during the debate. I would like to put some meat on those bones as well.

When you think about the average family who has kids, the doubling of the child tax credit from \$1,000 to \$2,000 and allowing for more refundability to happen because of the child tax credit being increased, more families today are healthier because of the doubling of the child tax credit, which is good news. When you think about the size of the refund, \$2,873 is, in fact, consistent with the refunds of years gone by, which, once again, reinforces the fact that the tax reform bill has presented itself in a positive way and produced results consistent with what we suggested. Because if you get the same refund you had last time—about—but you have more money in your take-home pay every payday during 2018, you actually can measure the success of the tax reform by looking at how many dollars you had in your paycheck in 2018 versus 2017, even if your employer did not give you a raise. So the success of our package is without question.

I would like to suggest that as you think about folks like me, and perhaps others in this body who were raised by single parents, a single mom in 2018 with two children did not have a Federal tax burden at all until her income hit over \$54,000. That is important, and it is powerful for a specific reason. The average single mother makes around \$40,000 a year, not \$54,000. That means that for the average single mother in America, because of the success of our tax reform package, her Federal tax burden is down to zero. That is not just good news, that is great news. I know it personally because of a single mother who worked 16 hours a day trying to keep food on the table. Having doubled the child tax credit and having lowered her taxes by doubling the standard deduction from \$9,300 to \$18,000, what we see for the single mom is hope and a light at the end of the tunnel that is not a train. This is good news.

Not only is it good news, but some have talked about our plan—we have defaulted on our mission to help the American people. I suggest that as opposed to defaulting on our mission, what we heard from others is that they are deflated because of the success of our mission. During the previous administration, GDP growth averaged

somewhere around 2 percent. In 2018, we saw a 3.1-percent GDP growth. What does that mean for the average person? What it means for the average person is that for the first time in a long time, more than a decade, we saw their wages grow over 3 percent. So not only did their wages grow over 3 percent, but, more importantly, they had more jobs—actually, not just more jobs. This is really good news. They had more jobs. So many more jobs are open today than people looking for work. In other words, if you think about the number of folks looking for work, the number of openings exceeds that number. That is a transformation in this country in a way we have very seldom seen or experienced.

There is even more good news to that. Our unemployment rate is down to nearly a 50-year low, 3.8 percent. So if we are asking ourselves what these corporations did with the money, we are seeing the evolution or the manifestation of what happened with these extra resources by seeing the lowest unemployment rate in 50 years. Now, that is not just true for America as a whole, it is true for the subgroups within America who have been challenged and sometimes excluded from the workforce. The African-American unemployment rate is around 7 percent over the last 2 years. You have to compare that to, under the previous administration, an unemployment rate of around 12 percent. The Hispanic unemployment is near 5 percent. You have to compare that to a 50-percent increase under the previous administration.

We have seen perhaps the greatest renaissance in our country, economically, than we have seen in 20 years, and much of it is due to tax reform being passed. Embedded in the tax reform package was my signature legislation that I am so excited about, the opportunity zones legislation, that is having a transformative impact and effect throughout the poorest, most distressed communities in all of our country. Somewhere around 8,000 opportunity zones have been designated by the Governors in collaboration with the mayors. Mr. President, as a former Governor, you understand better than most of us the process by which one went through in order to establish the zones and the potential of those zones in the most distressed communities in each of the States.

There is good news. The good news is, in places like my home State of South Carolina, is a logistics company named DHL that drives those little yellow vans that ship some of your packages across the country. They are investing \$100 million in a distribution and warehouse park, creating nearly 500 jobs in Dorchester County, and they have said the Federal opportunity zone designation was a factor DHL weighed in making this location decision.

In Washington State, the Vancouver Downtown Redevelopment Authority president said: "It's an absolute no-

brainer, and a real gift from the federal government and will give us a real shot in the arm in these areas"—these challenged, distressed communities.

In Vegas, the largest opportunity zone expo in the Nation is being held next month with some of the biggest names across the country trying to figure out how they can reinvest their resources in areas where they were unwilling to take a second look, because now the incentive is good enough, and we did so without more bureaucrats and without government money. These are private-sector dollars being deployed in some of the most distressed communities.

In the Midwest, up to 3,000 jobs are on the way to East Chicago, and a local foundation is looking to invest \$800 million in a solar farm in Flint, MI. There are so many other States with amazing projects that I would run out of time talking about those.

I will close with two thoughts. One is from Mayor Bowser of DC. She had a March Madness event for opportunity zones, and she attracted 400-plus folks who are interested in investing and seeing the results of the investments in the local community here in DC.

For folks on the left and on the right, African Americans, Hispanics, Whites, Asians, this is a policy that brings America together. Whether you live in the most affluent communities or the most distressed communities, Americans are looking at opportunity zones as a way to have a conversation with each other. If there is one thing that we all would agree upon, it is that America needs to talk a little more with each other in a civil way about fairness and opportunity.

One of the reasons why I started my national opportunity tour is to highlight some of the successes—from Miami, with my good friend MARCO RUBIO, to Boston, New Hampshire, and West Virginia, with Senator CAPITO, to Iowa, with Senator ERNST, and Colorado, Arizona, and so many other places. I look forward to continuing the conversation and distilling the benefits of the opportunity zones over the next few months.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I am honored to be cochairing the Entrepreneurship Caucus with the Senator from South Carolina. He is right that there are some great examples of people who want to get businesses started and who want to pursue their dreams, and we need to highlight those because we have a lot of people who right now have some great new ideas. If we are going to continue to be a country that is an incubator for those ideas, then, we have to promote those ideas and allow those people to follow their dreams.

NOMINATION OF DAVID BERNHARDT

Mr. President, I am here today to join many of my colleagues in discussing the nomination of David Bernhardt to be Secretary of the Department of the Interior.

I have serious concerns about many of the actions that Mr. Bernhardt has taken while serving as both Deputy Secretary of the Department, since 2017, and as Acting Secretary, since the resignation of Secretary Zinke in January. Some of the most concerning actions include defending the administration's budget request, which zeroed out funding for the newly reauthorized Land and Water Conservation Fund; rolling back protections for public lands, including proposals to reduce the size of some of our national monuments; limiting opportunities for public input into Agency rulemakings; and weakening enforcement of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

These actions have threatened the responsible and sustainable management of our public lands, imperiled laws designed to protect and conserve wildlife, and stacked the deck in favor of fossil fuel industries.

One particular area that I would like to focus on today is how Mr. Bernhardt has played a role in the Department of the Interior's decisions to rescind Obama-era climate and conservation policies that directed Agency employees to minimize the environmental impact of activities on Federal land. In a secretarial order published just before Christmas in 2017, which was signed by Mr. Bernhardt, the Department limited how its employees at sub-Agencies, like the Bureau of Land Management, can factor climate and environmental effects into their decision making. What does this mean, exactly? Well, it means that manuals, handbooks, and other lists of best practices that were compiled by Agency employees over the years—career Agency employees—that were meant to minimize activities that would harm species or accelerate climate change were thrown out or their instructions were rendered obsolete.

Mr. Bernhardt has not only downplayed climate science and prevented efforts to mitigate it within the Department of the Interior, but he has also advanced policy and rulemakings that will accelerate its effect. We all know what we are up against here with climate change. We have seen the weather events throughout the country—the heating of our ocean waters; the increase in hurricanes; the predictions of how many metropolitan areas are going to be experiencing significant flooding in just the next few decades; the wildfires that we have seen in Arizona, Colorado, and California; and the video of the dad in Northern California driving his daughter through lapping wildfires, leaving their house burning behind them as they drove and he sang to her to calm her down. Those are the big effects and the little effects, but Americans know this is happening.

So the question is not, Is it happening? We know it is because every one of these things was predicted by our scientists and was predicted by our military. The question is, What do we do about it? That is why I am so opposed to the administration's decision to get out of the international climate change agreement, and I am opposed to its decision to get us out of the Clean Power rules that we had just started to put forward and to implement, and why I am opposed to the decision it made to reverse the gas mileage standards.

Unfortunately, Mr. Bernhardt has not only downplayed climate change, but he has also helped, as I said, to advance policy that accelerates it. For example, in September 2018, the Bureau of Land Management announced a draft rule that would relax the Obama-era methane rules that regulated flared, leaked, and vented natural gas from oil and gas operations on Federal and Tribal lands. Methane is an extremely potent greenhouse gas that according to the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has an impact that is 34 times greater over a 100-year period than carbon dioxide. It is also important to remember that these proposed rescissions to methane rules are in direct opposition and run counter to the Senate's vote in 2017 to reject an effort at full repeal under the Congressional Review Act. Instead of going backward, we should be taking real action to combat climate change. We need a comprehensive approach to greenhouse gas emissions, and we need energy efficient technologies and homegrown energy resources. I also believe, as I noted, that we should reinstate the Clean Power rules and the gas mileage standards.

Under Mr. Bernhardt's leadership, the Department of the Interior has been taking us in the wrong direction on climate, conservation, and public lands. I will oppose his nomination.

NOMINATION OF DAVID STEVEN MORALES

Mr. President, before I conclude, I wish to make brief remarks on the nomination of David Morales to be a Federal judge for the Southern District of Texas, who was just confirmed yesterday evening. Yesterday the Senate began its consideration on this nomination at 4 p.m. and voted on the confirmation around 6 p.m.

Under the new rules, we had just about 2 hours of time on the Senate floor to debate the nomination for a lifetime appointment to the Federal judiciary. I would have liked to have made these comments before that time. But with these severe limits, it is very difficult for Senators, if they have other obligations within the building or constituent visits or hearings going on, to be able to make it within the 2-hour period that we are now allowed, which is actually a 1-hour period.

There was much more to be concerned about with respect to this nominee, which is why I am making these comments now. To name one example, during his time in the Texas Attorney

General's Office, he has participated in cases that have undermined American voting rights. In 2007 he submitted an amicus brief before the Supreme Court in support of an Indiana voter ID law. The brief argued that requiring voters to have photo IDs was only "a negligible burden on the right to vote." They should ask that of some of our seniors in Minnesota who have voted for decades and decades and decades and are well-known by election officials and, in our State, are able to show up at the voting booth and be able to vote or maybe they don't have a driver's license because they no longer drive. These are examples that go on across the United States. In many States that have these restrictions, these people are literally turned away from voting.

It is one of the reasons that the voters of my State turned away a proposal that was on our ballot to have these restrictive photo-ID requirements. It sounds good, but then when you really look under the hood, you find that it limits voting. It was especially difficult for people in our rural areas and our seniors to accept this change, and they didn't.

We also know that voter ID laws have a disproportionate impact on voters who are low income, racial and ethnic minorities, elderly, and people with disabilities.

The nominee also defended Texas's ban on same-sex marriage. In 2010 he signed on to a brief arguing that Texas had a right to ban same-sex marriage. The Supreme Court rejected similar arguments in *Obergefell v. Hodges*, which found that the Constitution guarantees the right to marry for same-sex couples.

These issues are about how our democracy functions and about treating people equally under the law and with respect.

It is the Senate's constitutional responsibility to give its advice and consent on lifetime nominees to the Federal bench. These nominations are too important to turn the Senate into a mere rubberstamp. The Senate must maintain its role as a meaningful check and balance in our constitutional system, and I join my colleagues in expressing my deep concern about the pace at which we are confirming these nominees.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. 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. 1116

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Thank you, Mr. President. Today I rise to speak about the legislation I introduced to the Senate this week, S. 1116, the BROWSER ACT.

Broadband or high-speed internet has absolutely revolutionized the way we communicate, the way we conduct commerce, and actually the way we participate in government.

Broadband is one of the greatest innovations in history. It allows near-instantaneous exchange of information and brings efficiencies to the daily life of millions of Americans as they move more of their transactional life online.

Thanks to broadband, entrepreneurs have been able to bring thousands of new applications to consumers. These edge services are now an essential part of our lives. We find ourselves every day saying: I can't imagine what we did before we had this or before we had that. These apps give consumers access to entertainment, news, information, helping us drive around town, and access to emergency services.

As consumers use these applications, they generate massive amounts of data about themselves, and that is the problem. Many companies collect this data and use it for a range of purposes without the user's knowledge.

They are collecting all of this—every bill you pay, every website you visit, these platforms are following you.

After all this information is shared, the question is, Who owns the virtual you? Who owns you and your presence online? Our laws have not kept pace with technological innovation.

Now we see some States and we even have some cities that are adding more complexity to the problem by enacting their own privacy rules and standards, despite the fact that digital commerce is not restricted to one area. Digital commerce is interstate and global in nature.

It is time we have a consistent national law regarding online privacy. We need one set of rules and one regulator for the entire internet ecosystem. It just makes sense.

That is why I have introduced the legislation I previously proposed as a Member of the House of Representatives. As I said, it is called the BROWSER Act. Americans want to be certain their privacy is protected in the physical and the virtual space. Broadband users—who are each and every one of us—should have the right to say who can or cannot access their private data.

Think about it. At this point, how and when you pay your bills, the credit cards you use, the sites you visit, the merchandise you shop for, friends you connect with, there is somebody tracking that activity with every move of the mouse. They are on it.

Consumers should have the right to clear and conspicuous notice of a service providers' privacy policies and the ability to either opt in or opt out, depending on the sensitive nature of that data. The BROWSER Act requires digital services to provide users with clear and conspicuous notice of their privacy rights. It also requires digital services to provide users the ability to opt in to the collection of sensitive information while also giving users the ability to

opt out of the collection of nonsensitive information.

By allowing for a clear and conspicuous notification process, consumers will be able to make a more educated choice about the nature of the relationship they want to have with online vendors and with tech companies.

Furthermore, the BROWSER Act will prohibit digital services from denying their service to users who refuse to waive their personal privacy rights. The BROWSER Act also empowers the FTC, the Federal Trade Commission, to enforce these rules using its unfair or deceptive acts or practices authorities.

Now the Federal Trade Commission has been our privacy regulator in both the physical and the online space. Just this week, Senator KLOBUCHAR and I sent a letter to the FTC urging stronger action for bad actors in the tech space. Companies like Facebook and Google have transformed society in revolutionary ways and need to recognize that with that great power comes great responsibility. This is the 21st century; it is not the Wild West. These tech companies need to be respectful of your privacy rights.

My hope is that through this bipartisan effort, we will shed light on the need to protect competition and online privacy to keep up with the fast-paced changes in technology. The FTC has a responsibility to hold tech companies accountable for securing their platforms. We need them to step up and be the cop on the beat in the virtual space.

Before I yield the floor, I want to make one last point. The BROWSER Act treats everyone in broadband and edge companies exactly the same—one regulator, one set of rules. This is common sense.

Unfortunately, yesterday, Democrats in the House passed a bill to regulate broadband service providers, but they didn't do anything to Big Tech. They didn't do anything about privacy with Google, with Facebook, with Yahoo—these people who collect your data and sell it to the highest bidder; then that person markets back to you.

When I chaired the Communications and Technology Subcommittee in the House, I repeatedly offered to work with the other side of the aisle to preserve a free and open internet. I am always happy to work together to find a legislative solution and put this so-called net neutrality issue to rest once and for all. Rather than work together on this, the House pushed through a hyperpartisan bill to reinstate a controversial, heavyhanded regulation of communication companies, but—heaven forbid—they do not want to touch Big Tech, their big buddies.

I am so grateful Leader MCCONNELL has said that this bill coming from the House is dead on arrival in the Senate. I look forward to continuing to work on this issue. But here is what my friends across the aisle and my friends over in the House need to realize: The

internet is not broken. The internet is not broken. Many of you probably have an electronic device close at hand. It is working just fine. The internet does not need the intervention of NANCY PELOSI and House Democrats. It is fine. It is going to be just fine by itself. In fact, as an alternative, we could just strike out the text of the House-passed bill and insert the BROWSER Act in its place—one set of rules for the entire internet ecosystem, one set of rules enforced by one Federal regulator. That is the BROWSER Act. It is about fairness. It is about encouraging innovation. It is about making certain we keep a free and open internet.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. FISCHER). The majority leader.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the postcloture time on the Bernhardt nomination expire at 1:45 p.m. today. I further ask that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

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

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

VEHICLE INNOVATION ACT

Mr. PETERS. Madam President, transportation is responsible for roughly two-thirds of our national consumption of petroleum and one of the largest contributors to greenhouse gas emissions. But imagine a future where we could produce low-cost, secure clean energy technologies to move people and goods easily across our Nation. Imagine if we could then sell our advanced American technology and products to the rest of the world.

Well, that is a future, by working together, we can indeed achieve. There is no question that the cars and trucks of the future can be equipped with technology to make them safer and more fuel efficient while also saving consumers money.

Rapidly emerging technology has the potential not only to reduce air emissions, but their development could also create jobs in Michigan and across the Nation, and these are jobs that cannot be outsourced. We must ensure that the United States leads the way in developing these innovations. That is why I reintroduced the bipartisan Vehicle Innovation Act with my colleagues Senator ALEXANDER and Senator STABENOW.

The Vehicle Innovation Act promotes research and development investments in clean vehicle and advanced safety technologies. The bill also modernizes

the Vehicle Technologies Office within the Department of Energy, which exists to help create and sustain American leadership in the transition to a global clean energy economy.

This office's leadership has already led to improvements in engine efficiency through vehicle weight reductions and reduced fuel production costs, and the Vehicle Innovation Act will help ensure that these continued innovations move forward.

I am proud to again partner on this bill with Senator ALEXANDER and fellow Michigander, Senator DEBBIE STABENOW. In the last Congress, we were able to pass the Vehicle Innovation Act through the Senate. Now, with fellow Michigan delegation Members, Congresswomen DEBBIE DINGELL and HALEY STEVENS, leading this bill in the House, there is no reason this legislation should not be enacted into law.

The bill is supported by labor, by industry, and by conservation groups, including the United Auto Workers, the Motor & Equipment Manufacturers Association, the Auto Alliance, the BlueGreen Alliance, and the Natural Resources Defense Council.

America should lead the world in clean energy advancements, and I urge my colleagues to support the Vehicle Innovation Act.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

BORDER SECURITY

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, while many folks in Washington, DC, remain ambivalent about what is happening along the southern border, I am here to report that we are reaching a breaking point.

Every month, Customs and Border Protection releases the total number of people who attempt to cross the southern border. The total includes those who cross illegally between the ports of entry, as well as those deemed inadmissible at a port of entry. Just to give you an idea of the size and scope of the numbers we have been dealing with in the past, since June 2014—the month that President Obama referred to this as a “humanitarian crisis”—more than 66,000 individuals were encountered along the border. At that time, we thought 66,000 was a huge number, but it pales in comparison to what we are seeing now. Last month, more than 103,000 people attempted to illegally cross the border. That is 103,000 up from 76,000 the previous month.

A few weeks ago, I know we got into a debate about what did and did not constitute an emergency or a crisis at the border. I don't care whether you call it a crisis or an emergency, but the entire system is breaking, and it is unsustainable. This is the highest number of people who has attempted to enter the country that we have seen since 2007.

The mind-boggling figure represents the strain that is being felt by the personnel—those being U.S. Government employees—whether they be Border

Patrol or Customs or whoever is trying to manage the influx of the migrants. The men and women of the CBP lack both the manpower and the facilities to appropriately respond. The already understaffed Agency is reassigning personnel to try to make do, but 40 percent of the Border Patrol's manpower is spent processing migrants and providing care and transportation, and many of the agents are taken off their patrol lines to do this work, which leaves areas of the border vulnerable to exploitation by drug cartels and others.

The detention centers at which these migrants are housed and processed are relatively small facilities that are not designed for these kinds of huge numbers. They were originally built to house single adults for a short period of time, but the skyrocketing number of unaccompanied children and family units is now putting a serious strain on those resources. Last month alone, there were more than 53,000 families and nearly 9,000 unaccompanied children who were apprehended at the border—53,000 families and 9,000 unaccompanied children. Customs and Border Protection simply lacks the facilities to hold these children, and it lacks the personnel to provide appropriate care.

Do we really want the Border Patrol handing out juice boxes and diapers as opposed to interdicting dangerous drugs and other contraband that come into the United States? I don't think so. We know they are desperately asking for additional detention space and staff to be able to manage the migrants who are in custody.

Why is it so important they be detained? It is because, if we engage in the practice that has come to be known as catch and release, then it is doubtful we will ever see these migrants again, even though they will be notified of their time to appear in front of immigration judges months—maybe even years—into the future. They will simply melt into the landscape. If they were to have bona fide reasons to claim asylum but were to fail to appear for their hearings in front of immigration judges, they will have waived those rights and be deported if they are ultimately located in the United States.

We know customs inspectors have been reassigned from their duties at ports of entry to do things like process migrants and provide transportation. With fewer customs agents on the job, you are now seeing lengthy delays at the ports and checkpoints along the entire border. In what is just right across from El Paso, TX, truckers have been reported as sleeping in their vehicles for hours and sometimes days so they will not lose their spots in line.

I have heard from some of the car manufacturers that require there be a flow of their supply chains into Mexico and vice versa, so they are literally hiring aircraft to fly from Juarez to El Paso because that 11-minute flight is faster than a trucker waiting 24 hours in line. Also, when many of our car

manufacturers that depend on just-in-time inventory can't get their inventory just in time but have to wait 24 hours, it disrupts their manufacturing lines and endangers their businesses. Of course, it is easy to see how this could have a ripple effect on the entire border and the American economy.

This slowdown isn't just affecting businesses along the border; it has businesses across the country worried. Mexican products feed the supply chain for many manufacturers in the United States, and these slowdowns affect production. While folks who live far away from the border may have just chosen to look the other way until now, they don't have a choice anymore. The system is breaking.

The ripples will soon be felt across the country unless Members of Congress, on both sides of the aisle, work together and are serious about enacting a solution. We know what we need to do, but politics is preventing us from getting it done. It is time to provide our frontline officers and agents with the personnel, the resources, and the legal authorities they need in order to do the jobs we have asked them to do. Yet, without support from Congress, we are sending them into a losing battle, and we are setting our economy up for a disaster.

GEAR UP FOR SUCCESS ACT

Madam President, on another matter, when the Senate is in recess next week, I, like most of our colleagues here, will be running to my State to talk to my constituents and to hopefully listen to what they have to say.

As I travel from El Paso to Laredo, some of the things I will be talking about will include the GEAR UP for Success Act with students, teachers, and school administrators. GEAR UP seeks to increase college and career readiness for underrepresented and low-income students. It currently serves about 600,000 students nationwide, and Texans have benefited from the \$885 million in GEAR UP grants over the last 20 years.

I am glad I have had a chance to visit with some of my constituents in San Antonio and Harlingen about this bill and the incredible impact that GEAR UP grants have had on their students. I guess I didn't fully appreciate the fact that students really have to begin deciding in the seventh grade what their courses of study will be because, if they don't take the required courses, or the prerequisite courses, or the other courses they are going to need in order to graduate or to get into college, they may miss the boat entirely. Many of these students come from families whose parents have never attended college or who may be unaware of the requirement to plan in order for their children to make the right course selections early on as opposed to their waiting until their junior or senior year to begin to think about where to apply to college.

This legislation would allow school districts to better cater to their students' specific needs rather than to use

a one-size-fits-all program, and it would reduce the local cost share required by half.

I am eager to hear from my constituents in El Paso and Laredo and to talk about what else we can do in Washington to promote college and career readiness. In a tight labor market with a booming economy, one of the things we hear about the most back home is the fact that employers can't find adequately trained workers for the jobs that are available and return a good wage. So it is important that we continue to do everything we can not only to promote education generally but also to promote career readiness for many of the well-paying jobs that are going wanting for the lack of qualified workers.

JENNA QUINN LAW

Madam President, I will also take some time to visit the Center for Child Protection in Austin to discuss the Jenna Quinn Law. This would authorize grants for training students, teachers, and caregivers on identifying and reporting child sexual abuse. The bill is named for a courageous Texan and is modeled after successful reforms in my State. It is another great example of how we are working to bring the successful Texas model to the national level.

B-21 STRATEGIC BOMBER

Madam President, finally, I will visit Dyess Air Force Base in Abilene, TX, with my friend and colleague, Congressman JODEY ARRINGTON, for a briefing on its latest operations and the recent news from the Air Force that Dyess will be receiving the B-21—the next generation of strategic bombers.

Dyess is the most dynamic bomber base in the country, and I am glad the Air Force has chosen the future home for the B-21 squadrons as well as weapons instruction courses and test squadrons. It just makes a lot of sense.

I look forward to spending time at home with my constituents. These conversations drive my work in the Senate, and I am eager to get more feedback on how these bills could make positive changes in their lives and in the lives of all of my constituents in the State.

REMEMBERING LIEUTENANT COLONEL RICHARD COLE

Madam President, on one final matter, this week, Texas lost a true hero. Lt. Col. Richard Cole passed away on Tuesday at the ripe old age of 103 in my hometown of San Antonio.

For Texans and for so many Americans, Lieutenant Colonel Cole—or “Dick” as his friends and brothers in arms called him—symbolized one of the most remarkable groups from the greatest generation in World War II—the Doolittle Raiders. The group is named for then-Lt. Col. Jimmy Doolittle, who, in April of 1942, fearlessly led 16 B-25 bombers and 80 crew members on a strike that targeted factories and military installations in and around Tokyo. This was actually

Dick's first mission, and he was Jimmy Doolittle's copilot.

After the attack by the Japanese on Pearl Harbor, this mission was not just of tactical importance—it was a major morale boost for our Nation.

Air Force Chief of Staff David Goldfein recently said:

Those 80 intrepid airmen changed the course of history. They executed a one-way mission without hesitation and against enormous odds.

The mission was, as you might imagine, perilous. Doolittle's Raiders took off from the USS *Hornet* with barely enough runway to get airborne. In fact, Doolittle and Cole's aircraft only had 467 feet with which to take off in an aircraft that was not designed to launch from an aircraft carrier. The airplanes inadvertently took off 170 miles further from Japan than they had planned, so they had insufficient fuel to make it to their landing fields in China.

As a result, Dick—then 26 and having had limited experience in jumping out of an aircraft—had to leap out of his B-25 into unknown territory. He later reported that he gave himself a black eye when he pulled the ripcord and finally landed in the branches of a tree, where he spent the night, dangling.

He later said:

They don't give a Purple Heart for self-inflicted injuries. I gave myself a black eye.

Yet his heroism was certainly rewarded. He received the Distinguished Flying Cross for his role in the bombing as well as the Bronze Star and the Air Medal. Then, in 2015, Dick and his fellow Raiders received the Congressional Gold Medal.

These men, as you might imagine, shared an incredible bond, and their lasting camaraderie was evident through one special tradition they shared. At each reunion, the crew would share a cognac in silver goblets. Each goblet was engraved with a Raider's name both right-side up and right-side down. After toasting to the men who had died since their last reunion, they would flip over the goblets of those who had passed away.

At their final reunion in 2013, only four Raiders were left. After determining that this would be the final reunion due to their ages and travel limitations, Dick delivered the last toast. Now his silver goblet will be turned over just as it was for the 79 brothers who left this Earth before him.

We remember the final Doolittle Raider today for his incredible courage and sacrifice and a life well lived. America has lost another hero, but our country will never forget him.

I send my condolences to Dick's family and friends and especially to Rich, his son, and to Cindy, his daughter.

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. MARKEY. Madam 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 DAVID BERNHARDT

Mr. MARKEY. Madam President, I rise today to address the Senate on the nomination of David Bernhardt to head the Department of the Interior.

I ask unanimous consent that I may use this chart in order to further my goal of making it clear why he should not be nominated and confirmed as Secretary of the Interior.

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

Mr. MARKEY. Madam President, under Secretary Bernhardt, the Department of the Interior will come to stand for the Department of Oil Interests, DOI.

This wheel of Bernhardt's giveaways makes it very clear what the objective of his tenure as the Secretary of Interior will, in fact, entail.

Bernhardt's nomination is just a continuation of the Trump administration's cartel Cabinet. Only a month ago, a former coal lobbyist was confirmed to head the Environmental Protection Agency. Let me say that again. Just last month, a coal lobbyist was nominated and confirmed to be the head of the Environmental Protection Agency of the United States—unbelievable. But now Republicans want to install a former oil lobbyist to head the Department of the Interior because, in Trump's administration, it is nothing but foxes guarding the henhouse.

We need more answers about Mr. Bernhardt's lobbying activities. We need answers on whether Mr. Bernhardt used his position at the Department of the Interior to help former clients. The American people need to see the documents associated with Bernhardt's lobbying activities. Most importantly, we should not confirm a former oil lobbyist to lead the very Agency that is tasked with protecting our public lands from despoliation.

Let me now point to the wheel of giveaways for more oil—more oil. And that is the goal of his appointment.

The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is one of our national treasures that is under threat from Big Oil and the Trump administration. This is the wildest place left in America, and it should not be turned into a drilling playground. Yet Republicans here in the Senate voted in 2017 to hand this special place—the Arctic Refuge—over to Big Oil. Now this administration is trying to hit the gas on drilling there, in one of the Earth's most pristine wilderness areas.

Last year, Mr. Bernhardt said that he would “expedite” oil development in the wildlife refuge, and he has worked inside the Department of the Interior to limit environmental review of drilling activities. So let's just imagine gushing oil poisoning the habitat of magnificent creatures like polar bears and caribou, snowy owls and the Arctic fox; rigs and pumps threatening the ancestral homeland of the Gwich'in and Inupiat peoples, which they call “the sacred place where life begins.”

I have spent my career protecting the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge for future generations, and today I will not support the nomination of David Bernhardt to undermine the protections we have worked so hard to put in place. We must stand up for the generations yet to come that cannot yet speak to protect our public lands and our oceans.

At the same time, the Trump administration is trying to roll back the fuel economy standards for the vehicles we drive. In other words, since we put 70 percent of all the oil we consume in our country on a yearly basis into the gasoline tanks of the vehicles we drive in our country, if you increase the fuel economy of every one of those vehicles, it will reduce the amount of oil you need to drill for.

What do the Republicans want to do? What do the oil companies want? What do the Koch brothers want? What does ExxonMobil want? Well, it is very simple. By not increasing the fuel economy standards of the vehicles we drive, we need more oil because cars will consume more in the course of a year. They then say: Ah, let's turn to the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge—a sacred place—and find more oil, because the vehicles we drive won't be that efficient.

What kind of sacrifice are we going to make in our country because the Koch brothers and ExxonMobil want to have more oil drilled for? We are going to have the Trump administration say: The only way we can justify it is if the cars, the light trucks, the SUVs that people drive are not that efficient; therefore, we need all the oil we can get, even though we are a technical giant and we know we can make these vehicles so much more efficient, so we never have to drill there. That is a sin against the environment and a sin against our country and future generations that should be able to enjoy this pristine area, the wildlife refuge.

Let's move on to another part of the wheel of giveaways—even more oil that will be another giveaway during the Bernhardt time at the Department of the Interior.

On January 4, 2018, the Department of the Interior announced a plan to revise the offshore drilling plan to eliminate protections for the east and west coasts, the eastern Gulf of Mexico, and the Arctic Ocean. The plan proposed to open up more than 90 percent of the U.S. coastlines to oil and gas leasing.

Since then, the bipartisan opposition has been deafening. All Governors along the east and west coasts have opposed or expressed concerns about expanded oil and gas exploration off their coasts. More than 340 municipalities and over 2,100 elected local, State, and Federal officials have formally opposed offshore oil and gas drilling and seismic airgun blasting in our ocean. But David Bernhardt is not listening to those concerns. Instead, he is listening to his former fossil fuel clients. He is moving ahead with this terrible off-

shore drilling plan that would threaten State after State with the threat of a spill in the ocean off of those States.

We should not confirm Bernhardt to lead the Department of the Interior. Handing the keys to the beaches of our country, the coastlines of our country, and our fishing and tourism industries in our country over to Big Oil is not what our citizens want. That is the opposite of what we need to do to protect our environment, but that is what David Bernhardt and his fossil fuel friends want.

There is no reason that we have to drill off of the coastlines of our country right where people who are swimming will be watching these oil rigs that are going to be drilling down into those ocean areas off of our beaches to find oil that we don't need. If we increase the fuel economy standards of the vehicles we drive, we will be able to back out the need for all of that additional oil. That is the sin against the environment that is being committed. That is the agenda of David Bernhardt's at the Department of the Interior.

Instead of being the United States of America—a technological giant that invents its way to the new automotive technologies that reduce the amount of oil we need and reduces the amount of greenhouse gasses that go up into the atmosphere—with David Bernhardt as the Secretary of the Interior, partnered with the new coal lobbyist who is running the EPA, we are going to wind up with more greenhouse gasses going up into the air, a reduction in the efficiency of the vehicles we drive, and putting more profits into the pockets of the Koch brothers and ExxonMobil and the auto industry, which also wants to reduce the fuel economy standards of the vehicles we drive. This is a sin against our environment but also our identity as the technological giant of the planet.

We can do this. We can make our cars more efficient. We can have plug-in hybrids. We can have all-electric vehicles. We can create a revolution that avoids the necessity of drilling off of our beaches and drilling in the Arctic Wildlife Refuge. We can do this, but that is not what Donald Trump wants. He wants fossil fuel industry representatives at the Department of the Interior and EPA running these Agencies.

David Bernhardt's ties to Big Oil—the very industry he is tasked with regulating—are as deep as an oil well. Those ties should be disqualifying for anyone nominated to head the Department of the Interior. We need to stop the pollution of our democracy by Big Oil interests.

I urge my colleagues to vote no on the nomination of David Bernhardt. I ask my colleagues to consider what we can do to avoid the necessity of despoiling these sacred environmental locations in our country for the oil industry, for the Koch brothers.

This is a big moment, this vote we are about to cast. This is one more step

by Donald Trump that will result in far more greenhouse gases going up into the atmosphere, far more danger being presented to places that should be put off limits to the oil industry because of the risk of environmental danger that would result from that permission to drill.

That is why we should all pause and really consider whether we want to go deeper and deeper into an era that is completely avoidable if we unleash the technological might of our country.

When President Kennedy went to Rice University in 1961, what he said was that we were going to have a mission to the Moon and that mission would require us to invent new metals, new alloys, new propulsion systems that did not exist, and that within 10 years, we would have to then bring that mission back safely from the Moon through heat half the intensity of the Sun and do so successfully.

Auto mechanics is not rocket science. We already know how to improve the fuel economy standards of the vehicles we drive. We don't need nuclear physics and we don't need aeronautical engineers to help us do this.

President Kennedy challenged our country, and we responded. President Trump is like J.F.K. in reverse. He is saying that we can't do it; that, instead, what we have to do is, here on Earth, be the leaders in spoiling our most sacred environmental locations.

That is why today is such a monumental opportunity for the Senate to say no on a bipartisan basis to David Bernhardt, who is someone who does not deserve the post of Secretary of the Interior.

I once again urge a “no” vote from all of my colleagues.

I yield the floor.

Madam 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.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Madam 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 DAVID BERNHARDT

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Madam President, I am pleased to be here today to speak in strong support of David Bernhardt's nomination to be Secretary of the Interior, and I thank all of my colleagues on the Energy and Natural Resources Committee. We worked pretty hard together to report Mr. Bernhardt's nomination last week. We moved it out with good bipartisan support. I also thank the majority leader for filing cloture this week so that we can confirm him before we depart for this 2-week work period.

I have several reasons—I have a whole host of different reasons to outline as to why I support Mr. Bernhardt's nomination. I outlined them

before the committee, but I would like to take a couple of minutes here this afternoon to reiterate them on the Senate floor.

First, really, is his background. He understands and is in touch with our public lands. Mr. Bernhardt is from the West where, of course, the vast majority of our public lands are located. He grew up in Rifle, which is a small town in Western Colorado. He spent a lot of his summers in Wyoming. He, to this day, remains an avid sportsman and outdoorsman. He likes hunting and fishing. He is a guy who appreciates the outdoors.

He is really almost unparalleled in terms of the experience that he brings to the job. He has worked at the Department of the Interior now for about 10 years, including two Senate-confirmed posts. Back in 2006, we confirmed him as Solicitor by voice vote, and then in 2017, we confirmed him to be the Deputy Secretary. Again, that vote was a good bipartisan vote. He has now served as Acting Secretary since January of 2019, so we have a situation where, simply put, he has more experience at the Department than any other previous nominee for Secretary, except one. That is a pretty good credential there.

Of equal importance, Mr. Bernhardt has the right perspective to be the Secretary of the Interior. He understands how Federal land management decisions affect our local communities. He has seen how Federal policies impact people's access to and use of public land, and he also recognizes the need to balance conservation and opportunities for economic development.

I think David Bernhardt has really proved his ability to lead the Department. He is well qualified. He is highly competent. He has built strong working relationships with those who are affected by the Department's decisions. I really think there is no question that he is ready for the job. He can handle everything it entails.

I have been asked by several of the reporters who are out there: What do you think David Bernhardt really brings to the table? What I have shared with them is that as I have gotten to know David Bernhardt in his various capacities at Interior, he is a guy who understands and enjoys the policy of these issues. He likes to get down into the fine details. He knows the background. He is not just being given something by staff to read. He is the one who is really engaged in understanding at a level of detail that is greatly appreciated.

When I think about the importance of this position of Secretary of the Interior, I come at it from the perspective of an Alaskan coming from a State that has more Federal acres than any other State. The Department of the Interior controls most of those. We often refer to the Department, and the Secretary specifically, as our landlord. That is not necessarily a title we like. We like to consider ourselves a partner,

but I think we truly recognize we need leadership to understand and appreciate the impact their decisions within the Department of the Interior can have on us. I know David Bernhardt understands that. He has been a good partner for Alaskans, but he has also been a good partner for individuals, groups, and States all across the country, and that is why his nomination is supported by a wide range of stakeholder groups from the Alaska Federation of Natives to Ducks Unlimited, the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, and the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies.

I think it is also important to note that Mr. Bernhardt moved through our committee process in pretty good order. He answered all of our questions. Again, he demonstrated the depth of his understanding of the issues and his expertise. He really exceeded expectations, which led to a very strong bipartisan vote of 14 to 6 at the business meeting last week.

Now the full Senate has the opportunity to confirm Mr. Bernhardt. Some will continue to make allegations over ethics, but the fact is, as we have reviewed those charges, we have found nothing that should hold him back. I know this has been a subject of discussion on the Senate floor, so I want to lay it out very clearly. There are some news stories that are being printed and have been printed that are filled with old information that has already been reviewed by our committee staff. New stories, old facts—they don't contain anything new or anything disqualifying. There is nothing amiss here, and there is no valid reason to delay this process.

The Office of Government Ethics has certified that Mr. Bernhardt is in good standing; so has Interior's Designated Agency Ethics Official. My committee staff has contacted Interior's Inspector General. It has been confirmed that there are no open investigations into Mr. Bernhardt. I would tell folks that what needs to happen here is that we need to move forward. We need to reject the last-minute rhetoric that is designed to delay. We need to confirm a well-qualified candidate to be our next Secretary of the Interior.

We have a lot to do. Interior has a lot to do to make sure that we are protecting our lands, increasing our energy security, as well as fulfilling all of the missions of the Department, and the sooner we are able to confirm a Secretary to focus on them, the better.

Mr. Bernhardt is very well qualified to be the Secretary of the Interior. He has the right background, the right experience, and the right perspective for the job. He is ready to lead on a permanent basis, and I am glad that very shortly here we are going to be considering his nomination. I strongly encourage every Member in this Chamber to support his confirmation.

Madam President, I come to the floor to speak to the robust support that David Bernhardt has received for his

nomination to be Secretary of the Interior.

Last week, those of us on the Energy and Natural Resources Committee reported Mr. Bernhardt on a strong, bipartisan vote of 14 to 6. He has actually added support from the last time that he was considered in committee, in 2017, and I hope we will see that again when we vote on his nomination later today.

Mr. Bernhardt's support is not limited to the Senate. For example, the Congressional Western Caucus is solidly behind Mr. Bernhardt, with many of its members on record in support of his nomination.

Bear in mind, these are members from Western States, where the vast majority of our public lands are located, whose districts are most impacted by the Department of the Interior. It is a very good sign that Mr. Bernhardt has drawn their strong support.

We have also kept a list of individuals and groups who have submitted letters of support for Mr. Bernhardt. It spans the spectrum of stakeholders, from the Public Lands Council and the Colorado Farm Bureau to the American Exploration and Mining Association and the Corps Network.

Multiple recreation groups have written in urging the Senate to confirm Mr. Bernhardt. The motorized recreation groups, like the American Council of Snowmobile Associations and the Off-Road Business Association, wrote that, "At a time when many of the senior posts at the agency lack Senate confirmed executives, a person of Mr. Bernhardt's experience is sorely needed . . . having [him] at the helm of the Interior Department will strengthen the agency's resolve to make the lands it manages accessible to the recreating public."

Officials at all levels of government are voicing their support for Mr. Bernhardt's nomination. The Governor of Wyoming, Mark Gordon, offered this statement: [Mr. Bernhardt's] recognition of expertise in the States is refreshing . . . I wish [him] a speedy and easy confirmation process."

The Mesa County Commissioners in Colorado wrote that "Mr. Bernhardt's extensive knowledge of public lands and energy issues makes him an avid leader with skill to see issues from multiple perspectives to maintain and improve partnerships among federal, state, and local governments."

The Harney County Court in Oregon has highlighted Mr. Bernhardt's commitment to balancing the multiple use of public land, writing that, "[He] has proved himself in the past by exhibiting understanding between the balance that is needed from an ecological standpoint, but also, what is needed from the economic and social aspect of public land use. He will work towards a balanced approach by trying to assess and distinguish between the multiple issues that we are facing with the [bureaus]."

Tribal groups and entities are also supportive of his nomination. In my home State, the Alaska Federation of Natives noted that, “Mr. Bernhardt has demonstrated a thorough understanding of the legal frameworks of the major laws covering Alaska Native subsistence customary and traditional rights and protections . . . he listens well, is articulate in his responses, and draws reasonable conclusions.”

The Chairman of the Southern Ute Indian Tribal Council wrote in that, “the [Tribe] has worked with [Mr. Bernhardt] previously and firmly believes that his knowledge and experience make him a very good fit for the Department . . . we also believe he is committed to building strong working relationships that rely on good faith and respect among all interests at the table.”

We have truly heard from a very wide range of organizations in support of this nomination. The Archery Trade Association wrote to us that “[Mr. Bernhardt] has demonstrated tremendous commitment to conserving and protecting our nation’s natural, historic and cultural resources . . . [his] experience with the Department of the Interior coupled [with his] exemplary history of collaboration, non-partisan views, highly respected demeanor and deeply held passion for conservation and historic preservation make him uniquely qualified for this position.”

One of the reasons that such a diverse group of stakeholders support Mr. Bernhardt’s nomination is that they have worked with him during his nearly ten years at Interior, including most recently as Deputy Secretary and then Acting Secretary. He has proven that he can work with groups, he has formed strong relationships with them, and they respect and support him.

For example, the Gila River Indian Community wrote that, “based on our experience in negotiating and working on complex issues with Mr. Bernhardt we support his position as Secretary of the Department of the Interior. We believe he has an understanding of Tribal sovereignty and the United States’ trust responsibility to Tribal nations.”

The Corps Network wrote that “Mr. Bernhardt has been accessible and responsive to our inquiries, visited several Corps in the field, and joined the Corps Network’s Day of Service last summer.”

These groups are reiterating what we already know—that Mr. Bernhardt’s experience at Interior and in the West; his willingness to listen, build relationships, be responsive; and his ability to earn people’s trust make him more than qualified to lead the Department of the Interior.

I want to wrap up by reading an excerpt from a letter that we received from the Beaver County Commission in Utah: “In our interactions with Mr. Bernhardt we have found him to act with integrity, be open minded to all points of view, and have a contagious passion for the health of our Nation’s

lands and people. These qualities, combined with many others, make Mr. Bernhardt an ideal candidate to serve the county by leading the Department of the Interior.”

I couldn’t say it any better. Mr. Bernhardt knows the Department and the laws that govern it inside and out. He appreciates and respects the Department’s mission. He is the right person for the job—the best person to lead Interior—and I look forward to his confirmation.

REMEMBERING SELINA EVERSON

Madam President, before I relinquish my time, I just want to take a very brief moment to note that a friend, a leader, an extraordinary role model for many Alaskans—certainly in the Alaska Native community—has recently passed.

Selina Everson was a language and culture warrior in Southeastern Alaska and one who fought for the Tlingit language and culture preservation. She was an extraordinary woman and role model. She grew up speaking Tlingit. It was her first language. In school, she was told: You can only speak English. She broke that rule and courageously spoke Tlingit anyway. She was a champion for her culture.

We mourn her passing. This woman not only was considered Grandma Selina and considered by hundreds of children in schools in Southeastern Alaska as a friend and a relative, I considered her one as well. I was honored that she was the one who helped adopt me into the Deisheetaan clan and gave me the honor and treasured name of Aan shaawat’k’i, Lady of the Land. So know that I send my prayers to Selina’s family as they face this loss.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CASSIDY). The assistant Democratic leader.

TRIBUTE TO MJ KENNY

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I come to the floor this afternoon to honor a member of my staff. I thank Senator FISCHER and Senator MANCHIN for giving me an opportunity to speak at this moment.

MJ Kenny has been part of my team in the Senate for 9 years, and for the past several years, he was a constant on the floor of the Senate as deputy floor director of my staff. At the end of this week, he is going to be moving on to a new professional opportunity.

Unlike many of us who work in this building, MJ actually is a resident of the Washington, DC, area. He graduated from Walt Whitman High School in Bethesda, MD, a suburb of the city of Washington.

Walt Whitman wrote in his essay, “Democratic Vistas,” the following: “Did you too, O friend, suppose democracy was only for elections, for politics, and for a party name?” Walt Whitman understood that democracy is more than campaigns. Democracy is certainly more than just yelling at one another. Democracy is a process. It is a daily dedication to the institutions and norms and the rule of law. Making de-

mocracy work takes skill and commitment, and it takes many people who are willing to make a sacrifice and see the demands for long hours and the demands for time on the floor as part of their democratic commitment. This can demand great patience and great sacrifice. I think Walt Whitman would have given MJ Kenny high marks, as do I.

For the last few years, MJ has helped to make sure the Senate does the daily work of democracy. I have counted on him to make sure that my interests were represented on the floor of the Senate, that my constituents in Illinois had a voice in the Senate, and that stories about Dreamers and other important information be shared in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD with my colleagues and beyond. Making certain that the information was floor-ready was a responsibility of MJ Kenny, and he handled it professionally.

MJ and my floor director, Reema Dodin, are my dynamic duo who help make things happen around here. Together, they are my eyes and ears on the floor when meetings and other obligations take me away. MJ has also been a big help to so many other Senators.

He came to my office 12 years ago for an informational interview. We tried to decide whether we were right for one another. Luckily, I came to the conclusion that this graduate of Northwestern University in Chicago with a degree in history, who had already interned for then-Congressman and now Senator CHRIS VAN HOLLEN, was a good fit for my team and a good prospect to help us move forward. I gave MJ Kenny his opportunity, and I am sure glad I did. He flourished.

In one year he moved from legislative correspondent to legislative aid to becoming a key part of my floor team. In every job he has done for me, MJ has been a steady, reliable partner. Even in difficult times, he works long hours without complaint and with grit and good humor.

In college, he studied history. In the U.S. Senate and on this floor for the last 9 years, he has not only witnessed history, he has helped to shape it. I couldn’t ask for more in a staff.

I suspect that some of what MJ knows about patience and perseverance he learned as a lifelong, long-suffering Baltimore Orioles fan. It is like being a Chicago Cubs fan. Among his treasured possessions on his desk is a bobblehead of Manny Machado, the former O’s third baseman and Golden Glove winner. Just as Manny Machado left the O’s, MJ Kenny is leaving the Senate at the end of this week. I want to wish him continued success and thank him again for being such an important part of my team over the years.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, first of all, I want to thank MJ also, on behalf of Senator DURBIN. His staff does a

great job, and we always enjoy working with them. MJ, enjoy your new endeavor in life.

NOMINATION OF DAVID BERNHARDT

Mr. President, I rise today to speak on the nomination of Mr. David Bernhardt to be the Secretary of the Interior. The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources voted to report David Bernhardt's nomination to be the Secretary of the Interior last week by a vote 14 to 6. Members on both sides held and continue to hold strong feelings on Mr. Bernhardt's nomination. Both sides have scrutinized his record carefully, as we should, considering the enormous responsibility entrusted to the Secretary of the Interior.

Whether it be payments for miners for their healthcare benefits, processing permits for the privilege of energy production on Federal lands, or ensuring the U.S. Geological Survey can conduct its critical work of collecting and analyzing data on our changing climate, the Department of the Interior has a huge amount of responsibility and diverse jurisdiction. Furthermore, the Secretary of the Interior is the guardian of our Nation's greatest natural resources.

The Department of the Interior manages nearly half a billion acres of Federal land, or about 20 percent of the Nation's land. One of every 5 acres in the United States is under their control. These lands include some of our most special places—our national parks, trails, seashores, and historic sites. In addition, the Department manages another 1.7 billion acres of submerged land on the Outer Continental Shelf.

The Department of the Interior is also the largest supplier of water in the 17 Western States. It manages nearly 500 dams and over 300 reservoirs that supply water to over 31 million people and irrigate 10 million acres of farmland.

Furthermore, nearly 20 percent of energy we use is produced on lands managed by the Secretary. These include not just coal and oil and natural gas but also hydropower, geothermal, solar, and wind energy. In addition, the Secretary of the Interior manages our trust obligations to nearly 600 federally recognized Indian Tribes and provides services to nearly 2 million Native Americans.

By any measure, the job of Secretary of the Interior is an enormous and special responsibility.

As a former Governor, I have always believed that an executive is entitled to deference when selecting his or her team, as long as the candidates are qualified and ethical. I have carefully reviewed Mr. Bernhardt's experience and his qualifications. I met with him twice before his hearing and spoke with him again by phone afterwards. I questioned him extensively about his willingness to be a good steward of our Nation's greatest natural treasures—our national parks, monuments, and his-

torical sites. I questioned him about his responsibility to balance our resource needs with environmental protection and fairness to the owners of our public lands, which are all of us, the American people. I spoke to him about the need to make sure that those who are granted the privilege of using our public lands leave them in better condition than they found them.

Based on my extensive discussion with him and my review of his record, I believe Mr. Bernhardt is clearly qualified to serve as Secretary. He held senior positions in the Department for 8 years during the Bush administration, including over 2 years as the Solicitor, which is the third highest office in the Department. He has served as the Deputy Secretary for the past 2 years and as Acting Secretary since January. He knows the Interior Department inside and out, and he is well-versed on all of the issues that come before it. He clearly has the knowledge and experience to serve as Secretary.

Now, the opposition to Mr. Bernhardt's nomination comes not from any lack of knowledge or experience but from questions about appearances of conflicts of interest arising from his law practice prior to being confirmed as Deputy Secretary. I had extensive conversations with Mr. Bernhardt about these potential conflicts of interest and his compliance with ethics laws and regulations. I reminded him that he takes the same oath I take—public service, not self-service. We also spoke about the importance of ensuring a culture at the Department of the Interior that reflects the highest level of ethical compliance and integrity.

Based on my extensive discussion with Mr. Bernhardt and the assurances he gave me, I voted for him in the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources last week, and I will support his nomination when we vote on the floor to confirm him.

But I said before the vote in the Energy and Natural Resources Committee—and I will say it again—that I expect him and the Department to hold itself to the highest ethical standards because I assured him I will. Mr. Bernhardt must work to ensure the commitment to ethical and scientific integrity, and I intend to work with him and his staff persistently to ensure this is the case.

Our parks and public lands, our scenic beauty, and our fish and wildlife resources are important to everybody and especially to the people of West Virginia, which I represent, and to the people of all of our States and to the Nation's outdoor recreation economy. West Virginians count on the Secretary of the Interior as the guardian of our public lands, as I know you do, Mr. President, in Louisiana.

The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, which I am privileged to serve on as ranking member, has a lot of work to do. We have to address the park maintenance backlog. We

have to fully fund the Land and Water Conservation Fund, ensure that companies granted the privilege of developing public energy and mineral resources pay the royalties they owe the taxpayers and nothing less, and see that our public lands and resources are wisely managed and protected.

I intend to work with Mr. Bernhardt on these important issues. I have made it clear to him that I expect him to put his extensive experience and knowledge of these issues to work for all the American people and to execute his responsibilities in a manner that ensures that our public lands are not just being maintained but improved for the benefit of generations to come.

For that reason, I will vote to confirm him to this important position, and I ask your consideration for the same.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

ICBMS

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, recently I came to the Senate floor to speak about the airborne leg of the nuclear triad. Today I rise to discuss the value of another leg of the triad—our intercontinental ballistic missiles, or ICBMs.

Following the brief deployment of the Atlas and Titan ICBM weapon systems in the early 1960s, the United States deployed the first Minuteman ICBMs in support of the strategic deterrence mission. Over half a century later, today the United States deploys 400 Minuteman III ICBMs, each carrying a single warhead. While the Minuteman III system was deployed in the 1970s, much of its technology dates to the previous decade. The system was originally designed for a 10-year service life but has sustained an exceptionally high availability rate and is expected to remain in service through the 2030s, thanks to a series of life-extension programs. But we cannot extend the current system beyond 2030, and that is why we are now developing its replacement—the ground based strategic deterrent. Doing so will require resources in a budget-constrained environment and, perhaps for that reason, we are hearing renewed calls to abandon the triad and cut our ICBM force. However, this step would be foolish and dangerous to the United States and to our allied security for several reasons.

First, ICBMs are highly reliable and always ready. That is why they are regarded as the most responsive leg of the triad. Unlike bombers and submarines, which may require time to arm or maneuver, the ICBM force provides the President the ability to promptly respond if deterrence fails. This virtue is often mischaracterized as a source of risk.

The system's rapid response is described as a "hair trigger" by critics who often paint chilling pictures of 400 ICBMs automatically flying to their

targets and causing Armageddon, either by accident or as a result of cyber interference.

I want to be clear that there is no “hair trigger” about our ICBMs. We have many safeguards put in place to ensure the system operates only as intended. For example, our ICBMs are actually targeted on the open-ocean spaces as a means of ensuring that, even if all of our safeguards failed and a missile somehow managed to launch by accident, it would land in the ocean and not accidentally start a nuclear war. The critics conveniently fail to mention this.

Former STRATCOM commander General Robert Kehler recently testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee, and he said: “It isn’t the same thing at all as thinking about a Wild West hair trigger It’s not the way it works.”

The high readiness of the ICBM force also provides an important hedge against uncertainty. Since we no longer maintain bombers on nuclear alert, the ICBMs and the submarines reinforce each other so that a technical failure in one leg of the triad does not render our day-to-day deterrent inoperative.

Those who advocate for doing away with the ICBM force must account for the fact that, under their proposals, in such moments there would not have been an additional leg of the triad to ensure our Nation isn’t left without a nuclear deterrent. As our nuclear forces continue to age, reliability challenges will only grow.

Critics often describe the ICBM force as being vulnerable, even going so far as to call our missiles sitting ducks. It is true that silos are not hidden, they aren’t mobile, and they can be targeted. But, again, this is a misunderstanding of what actually is the strength of the ICBM force.

In his testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee, General Hyten stated that the ICBM force “creates the most significant targeting problem for an adversary, because there are 400 separate targets across the United States. All would have to be independently targeted by an adversary. That targeting problem is hugely problematic and creates a significant advantage for us.”

Simply put, destroying 400 hardened and geographically dispersed silos is an extremely difficult proposition. Only Russia possesses the capability to destroy our ICBM force. No other nation on Earth can do so, and it would greatly diminish Russia’s arsenal in the process. That is not a vulnerability. As General Hyten clearly states, it is a significant advantage for our Nation.

For these reasons and many others, Republican and Democratic administrations alike have maintained ICBMs as part of our nuclear forces for decades. The role of ICBMs has been reconsidered and reviewed many times, and their value has been repeatedly reaffirmed in a bipartisan manner. For

example, last November the report by the bipartisan National Defense Strategy Commission stated that the triad presents insurmountable targeting challenges for adversaries, imposes disproportionate costs on adversary defenses, and hedges against unforeseen geopolitical or technological changes.

Mr. President, I will close by saying that our ICBM forces make key contributions to our overall nuclear forces and, as Members on both sides of the aisle agree, they are an essential ingredient to the bedrock of our national security—our nuclear deterrent.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

VENEZUELA

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Good afternoon. The crisis in Venezuela is a crisis in America. Senator RUBIO, Congressman DIAZ-BALART, and I have been talking about this for years and worked with the White House on a comprehensive strategy. More than 200,000 Venezuelans live in Florida, and their concerns are our concerns.

Make no mistake—this is a crisis. It is a humanitarian crisis that threatens the lives of the people of Venezuela and has created a flood of refugees numbering in the millions. It is also a crisis that threatens the safety and security of our allies in Latin America and in the United States of America.

The dictatorship of Nicolas Maduro and the creeping influence and military presence of our global adversaries represent a clear and present danger to the entire Western Hemisphere. There are some who will say that this is not our fight, that the millions of Venezuelans suffering 2,000 miles away are not our concern. Some have criticized the mere mention of the crisis in Venezuela by those like myself as American imperialism or a U.S.-backed coup. I reject that. This is our fight. Freedom and democracy in Latin America is our fight. I remind these critics that the only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good people to do nothing. We cannot let evil triumph in Venezuela. It would be a failure of leadership with disastrous consequences.

There is only one option left to get aid to the people of Venezuela. It is something that no one is willing to talk about. It is becoming clear that we will have to consider the use of American military assets to deliver aid. Maduro and his thugs have left us no choice.

I applaud President Trump and his administration for taking bold action by recognizing Juan Guaido as the legitimate President of Venezuela and organizing the international community to do the same. The sanctions implemented by this administration against the Maduro regime and its puppet masters in Havana reflect their commitment to freedom and democracy in Latin America. Yet Maduro remains in power, the people of Ven-

ezuela continue to suffer, and the influence of Cuba, Russia, China, and international terrorist organizations grows.

We must do more, but in order to understand where we go from here, we need to look at history. Hugo Chavez might have been elected democratically, but he never intended to govern democratically. He built a socialist dictatorship by hollowing out all the democratic institutions: the constitution, the electoral system, and the courts. He made civil society and the business sector bend to his will or face elimination. He nationalized entire sectors of the economy and used them to pay off his cronies. He took over the oil sector and made the national energy company his piggy bank. He made common cause with our enemies—most notably, the Castro regime. Cuba received and continues to receive free oil from Venezuela and in return provides political and internal security operatives. In other words, Cuba provided and is still providing military thugs to help stop freedom.

Chavez allowed his regime to engage in illicit trafficking of drugs and people. He cooperated with Middle Eastern terrorist organizations like Hezbollah and the terrorist state of Iran. This cooperation has only intensified under Chavez’s successor, Maduro.

The path of socialism chosen by the Chavistas inevitably led to a failed state that relies on bad actors for survival. The result is one of the worst humanitarian crises in our hemisphere’s history.

We cannot ignore the impact the socialist policies of Chavez and Maduro has had on the people of Venezuela. Nine out of ten households say they don’t have enough money to buy food. That is socialism. Eighty percent of children under 5 are in some state of malnutrition. That is socialism. Inflation is over 10 million percent this year, and their currency is worthless. What does that mean to the average person? A bundle of carrots costs 3 million bolivars. A dozen eggs costs \$150 USD. That is socialism. Venezuela has the highest murder rate in the world. That is socialism.

More than 3.5 million refugees—about 12 percent of the population—have fled to nearby countries because they can’t get food, water, medicine, or safety from their government. Two million more Venezuelans are expected to flee before the year is out, with Colombia taking the brunt of this refugee crisis. Colombian resources are strained, as they do all they can to help the refugees fleeing persecution, starvation, and sickness, while the Maduro regime blocks aid caravans, sets them on fire, and continues to cooperate with the narco trafficking rebels that plague Colombia.

I want to thank my good friend President Duque for all he is doing. Other nations in the region, such as Brazil and Peru, have also chipped in, accepting hundreds of thousands of refugees.

For weeks, millions of Venezuelans have been left without running water and amid a series of massive blackouts. Journalists report scenes that are now a part of the daily life for Venezuelans: dozens sleeping in line for their turn at a well in one of the city's biggest slums; three men tossing an old paint bucket tied with ropes down a well hoping to hit water; people parked by the highway, waiting their turn to place bottles under small streams that run down the Avila Mountain.

Many Venezuelans call these conditions a genocide because the violence and starvation are being imposed on the civilian population as a conscious policy of Maduro and his Cuban puppet masters. Dictators like Maduro recognize weakness as an opportunity. The hungrier and sicker his people are, the easier they are to repress. This is the kind of evil we are facing in our hemisphere. But one thing is clear: Maduro underestimates his people. They may be oppressed, but they are not weak. They may be hungry, but their hunger is for freedom, and they are making their voices heard. We need to listen.

Nicholas Maduro is an illegitimate President. His election was a sham, just like the elections in Cuba and Russia—a complete sham and a joke. Dozens of countries across Latin America and Europe have recognized Juan Guaido's right to the interim Presidency. As President of the National Assembly—the only democratic body left in Venezuela—Juan Guaido has the right and the duty to preside over new elections and the return of democracy.

The people still in power in Venezuela are corrupt bureaucrats and military officers engaged in embezzlement, narcotrafficking, and human rights abuses. Since being tested by uprisings in 2014 and 2017, the regime has reinforced a repressive apparatus that uses armed mobile civilian gangs known as colectivos, specialized police units, and anti-riot forces of the National Guard to terrorize and control the civilian population through arbitrary arrests, beatings, detentions, and killings.

The Maduro regime has gone so far as to arrest the Chief of Staff for Interim President Guaido, Roberto Marrero. I met his wife Romy on Monday in Miami. She fled the country 3 weeks ago with their 7-year-old son, right before Maduro's thugs destroyed their home. The majority of the armed forces want change in their country, but they live under the repressive forces of control, threats, intimidation, and violence.

Russian mercenaries protect Maduro because he can't trust his own troops, and the Russian Government has provided military advisers and specialists to maintain the Maduro regime's defenses, including surface-to-air missile systems. Russia has also sent nuclear-capable bombers to Venezuela, in violation of the Venezuelan Constitution, to intimidate the United States and other countries in the region.

In short, Russia is expanding its military presence in Venezuela to prop up a regime hostile to the United States and create a foothold in the Western Hemisphere. Not since the Cuban Missile Crisis has Russia taken such an aggressive step to expand their influence in the region.

Meanwhile, China evades sanctions we have placed on the regime by investing in the country and extending generous loans to prop up the dictatorship in Caracas.

The United States faces a serious national security threat and a humanitarian crisis at our doorstep. This is becoming as dangerous for us as the Syrian civil war has been for Europe, Israel, and Jordan. Left unchecked, it will destabilize our regional allies and provide a base of operations for our enemies.

Today, I am urging the administration, Congress, and the American people to see the crisis for what it is—a rising tide of social and political collapse encouraged and funded by our enemies. The socialist dictatorship of Nicholas Maduro and his Cuban, Russian, Chinese, and narcotrafficking allies do not care how many millions of Venezuelans suffer and die. He is determined to remain in power, sucking the life out of a once-vibrant nation and creating an outpost for adversaries and a safe harbor for terrorists intent on harming Americans.

We cannot let this stand. We will be judged for our response to this crisis—not just the humanitarian crisis but the threat to our hemisphere. The credibility and security of the United States is on the line. The question is not whether we can tolerate this crisis that is worsening daily—we surely cannot. The question is, When will we act to end it? Hostile regimes like Russia, China, and Cuba are digging in. They are training killers, distributing weapons, and placing military assets in Venezuela. Their message is clear: They don't intend to give up without a fight.

History has proven that permitting the former Soviet Union to establish a presence in Cuba perpetrated a six-decade, totalitarian dictatorship that has exported instability to the region and worked against U.S. national security interests. Our safety, national security, and the peace of our hemisphere demand that we take action. We cannot allow this murderous regime to continue spreading misery within its borders and into neighboring countries.

There is a democratic government-in-waiting in the form of National Assembly and Interim President Juan Guaido. U.S. policy relies on rallying his internal support and forcing those around Maduro to see their future as brighter if they defect and support the movement toward freedom and democracy. There are steps we can take to accelerate this process.

First, we must follow through on American policy and indict regime leaders for human rights violations and

for narcotrafficking and money laundering crimes.

The region's strongest supporters do not care if the people suffer, but they do care if their stolen fortunes and their freedom are at risk. We must make clear to them that their future is in jeopardy if they continue to support Maduro and interference from Cuba, Russia, and China. There will be nowhere to run, nowhere to hide. The United States will give no quarter to those who support the brutal Maduro dictatorship instead of freedom and democracy for the people of Venezuela.

Second, we must break the hold the Cuban Government has on Venezuela.

It is imperative that the United States fully implement the sanctions contained in the LIBERTAD Act to allow U.S. nationals to sue over property confiscated by the Cuban Government and to deny entry to those who traffic in stolen property. Cuba cannot continue to freely incite violence in Venezuela while profiting from the use of stolen property and human trafficking. Chavez and Maduro kept the Cuban regime afloat for decades, and now Cuban operators are keeping the Maduro regime in power. It is time we recognize that these problems are one and the same.

Third, we must encourage our allies in the region to join us in this effort.

President Trump has repeatedly called on regional counterparts to exert more leadership, and he has a right to do so. The United States has implemented strong sanctions on Venezuelan leaders, on oil, and on trade. Our allies must join us in this effort.

The Lima Group, made up of our friends in the region, has given broad support to the strategy of isolating the Maduro regime in favor of Interim President Guaido, urging additional sanctions. That is welcome, but they should not rule out the possibility that they need to pursue more aggressive means to secure this threat. Their security and economic well-being are also at risk. They should remember that the Maduro regime and its supporters want Venezuela's neighbors to live in fear. Even before this crisis began in earnest, Colombia and Guyana faced regular interventions and threats from the Venezuelan regime. Maduro and his supporters do not want peaceful relations with other countries except on their own terms. I am quite sure that Cuba, China, and Russia do not have the best interests of the region in mind.

I was glad to see the Organization of American States accept the appointment of the designated permanent representative of the National Assembly, Gustavo Tarre Briceno. Consistent with the Inter-American Democratic Charter, the Organization of American States must expel Maduro's representative. The Maduro regime is not a legitimate government and has no right to send a representative to the very body in the Western Hemisphere charged with protecting and promoting democracy in the region.

Fourth, we must not appear weak in the face of Chinese, Russian, and Cuban determination to prop up Maduro.

Our adversaries question our will and determination. Put simply, they don't think we are serious. We should disabuse them of that notion. All options, including the use of American military assets, must remain on the table. If sanctions can cripple the Maduro regime, we must continue on that path, but so far, sanctions alone are not stopping the Maduro regime, and the United States needs to start considering the use of military assets to bring aid to the millions of starving and sick Venezuelans. I call on all of our allies and those supporting Guaido to help us in this effort.

Let me repeat that. The United States must consider the use of military assets to bring aid to the people of Venezuela, but that doesn't end the conversation. If embargoes and blockades can help, we should consider them. If military force on the part of the United States and our allies in the region is necessary to rid us of the scourge of Maduro and his thugs, then we cannot rule it out. If the Venezuelan people, through their elected National Assembly and their own laws and Constitution, request assistance to restore constitutional government and democracy, we should be ready to answer that call. The Maduro regime has not been broken yet and can count on billions of dollars looted from the Venezuelan people and generated from 20 years of narco-trafficking.

The Cubans, Russians, and Chinese see Venezuela as an economic opportunity, but, more importantly, they see a chance to intimidate the United States—to be a thorn in our side. This is a “great power” confrontation and one that our national defense strategy might not explicitly contemplate. Yet it is a confrontation we must be willing to meet with decisive action.

The Venezuelan people want change, and even now they think of survival as much as they think of a democratic future. They are looking to the future. They are looking to the United States and democratic countries to help them. We must answer that call.

I yield the floor.

NOMINATION OF DAVID BERNHARDT

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise today in opposition to the nomination of David Bernhardt to be Secretary of the Interior.

I opposed his nomination as Deputy Secretary of the Interior because of his numerous conflicts of interest as a former lobbyist.

Bernhardt's tenure, both as Deputy Secretary and now the Acting Secretary at Interior, has since confirmed my initial concerns and given rise to new ones.

As a former partner at a powerful DC lobbying and law firm, Bernhardt represented numerous oil, gas, mining, and water companies with ongoing business before the Department that he now oversees.

The Washington Post recently reported that he has at least 22 known conflicts of interest, the most of any of President Trump's nominees.

This is particularly concerning given that Mr. Bernhardt's recusals mandated by President Trump will expire in August, and he has refused to commit to continuing recusing himself beyond then on any issues that could benefit former clients.

In fact, during his recent confirmation hearing, Bernhardt stated that recusal isn't “really is the best strategy”—an unacceptable stance.

By refusing to recuse himself, Bernhardt has shown a potential willingness to put his former clients' needs before the public good.

One troubling example is his relationship with Cadiz, a company that wants to profit by draining a critical aquifer in the Mojave Desert.

Before coming to the Department of the Interior, Mr. Bernhardt was a partner at and led the natural resources division of Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck, Cadiz's lobbying firm that retains a financial stake in the project.

This project would destroy the treasured California desert that I have fought my entire Senate career to protect.

In order to sell the water, Cadiz needs to build a more than 40-mile pipeline through the desert to connect to an aqueduct.

Several months after Bernhardt was nominated as Deputy Secretary, the Department of Interior temporarily suspended its own solicitor's opinion requiring Cadiz to get Federal permits to build its pipeline along a railroad right-of-way.

That solicitor's opinion was ultimately reversed 2 months after he was confirmed, completely removing the Federal permitting authority for this project.

The timing of this decision is extremely troubling, particularly in light of the Interior Department's own independent science that has repeatedly questioned the sustainability of this project.

The U.S. Geological Survey, which is part of the Interior Department, stated in 2002 and confirmed in 2017 that the natural recharge rate of the aquifer is only 2,000 to 10,000 acre-feet per year. Cadiz proposes to withdraw water at more than 50,000 acre-feet, or 16 billion gallons, per year for 50 years.

Taking that much water would rob the desert of its most precious natural resource and harm the surrounding flora and fauna.

Now the Federal Government, despite its own science saying Cadiz would take too much water and legal opinions requiring Federal review, has removed itself from the permitting process.

Even the mere appearance of favoritism or special favors for Cadiz is extremely inappropriate and a concern with this nomination.

I am also concerned that throughout his tenure at Interior, Bernhardt has

shown a willingness to ignore the public's interest for political purposes.

During President Trump's government shutdown—the longest in U.S. history—Acting Secretary Bernhardt kept most of the national parks open to avoid public backlash for the shutdown.

Left open but severely understaffed, major damage occurred to parks across the country. Few places felt the impact of his poor decision more than Joshua Tree National Park.

Iconic Joshua trees were cut down, cultural artifacts stolen or destroyed, and pristine desert habitat marred by vehicle traffic.

I have twice requested from Mr. Bernhardt a full accounting of the damage and costs of his decision and have not received a response.

I am also deeply concerned by steps Interior has recently taken to expand offshore oil drilling, despite bipartisan opposition from coastal States.

Californians don't want new offshore drilling along our coast. We still remember the horror of the 1969 Santa Barbara spill, when an offshore oil rig leaked more than 100,000 barrels, the third largest oil spill behind the *Exxon-Valdez* and Deepwater Horizon disasters.

There has been no new drilling in State waters since that spill and no new drilling in Federal waters off the coast of California since 1984.

Now, the Department of the Interior is openly discussing the option of restarting such drilling.

Bernhardt's ties to the fossil fuel industry give me zero confidence that the Interior Department will reach the right conclusion if he is confirmed.

For the reasons I have stated, I cannot vote to confirm Mr. Bernhardt.

Should he be confirmed, I again ask that he fully recuse himself from all matters related to former clients during his tenure as a lobbyist.

I urge my colleagues to carefully consider this nomination before voting.

Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 6 minutes prior to the scheduled vote.

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

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I rise today to oppose the President's nominee for Secretary of the Interior, David Bernhardt. Once again, instead of draining the swamp, President Trump is flooding the swamp with a whole new breed of corporate-sponsored creatures. Already, we have a former coal lobbyist running the Environmental Protection Agency. We have chemical lobbyists running the EPA's chemical safety programs. And unless we put the brakes on Mr. Bernhardt's nomination, soon we will have a fossil fuel lobbyist running the Department of Interior.

For a State like New Jersey, which depends on a healthy, vibrant coastal

economy, Mr. Bernhardt's extensive ties to the fossil fuel industry are troubling, to say the least.

The Secretary of the Interior is charged with the stewardship of public lands and waters and safeguarding our natural resources for generations to come. Yet the Washington Post has reported that Mr. Bernhardt has so many conflicts of interest that he must carry a card around just to keep track of them. Think about that. Mr. Bernhardt has such deep ties to fossil fuel companies with business pending before the Interior Department that he cannot keep track of them.

How Mr. Bernhardt would approach his position if confirmed as Secretary of Interior is no mystery. During his time as Acting Secretary, he has gained a reputation as a general in the Trump administration's war on science. Reports suggest that he has suppressed scientific evidence in order to benefit corporate interests at the expense of environmental protection.

Rather than be responsive to Congress about our concerns, Mr. Bernhardt has displayed a stunning lack of transparency. Like many Trump nominees, he has failed to respond to basic inquiries from Congress. For example, on March 20, I sent a letter—along with Senator FEINSTEIN, Senator MERKLEY, and 15 of our colleagues—requesting that the Acting Secretary respond to a series of questions about his views on offshore drilling. With his hearing in the Energy and Natural Resources Committee quickly approaching, we asked Mr. Bernhardt to respond prior to coming before Congress. This way, committee members could have at least a baseline understanding of his views while crafting their questions. We received no response.

Mr. Bernhardt then came and testified before the committee. He could have used the opportunity to enlighten us about his views on offshore drilling. He chose not to. Now, 3 weeks later, we still lack answers, even as the majority seeks to confirm him as Secretary of the Interior.

When an individual seeking confirmation by the Senate refuses to answer basic questions posed by 18 Senators, that should be a red flag for all of us. The questions that were asked weren't technical. They weren't "gotcha" questions. They were straightforward questions about one of the most fundamental jobs the Secretary of the Interior has—the stewardship of our Nation's coastal waters.

We asked Acting Secretary Bernhardt: Do you support opening up any or all of the Atlantic Ocean to offshore oil and gas exploration, development, or production? No response.

We posed the same question about the Pacific, the Arctic, and the eastern Gulf of Mexico. Again, no response.

We asked the Acting Secretary if he would commit to meeting with the Governors of States in which he proposes to drill for oil. No response.

We asked if he would commit to meaningful public hearings in States

impacted by offshore oil drilling. No response.

We asked how he could reconcile the opposition to offshore drilling of every Atlantic and Pacific Governor—Democrat and Republican—with President Trump's goal of opening all of those waters to drilling. Again, we got no response.

We asked whether the Acting Secretary could confirm to us that the Trump administration's revisions to the well control rule—the one major safety reform put in place after the Deepwater Horizon disaster—wouldn't denigrate safety. No response.

I will not risk it. I will not risk New Jersey's \$44 billion tourism industry. I will not risk over \$800 billion in coastal property values. I will not risk a recreation and commercial fishing industry that supports 50,000 jobs in my State. I will not risk the economies of shore towns up and down the coast of New Jersey and the entire Atlantic. I will not risk the lives and livelihoods that depend on clean coastal waters because that is what we are risking if we vote for Mr. Bernhardt.

I cannot fathom going home to my constituents and telling them that I gave the nominee for Secretary of the Interior a free pass on basic questions about the job he is applying for.

With the radio silence from this nominee on offshore drilling, I have no reason to believe Mr. Bernhardt will deviate from the path chartered by this administration. Every Member of this Chamber knows what that path looks like.

We have seen the weakening of protections put in place after the BP oil-spill, endangering the safety of workers and the livelihood of our vibrant coastlines. We will see the start of seismic blasting in search of oil up and down our coasts without any concern for the devastating impact on wildlife and our fisheries. We will see the finalization of President Trump's offshore drilling plan—one that would open the entire Atlantic Ocean, the entire Pacific Ocean, the entire Gulf of Mexico, and the entire Arctic Ocean to offshore drilling. If this plan comes to fruition, sooner or later we will see another crisis of the magnitude of the Deepwater Horizon.

My friends, my colleagues, this is not a matter of if; it is a matter of when. When that day comes, every Member of this Chamber who supported David Bernhardt is going to have to answer to their constituents, to the shore businesses who see their livelihoods washed away in a slick of oil, to the fishermen who are suddenly out of a job through no fault of their own, to coastal towns that see their communities and the tourism and recreation industries their economies depend on wiped out.

I refuse to take that risk. A vote for David Bernhardt is a vote for offshore drilling. I ask my colleagues to oppose his nomination.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, all postcloture time has expired.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Bernhardt nomination?

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) and the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS) are necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 56, nays 41, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 77 Ex.]

YEAS—56

Alexander	Gardner	Paul
Barrasso	Graham	Portman
Blackburn	Grassley	Risch
Blunt	Hawley	Roberts
Boozman	Heinrich	Romney
Braun	Hoeven	Rounds
Burr	Hyde-Smith	Rubio
Capito	Inhofe	Sasse
Cassidy	Isakson	Scott (FL)
Collins	Johnson	Scott (SC)
Cornyn	Kennedy	Shelby
Cotton	King	Sinema
Cramer	Lankford	Sullivan
Crapo	Lee	Thune
Cruz	Manchin	Tillis
Daines	McConnell	Toomey
Enzi	McSally	Wicker
Ernst	Moran	Young
Fischer	Murkowski	

NAYS—41

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

NOT VOTING—3

Booker	Harris	Perdue
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The nomination was confirmed.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 123.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

The clerk will report the nomination. The bill clerk read the nomination of William Cooper, of Maryland, to be General Counsel of the Department of Energy.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

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

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of William Cooper, of Maryland, to be General Counsel of the Department of Energy.

Mitch McConnell, David Perdue, Shelley Moore Capito, John Barrasso, John Boozman, Mike Crapo, Richard C. Shelby, Mike Rounds, John Cornyn, Roger F. Wicker, Pat Roberts, John Thune, John Hoeven, Roy Blunt, Marco Rubio, Tim Scott, Kevin Cramer.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 188.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

The clerk will report the nomination. The bill clerk read the nomination of R. Clarke Cooper, of Florida, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (Political-Military Affairs).

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

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

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of R. Clarke Cooper, of Florida, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (Political-Military Affairs).

Mitch McConnell, Thom Tillis, Mike Crapo, John Hoeven, Johnny Isakson, John Thune, Shelley Moore Capito, John Boozman, Mike Rounds, Pat Roberts, James E. Risch, Richard Burr, John Barrasso, Roy Blunt, David Perdue, John Cornyn, Tom Cotton.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 214.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Gordon Hartogensis, of Connecticut, to be Director of the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation for a term of five years.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

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

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Gordon Hartogensis, of Connecticut, to be Director of the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation for a term of five years.

Mitch McConnell, Thom Tillis, Mike Crapo, John Hoeven, Johnny Isakson, John Thune, Shelley Moore Capito, John Boozman, Mike Rounds, Pat Roberts, James E. Risch, Richard Burr, John Barrasso, Roy Blunt, David Perdue, John Cornyn, Tom Cotton.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 26.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of J. Campbell Barker, of Texas, to be

United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Texas.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

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

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of J. Campbell Barker, of Texas, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Texas.

Mitch McConnell, Johnny Isakson, Roger F. Wicker, John Boozman, John Cornyn, Mike Crapo, Shelley Moore Capito, Pat Roberts, Roy Blunt, Deb Fischer, David Perdue, Todd Young, John Thune, Mike Rounds, Steve Daines, John Hoeven, Thom Tillis.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 29.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Andrew Lynn Brasher, of Alabama, to be United States District Judge for the Middle District of Alabama.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

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

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Andrew Lynn Brasher, of Alabama, to be United States District Judge for the Middle District of Alabama.

Mitch McConnell, Johnny Isakson, Roger F. Wicker, John Boozman, John Cornyn, Mike Crapo, Shelley Moore Capito, Pat Roberts, Roy Blunt, Deb Fischer, David Perdue, Todd Young, John Thune, Mike Rounds, Steve Daines, John Hoeven, Thom Tillis.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 33.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Rodolfo Armando Ruiz II, of Florida, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of Florida.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

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

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Rodolfo Armando Ruiz II, of Florida, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of Florida.

Mitch McConnell, Deb Fischer, Mike Rounds, James E. Risch, John Thune, Rick Scott, James M. Inhofe, John Cornyn, John Hoeven, Pat Roberts, Tim Scott, Steve Daines, Richard Burr, John Boozman, Roy Blunt, Shelley Moore Capito, John Barrasso.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 34.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Raul M. Arias-Marxuach, of Puerto Rico, to be United States District Judge for the District of Puerto Rico.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

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

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby

move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Raul M. Arias-Marxuach, of Puerto Rico, to be United States District Judge for the District of Puerto Rico.

Mitch McConnell, Deb Fischer, Mike Rounds, James E. Risch, John Thune, Rick Scott, James M. Inhofe, John Cornyn, John Hoeven, Pat Roberts, Tim Scott, Steve Daines, Richard Burr, John Boozman, Roy Blunt, Shelley Moore Capito, John Barrasso.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 36.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Joshua Wolson, of Pennsylvania, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

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

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

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

Mitch McConnell, David Perdue, Shelley Moore Capito, John Barrasso, John Boozman, Mike Crapo, Richard C. Shelby, Mike Rounds, John Cornyn, Roger F. Wicker, Pat Roberts, John Thune, John Hoeven, Roy Blunt, Marco Rubio, Tim Scott, Kevin Cramer.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum calls for the cloture motions be waived.

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

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

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

CONFIRMATION OF DAVID BERNHARDT

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, we just voted in a very important vote on the Senate floor—a bipartisan vote—to

confirm Mr. David Bernhardt as the next Secretary of the Interior for the United States of America. It was a strong vote—56 to 41.

I want to begin my remarks this afternoon by rising to express my gratitude and appreciation to Mr. Bernhardt for stepping up to the plate to continue to serve his country and to continue to serve the Department of the Interior now in the role of Secretary, the individual who is going to be running the Department of the Interior for the United States.

I thank my colleagues. It was a bipartisan vote in the Senate, which I think is important for voting for now-Secretary Bernhardt. Actually, I would like to be the first Senator to call him Secretary Bernhardt. If you and your family are watching, Mr. Secretary, thank you.

I also want to mention that I have been listening to some of the speeches made by my colleagues on the other side of the aisle. To be perfectly blunt, I find what we just witnessed a bit disheartening. I would like to say at the outset that we can and should disagree on policy disputes. Certainly issues like land issues are really important to me in my State, that is for sure. We can disagree about the direction of how we are going to move some of those policies forward. What is disheartening, though, is when you have someone like Mr. Bernhardt, who is willing to serve his country again—and I am going to talk about that—essentially getting his reputation dragged through the mud on the Senate floor. It is not a good thing. It doesn't encourage people to want to serve.

So, Mr. Secretary, thank you. I know this wasn't an easy confirmation process.

When you look at his background, this is actually one of the most qualified individuals to serve as the Secretary whom we have had in many years. He was the Solicitor General under President George W. Bush, confirmed by the Senate; he was the Deputy Secretary for the last 2 years, confirmed by this body; and now he is the Secretary. I would say those are very high qualifications. I just want to talk about him for a little bit.

Why do I support Mr. Bernhardt? The Secretary of the Department of the Interior is really important to America. It is critically important to my State, the great State of Alaska. We have over 200 million acres of land under the Department of the Interior's control in Alaska—200 million acres. That is over two times the size of California. In fact, one-quarter of all the lands that the Department of the Interior manages for the United States reside in Alaska. Let me repeat that. One-quarter of all the lands that the Secretary of the Interior manages in America are in my State.

So we take this role of Secretary of the Interior very, very seriously, which is why I wanted to come to the floor and again thank Secretary Bernhardt

and let him know that even though there were a lot of Senators down here really ripping into him, the vast majority of us—56 of us, at least—think he is going to do a great job.

Why do we think that, Mr. Secretary? Well, certainly with regard to Alaska, sometimes Secretaries of the Interior understand our State and that we are different and unique and that Federal laws passed by this body say so. Other Secretaries of the Interior don't. They don't understand that in Alaska you have to balance conservation with resource development and economic opportunity. Secretary Bernhardt does understand this, and this is refreshing. Secretary Zinke did. This was refreshing. It was a refreshing break from the previous administration, the Obama administration, where Secretaries of the Interior, like Sally Jewell, went out of their way to tilt Federal power in a way that disadvantaged the State of Alaska, despite Federal law saying you shouldn't do that.

Well, we just had a U.S. Supreme Court decision 2 weeks ago saying that that practice of the Department of the Interior and their different officials tilting the law against Alaskans had to stop. It was a huge case that I talked about on the floor last week, *Sturgeon v. Frost*, which says that in the laws of the Federal Government, particularly as they relate to Alaska—the Supreme Court stated it several times in a 9-to-0 opinion—Alaska is unique and Alaska is different. When it comes to the Department of the Interior, it is very different.

Well, Mr. Secretary Bernhardt knows that, and that is one of the reasons why I am so pleased to have voted for him and supported his confirmation, which we just saw on the Senate floor. It is not just me who supports him. Let me provide some quotes from letters and support groups, because, again, after listening to some of my colleagues the last couple of days, you would have thought that everybody was against him. Actually, most groups who care about conservation were for him. Let me give one really important group—the Alaska Federation of Natives, an extremely important group in my State. The Secretary of the Interior has trust responsibilities to lower 48 Indians and Alaska Natives. This group had this to say about Mr. Bernhardt:

He listens well. He is articulate in his responses. He draws reasonable conclusions. Moreover, he has established a trusting relationship with the Alaska Native community around the issues of resource development and subsistence hunting and fishing.

So they have been complimentary and supportive.

The American Farm Bureau says:

This President's nomination of David Bernhardt as Secretary of the Interior is great news for American agriculture. He understands the needs of America's farmers and ranchers and is an excellent choice for Interior Secretary.

The Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies—who are they? Those are the

men and women in each State who manage fish and game like the Department of the Interior. Here is what they had to say:

The Association is appreciative of Mr. Bernhardt's continued support for the great work of state fish and wildlife agencies in conserving our nation's natural resources.

The Congressional Sportsmen Foundation says:

Mr. Bernhardt has demonstrated he is a true advocate for sportsmen and women across the country by working with the community throughout his career in natural resources management, and implementing Secretarial Orders that promote sportsmen's access to public lands.

That is a very big issue in my State.

Even a group like Ducks Unlimited says: "His integrity in following the law is beyond reproach." Let me say that one again. "His integrity in following the law is beyond reproach." David Bernhardt is a champion of conservation and the right person for the job.

When I was the commissioner of natural resources in the great State of Alaska—which actually is a job similar to the Secretary of the Interior, where we manage an enormous portfolio of land, water, oil, gas, minerals, and timber—I had the opportunity to actually hire Mr. Bernhardt when he was in the private sector as an attorney helping the State of Alaska with a big complicated lands issue. He did a great job. He was a hard worker. He was a man of integrity. So the list goes on and on of the supporters.

So, again, Mr. Secretary, we just want you to know that given your background as former Solicitor of the Department of the Interior and former Deputy Secretary of the Department of the Interior and as someone who has gotten rave reviews from groups all across the country, and now as the Secretary of the Interior, my view is that you are actually one of the most qualified individuals to hold this position. So congratulations. You certainly earned it. We appreciate your service to this great Nation of ours, your service to the Department of the Interior, and your service to my State, the great State of Alaska, and we certainly look forward to working with you as you continue your public service for our country, for Interior, and for Alaska. I just wanted to come to the floor to commend you on a strong bipartisan support, and we are going to look forward to working with you.

TRIBUTE TO CYNTHIA ERICKSON

Mr. President, it is Thursday afternoon, and it is one of the times that I enjoy the most here in the Senate because it is the time when I get to come down to the floor and do a little bragging about my State and, most importantly, do a little bragging about the people who make Alaska such a wonderful place and such a unique place.

Now, we have all heard the stories about the grandeur, size, and beauty of the great State of Alaska, and they are all true, as you know. To anyone

watching, we would love for you to come on up for a visit. You will love it. It will be the best trip of your life. Right now, for example, what is happening in Alaska is that it is a wonderful time of the year. We are gaining sunlight every day. The snow is melting. The birds are beginning their huge migration back to Alaska. Some flowers are even starting to bloom in parts of the State. It is a wonderful and incredible time.

Like any State, and we all come down here and like to talk about our States, it is the people who truly make my State so special. It is generous people who work tirelessly day in and day out to help one another. So each week, I come down to the Senate floor and talk about one of these individuals, and I call that person "Alaskan of the Week."

Today, that person is a wonderful leader and a good friend of mine, Cynthia Erickson. As I mentioned, we live in a great State—great State to raise a family, build a good exciting life of service and meaning. But Alaska, like all States, has its share of challenges, and one of the biggest and most pernicious challenges in Alaska is that we, unfortunately, have some of the highest rates of domestic violence and sexual assault in the country—as a matter of fact, in a lot of categories, the highest, including child abuse.

Now, when I was attorney general, we made confronting this issue a very big priority. We are continuing to push these initiatives in the Senate. Just yesterday, Senator GILLIBRAND and I introduced a bill that would seek to change the culture around sexual assault and domestic violence through a national ad campaign. We called that bill the Choose Respect Act, and we introduced it yesterday. This is a bill that will be part of a whole series of bills focused on trying to bring respect to our country with regard to these issues. Stay tuned on that.

Here is a fact. We can do all of those kinds of important pieces of legislation here in the Senate on these kinds of critical issues, but as I think we all know that it is really the work done on the ground by members of the community and the grassroots that ultimately has the biggest and most lasting impact on these critical issues—the biggest and most lasting impact on changing the culture that we need to change, not just in Alaska but in the country, on these issues of abuse and domestic violence.

I am happy to say that there are hundreds, if not thousands, of people across my State—heroes all, no doubt—who have banded together using their passion, creativity, and energy to be there for victims and survivors and to help them break out of cycles of violence that often can be generational cycles.

Let's talk about one of those heroes, a very special woman, Cynthia Erickson, and today's Alaskan of the Week, who has spent countless hours

helping to stop the generational cycle by helping Alaskan children, one child at a time, who are victims of abuse themselves and who are living in households where violence is prevalent.

Confronting the abuse of children can be a very difficult issue. It is so heart-breaking and so tragic that we often don't want to talk about it and you want to sweep it under the rug. But Cynthia, with a group of children she has gathered, is working to break that culture of silence one kid at a time. I can't think of anything more important than that.

Before I talk about what she is doing and what she has been doing, let's talk a little bit about her background. Her family is from Ruby, in Western Alaska, on the mighty Yukon River. She was raised in Tanana, a village of about 300 people near the confluence of the Yukon and Tanana Rivers, where she has been living for the past 33 years.

Many years ago I had the opportunity to visit with Cynthia and her husband in Tanana. She hosted me and some other State of Alaska officials. I remember being so welcomed by her and her family but also coming away thinking: This is a woman who is a leader and a woman of spirit and a woman of energy and a woman of passion.

We see that a lot in Alaska with Cynthia. She received a degree in elementary education from the University of Fairbanks. Her family owns a store that she worked at, but she never lost her love for children. Her house was a place where children throughout the town in Tanana went. She had things for them to do, but it was also one of those homes—and we all know the homes we are talking about in different communities throughout Alaska and the country—that kids felt safe in. That was her home.

About 5 or 6 years ago, when there was a series of suicides in her village and in nearby villages, she knew she had to do something. She called the local politician. He talked her into coming to Juneau, our State capital, to work for him. She did that for a few months, and she gathered as much information as she could about programs available to help children in crisis. But she wasn't satisfied. She concluded that there wasn't nearly enough being done.

When she got back home, she took matters into her own hands. Amassing a group of children, she started a 4-H club, which eventually morphed into a nonprofit called "Setsoo 'Yeh." That is Athabaskan for "My Grandmother's House." In Cynthia's house, kids gather to crochet, to sew, to cook, and to be. They glide on the snow outside in the winter, and they swim together in the summer. She told a reporter recently, when she was being honored: "Between all the swimming and the sewing and the beading—we all sewed our own kuspiks—in between all that, we talk about our problems."

Why? Why did she call it "My Grandmother's House"? Because every child that she spoke to who was having problems—and she spoke to a lot of them—had fond memories of a grandmother's home—a place where soup is served, bread is baked, mukluks are sewn, and a place of love and safety. Currently, Cynthia's "My Grandmother's House" is a virtual space for kids in far-flung villages, but she envisions real houses all across the State—houses where children can go and be safe.

First, she had to raise awareness of these issues that affect so many children in Alaska. In 2014 she and seven of these brave kids went to the Alaska Federation of Natives conference. That is the biggest gathering of indigenous people in North America every year. AFN comes together for the conference, usually in Anchorage or Fairbanks, and these young kids spoke on stage about what they had experienced. I remember this. It was so powerful. The stories they told of abuse that they or their friends had experienced were heartbreaking and very difficult to listen to. Importantly, they implored the elders in the audience to stop turning a blind eye to the abuse. That took so much courage from these children and their courageous leader, Cynthia.

When the presentation was over at AFN, it received a standing ovation. People cried, they thanked Cynthia, and they thanked these courageous young kids for at long last having the courage to speak out—remarkable.

Last summer, Cynthia and 11 children and a doctor—a mental health therapist—traveled on a plane, a bus, a boat—we have a very big State—to Fairbanks and to the villages of Minto, Tanana, Ruby, and Galena. It was a healing journey, they called it. At the villages, the kids formed a talking circle to talk about their experiences. Again, this is courage. It is not easy for young children to do this. They ate together, danced, prayed together, and talked some more. Cynthia said about this journey:

It's empowering the children. It's giving them a voice. It's grassroots. There are so many programs out there to help kids, but there are not boots on the ground [on the frontlines]. They aren't grassroots. These kids have had enough. They are sick of waiting for help. I tell them all the time, 'We are the ones we've been waiting for' [for the help].

That is a beautiful statement and a powerful statement: We are the ones we have been waiting for. It is a grassroots movement to do what we all know is right—to work to stamp out this kind of horrible abuse.

We just learned last night that Cynthia has been appointed to the Alaska State Commission for Human Rights. It is no surprise to me. This is a woman of energy, passion, and inspiration who has done so much for these kids—and, by the way, a woman of courage. I am confident she will do a great job in that new position—a very important position in Alaska. She will bring her em-

pathy, her common sense, and her passion to protect Alaskans—particularly our children—across the State.

Cynthia, from the bottom of my heart, my friend, thanks for all the great work you do. Thanks for your courage. Thanks for your energy. Thanks for being an inspiration for all of us. Thank you for protecting our most precious asset, our most precious resource—our kids in Alaska. Thank you for creating My Grandmother's House. Everybody needs a grandmother's house. Thank you. And congratulations on being our Alaskan of the Week.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BRAUN). The Senator from Wyoming.

(The remarks of Mr. ENZI pertaining to the introduction of S. 1770 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CRAMER. 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 DREW H. WRIGLEY

Mr. CRAMER. Mr. President, in a little bit, we are going to have the opportunity to vote to confirm Drew Wrigley as the next U.S. attorney for the District of North Dakota. First of all, I want to thank Leader MCCONNELL and Leader SCHUMER for providing this opportunity to vote to confirm this outstanding candidate.

A little bit about Drew. First of all, he is a good personal friend. Drew is a sincere public servant. He has served our State as our Lieutenant Governor and previously as U.S. attorney for North Dakota under President George W. Bush. He has a servant's heart.

The thing I like so much about Drew is, besides being a professional prosecutor—and prior to even being a U.S. attorney, he was a longtime prosecutor in Philadelphia in the district attorney's office. He is good at his job. He is smart. He is compassionate. He cares as much as anything about the rule and the letter of the law and the victims of crimes. But the thing I like the most about Drew is that he is a courageous prosecutor. He doesn't just take the layups. He is willing to push to the edge for victims, for justice. He takes the tough cases, and he takes them on. Win or lose, he fights as hard as he can for the cause of justice and for the victims of crimes.

So it is a great honor for me today to advocate for Drew's confirmation, and I look forward to the opportunity in a little bit to vote for it.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. 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.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to the en bloc consideration of the following nominations: Executive Calendar Nos. 108, 160, 161, and 206.

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

The clerk will report the nominations en bloc.

The legislative clerk read the nominations of Drew H. Wrigley, of North Dakota, to be United States Attorney for the District of North Dakota for the term of four years; Wing Chau, of Rhode Island, to be United States Marshal for the District of Rhode Island for the term of four years; Ramona L. Dohman, of Minnesota, to be United States Marshal for the District of Minnesota for the term of four years; and Nick Edward Proffitt, of Virginia, to be United States Marshal for the Eastern District of Virginia for the term of four years.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the nominations en bloc.

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate vote on the nominations en bloc with no intervening action or debate; that, if confirmed, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table en bloc; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action; that no further motions be in order; and that any statements relating to the nominations be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Wrigley, Chau, Dohman, and Proffitt nominations en bloc?

The nominations were confirmed en bloc.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session for 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.

REMEMBERING MIRIAM ZAYED

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, in the early 20th century, hundreds of emigrants left the Palestinian town of

Beitunia to come to Chicago for a better life. Many could not read or write in English. Still, they set about succeeding in America and fitting into society, overcoming obstacles in a new land, becoming salesmen, shopkeepers, and factory workers. Miriam Zayed grew up in this community outside of Chicago.

Khalil Gibran once wrote, "I slept, and I dreamed that life is all joy. I woke, and I saw that life is all service. I served, and I saw that service was joy." The call to service isn't an easy path, and not nearly enough answer this call, but there are times when you meet someone who embodies the joy of service. This was Miriam Zayed.

Miriam passed away last fall in October after a lifetime of leadership. She spent her life fighting for Arabs and Muslims in the Chicagoland area and the rights of everyone.

Born and raised in Chicago, Miriam always had a love of politics and education. She convinced her parents to let her go to Chicago State University, becoming among the first in her family to attend college. But there was one stipulation. Her mother had to go with her every day. Miriam's thirst for knowledge would not be deterred by having her mom take her to and from school and wait outside her classes. She went on to receive her master's degree from National Louis University in curriculum education.

Miriam was one of the first Arab Americans in the Chicagoland area to run for public office when she ran for District 230 School Board in the 1990s.

As treasurer of the Arab-American Democrat Club, Miriam brought all local politicians and candidates to attend the annual candidate's forum brunch and encouraged the Arab-American Community to attend and be recognized as voting constituents. I have attended the AADC forums, and promise you, it was always a full house, and Miriam was always working. She never sat for the entire event.

Those that attended AADC brunches, events at the United Holy Land Fund, or the Beitunia Club events knew the tireless work of Miriam Zayed. She never sought the limelight, but all who knew her respected her.

When she wasn't building her community, Miriam was teaching in the Chicago Public School system in the Englewood neighborhood in Chicago. For decades, she taught at the Earle Elementary School. She took her classes to the Art Institute in Chicago, and for some students, it was the first time they ever went downtown. She educated her students about State government and introduced them to public officials. Miriam purchased school supplies and clothing for her students too. Miriam also somehow found time to run her own business as a certified public accountant, helping people in the community with their tax preparation and planning needs. She treated everyone as family.

The week before she passed away, a candidates' forum and brunch that she

helped organize took place to celebrate politics and the 2018 election. By then, she was too ill to attend as she had done so many times before. The brunch's keynote speaker, Illinois House Speaker Michael Madigan, reported that April would be designated Arab Heritage Month by the State of Illinois. There wasn't a better place to make that declaration.

In May of this year, Miriam will be awarded the 2019 Najeab Halaby Award for Public Service posthumously by the Arab American Institute Foundation at the Khalil Gibran Spirit of Humanity Awards. This award is given to those who promote greater understanding and appreciation of diversity and inclusion. Her decades of work for her students, the greater Chicago area, and the many communities of which she was a member make her more than worthy of the award.

Miriam's joy in service and love for her family and community will be missed. She is survived by her husband Refat Zayed; her children Hythem Zayed, Belal Zayed, Holly (Zayed) Murad, and Lena Hussien; and by her brothers and sisters, Nancy, Zayid, Adele, Heyam, Hanan, Cindy, and Dena.

TRIBUTE TO JOHN OSTENBURG

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, the late Pulitzer award-winning historian Studs Terkel in his seminal book, "The Good War," described how the Second World War helped give birth to a new middle class for America. The GI bill helped make new things possible. One of those things was the opening of the suburbs for everyone and not just the exclusive domain of the upper class. Thanks to the GI bill, new suburbs became places for returning soldiers and their families to earn a better way of life. This is how Park Forest entered the lexicon of Americana. It was one of America's first "GI Towns."

Park Forest has always been on the frontlines of progress. The town won the All-American City award twice, first in 1953 and then in 1977, for its work in racial integration and open housing initiatives. For the last 20 years, my friend, Mayor John Ostenburg, has maintained this tradition while leading Park Forest through a new time of transition and anxiety. Now, as John passes his leadership to a new generation, Park Forest has never been stronger.

John's vocations and career highlights were too numerous to count.

John was born and raised in Springfield, IL. Graduating high school in 1963, he joined a Catholic seminary called the Clerics of St. Viator, where he developed a lifelong sense of justice and humanity. His expertise and interest in the studies of the Trappist monk Thomas Merton earned the admiration of so many, and John regularly is published discussing Thomas Merton.

As a young seminarian, John joined 35,000 others in rallying with Dr. Martin Luther King at Soldier Field in Chicago and then marched with him as he went to Chicago City Hall to post his demands on its doors. He remains, to this day, a life member of the NAACP. Making a difference has always been part of who John Ostenburg is as a person. He witnessed firsthand the violence at the 1968 Democratic Convention while working as a campaign manager for Eugene McCarthy's Presidential campaign.

Upon leaving the seminary, John became a reporter at the Springfield State Journal covering the African-American community. He would go on to be an editor for the Joliet Herald-News, a sports editor for the Tinley Park Crescent Newspapers, and a reporter for the Hammond Times. He even was part-owner and managing editor for the Lockport Free Press.

What brought him to Park Forest was education. He took a job as communications director for Prairie State College. John has been a classroom teacher at the grade school, high school, community college, and university levels. His expertise teaching and administrative work made him an ideal leader in the Chicago Teachers Union. He edited the Union's publications, chaired the communications department, and was legislative director and chief of staff from 2007 to 2010. He also helped move the organization out of debt into fiscal stability.

John's love of Park Forest and its residents always came through to everyone. It was the late Marge Friedman Scherr, a legend in the community, that talked him into running for the Park Forest village board. She saw greatness in him. He lost in 1983, but he didn't give up. He won a 2-year term in 1985, and after the board approved a staggered 3-year term, won again in 1985.

In 1992, John ran and won a seat in the Illinois Legislature for the 80th District. He lost reelection 2 years later, but it was a blessing in disguise. John returned to the Park Forest village board in 1997, and in 1999, he ran and won his first term as mayor. He would go on to win reelection in 2003, 2007, 2011, and 2015, becoming the longest serving mayor in the history of Park Forest.

During his time as mayor, John helped Park Forest continue its tradition as a place of progress. His visionary approach made the town an All-American award finalist in 2000 and 2006. John continued Park Forest's tradition of diversity by encouraging unity and equality in Chicago Southland, earning a 2009 Award from Diversity, Inc. John's expertise in housing is respected nationally, and he has served on panels for the Brookings Institute on confronting poverty in America.

John implemented the Park Forest Sustainability Plan to help ensure residents maintain high-quality life for future generations through green

projects that bring the community together. Under John's leadership, Park Forest was the recipient of the Distinguished Budget Award and Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting for more than 20 years.

John Ostenburg's focus on service to others and the greater good is a trademark of his lifetime. His role model Thomas Merton once said, "We do not exist for ourselves." John's career is a reflection of this. Son, father, grandfather, author, and mayor are all roles in which he excelled. The people of Park Forest, the people of Illinois, and I take pride in calling him a friend. We thank him for his public service. John will never cease being a servant to people.

TRIBUTE TO KATHERINE PATERSON

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. president, Katherine Paterson is a Vermont author with more than 30 titles to her name and a list of awards that other writers could only dream of. She has a keenly special knack for introducing young readers to difficult topics about life and death, as she did with her well-known novel, "Bridge to Terabithia." She has just added a prestigious and fitting recognition to that long list, having been named the American Academy of Arts and Letters' 2019 E.B. White Award winner. The award pays tribute to her lifetime of achievement in children's literature.

What is notable about this latest award is the modesty by which Katherine Paterson comes to it. In an interview with Vermont Public Radio, VPR, the author who has twice won both the National Book Award and the Newbery Medal said her latest award held special meaning.

"Any award that has the name 'E.B. White' attached to it brings with it a great thrill of joy, since he's one of my real heroes," she told her VPR audience. "He probably was one of the best writers in America, and yet he respected children so much that he wrote some of his best work for them. And that makes me incredibly happy."

Clearly, some of E.B. White's influence has rubbed off, as Katherine Paterson's own novels show great respect for her readers, young and old alike. Her writing has been hailed for the compassion she expresses, taking on life's challenges—and tragedies—in a forthright and honest exploration for young readers. Her achievement is all the more impressive given that Katherine Paterson's first language was Chinese, having been born to Christian missionaries who immersed her in the culture before being forced to leave China in the late 1930s. Her studies of both Chinese and Japanese cultures, as well as her religious interests, are evident in her collection of writings.

We are fortunate that Katherine and her late husband John chose to settle in Vermont more than three decades ago. On both local and national levels,

she has been most generous with her time, visiting schools and inspiring young people to read, while advocating for organizations that promote literacy. It is no wonder that Katherine Paterson has been named a Living Legend by the Library of Congress.

Marcelle and I are proud and honored to call Katherine Paterson a friend and, more so, a Vermonter.

Congratulations to you, Katherine, on this latest and most meaningful recognition. It is so very much deserved.

RECOGNIZING VERMONT'S BEAU TIES LTD.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, it is not often that I say the words "Vermont" and "bow tie" in the same sentence, except, of course, when discussing the famed Beau Ties Ltd. of Vermont. Beau Ties, Vermont's sole bow tie manufacturer, got its start as a mom-and-pop operation more than 25 years ago and maintains that ethos. They are an amazing example of the many small businesses that are the heart and soul of Vermont.

Beau Ties was started in 1993 by bow tie aficionado Bill Kenerson and his wife Deborah Venman. They ran the company out of their home and sold their bow ties through the mail. Over the years, the company has grown to employ 30 Vermonters and now has its own manufacturing facility in Middlebury. They sell hundreds of different bow ties, and their selection is constantly changing to keep customers coming back.

Though they are no longer at the helm, Bill and Deborah's desire to keep the company in Vermont has been honored. In fact, the company has never left the facility that it moved into in 1999, and many of its employees have been with Beau Ties for over 20 years.

Among its clientele, Beau Ties Ltd. can count the late Orville Redenbacher and Bill Nye. The company has also cut cloth for the Obama White House and is the official tiemaker of the U.S. House of Representatives and the Vermont Statehouse. I have also sported Beau Ties before: I wore one of their bow ties to the investiture of Judge Geoffrey Crawford, now chief judge of the U.S. District Court for the District of Vermont.

I am proud to recognize the achievements and devoted following that Beau Ties Ltd. has accumulated over its nearly three decades in business. I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a "Seven Days" article titled, "Middlebury's Beau Ties Collars the Market on Dapper Neckwear." It tells the story of Beau Ties Ltd., from its humble beginnings to now and of its importance to Vermont's economy and its many satisfied customers, myself included.

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

SEVEN DAYS
[March 6, 2019]

MIDDLEBURY'S BEAU TIES COLLARS THE
MARKET ON DAPPER NECKWEAR

Anyone who wears a bow tie is making a statement. It can be "I'm conservative," "I'm in the wedding party," "I'll be your server this evening," or "I'm intelligent and dexterous enough to knot my own bow tie." Regardless of the message, bow ties get noticed, as do the people who sport them.

Not everyone can pull one off—or tie one on. Those who wear bow ties are a rarefied set. And for many bow tie enthusiasts around the country, their bow tie mecca is Beau Ties Ltd of Vermont: a modern, one-story manufacturing facility in a Middlebury industrial park. There, bow tie aficionados are occasionally seen getting their pictures taken in front of the giant polka-dotted bow tie out front.

Never heard of Beau Ties? That's unsurprising in Vermont, where few people routinely wear ties of any kind. According to Elizabeth Smith, copresident and CEO of Beau Ties, most of the company's clients live out of state and buy their products online or through their catalogs.

But this predominantly retail business, now in its 26th year, boasts an impressive clientele of famous bow tie-wearing blokes: the late popcorn entrepreneur Orville Redenbacher, science educator Bill Nye "The Science Guy" and retired "CBS News Sunday Morning" host Charles Osgood, who has his own signature line of bow ties with the company.

Beau Ties has also produced ties for the Obama White House, Tiffany & Co., PBS, and countless colleges, prep schools and fraternal organizations. It's also the official tie maker for the U.S. House of Representatives and the Vermont Statehouse. And its private-label clients include fine menswear retailers Ben Silver, Barneys New York and Brooks Brothers.

On a reporter's recent tour of the facility, Smith and fellow copresident Cy Day Tall rarely referred to their clientele as "customers." Instead, they were "our guys" or "our fellas." While the bow tie market isn't huge, or exclusively male, the people who purchase their bow ties, neckties and other fashion accessories—cummerbunds, cufflinks, suspenders, cravats, pocket squares—tend to return time and again. Often they'll phone the company and ask to speak to a specific employee who helped them in the past.

"In our mind, we're a family business," explained Smith, who splits management duties with Tall. Smith handles customer service and sales, while Tall is the chief marketing officer and "wordsmith" of the catalog, the mainstay of their retail business.

Beau Ties' familial feel extends to its staff, too. Of the 30 employees, several are mother-daughter or grandparent-grandchild pairs. Many, including Smith, have been with Beau Ties 20 years or more. All but three are women. The company also hires no seasonal help, Smith noted, so that everyone can earn a decent wage with benefits.

Notwithstanding its reputation for formal attire, Beau Ties is actually a casual and relaxed workplace, where several seamstresses were listening to music on headphones and joking among themselves while sewing. Zooney, a small black pug, and Margy, an energetic Welsh corgi, enthusiastically greeted a visiting reporter.

Beau Ties was founded in 1993 by Bill Kenerson and his wife, Deborah Venman. Kenerson, a native of New Haven, Conn., and a Marine Corps veteran who attended Yale University, moved to Vermont in 1978 to buy the Killington Country Resort. A year later

he took a job at Simmonds Precision Products in Vergennes, where he worked until 1990. In 1991, then-governor Richard Snelling tapped him to serve as commissioner of economic development.

Though Kenerson had a strong business background, he had no training in men's apparel, Smith said. But he was a dyed-in-the-wool bow tie aficionado who inherited many of his favorites from his father and grandfather. Discouraged by the dearth of quality ties he liked, he and Venman launched their own bow tie business in the spring of 1993.

Two months later, they hired Vivian LaFave, a New Haven seamstress, who set up their shop in her basement and began cutting and sewing ties from fabrics Kenerson and Venman purchased in New York City's garment district. LaFave is still with the company and considered the grand dame of the sewing floor.

Kenerson and Venman began by marketing just eight bow ties via a one-page circular, which they mailed to 5,000 people; it eventually evolved into a catalog. The company also advertised in periodicals that Kenerson assumed would appeal to fellow bow tie wearers, such as Smithsonian magazine and the New Yorker.

Smith remembers the surge of business that occurred the day after Kenerson ran an ad on page two of the Wall Street Journal in the late 1990s. "We couldn't answer the phone fast enough," she recalled.

For several years, Kenerson and Venman ran the business out of their home, said Smith. However, the company quickly outgrew that space.

"Deb had to get up and get dressed every morning because we had to go through their bedroom just to get to our offices," she noted. In November 1999, Beau Ties moved into its current building. Wanting to maintain the company's homey feel, Kenerson had it outfitted with a large kitchen, an outdoor deck, a grill and even a dog run.

Soon, the company was producing 36- to 48-page catalogs that featured nearly two dozen new ties per month, as well as some ancillary products. The company's website also lists another 500 to 600 bow ties, which come as pre-tied, clip-on or "freestyle," that is, DIY knots.

Basically, the styles fall into two categories, Smith said: the subdued patterns for "the conservative fellows" and the loud, bold and bright colors for the more flamboyant dressers. On the day of Seven Days' visit, seamstresses were sewing plenty of green Celtic themes (for St. Patrick's Day), hearts (for Valentine's Day), and purple, green and gold masks (for Mardi Gras). Mostly, the fabrics come from China, Italy and the UK, Smith said.

It's worth noting that the "Ltd" in the company name isn't an aesthetic flourish but reflects the time-sensitive availability of its products.

"Bill and Deb's concept was to be limited, so that people come back," Smith explained. "I have to have something [new] to entice them to buy from me every month."

Beau Ties continued to grow throughout the 2000s. By September 2012, however, Kenerson, who was facing significant health challenges, sold the company to its current owners: David Kramer, who lives in New York State, and David Mutter, in California. Though other buyers approached him, Smith said, Kenerson insisted on finding people who would keep the company in Vermont and run it the same way he and his wife had.

"This was Bill's baby," Smith added. "Every single person who worked here was completely valuable to him." As she noted, Kenerson opened every piece of mail that came in and usually answered customers himself. A mere two months after the sale,

the "Beau" of Beau Ties died at the age of 81.

Though one might assume that the typical Beau Ties customer is a stodgy, Barry Goldwater-era conservative, Smith said that members of the younger generation also want to fashion one on.

Representative of the new demographic is 21-year-old Andrew Brown of Bristol, who's been working at Beau Ties since he was 17. His grandmother, Barb, works there, too. The younger Brown, a dapper youth who sports a bow tie daily, is now the company's social media manager.

"The bow tie wearer is the musician. He's the architect. He's the fella who works in a museum," Smith said. "He's the attorney and the judge. He's the young guy who wants to wear something on 'bow tie Friday.' He's the preppy kid who wants something to wear to the yacht club."

Doctors and other health care professionals tend to prefer bow ties, too. Why? The short ties don't drape onto their patients and spread germs, Smith explained. Pediatricians like them because babies and toddlers can't grab them. In fact, Burlington pediatrician Joe Hagan belongs to a professional group of docs from around the country called the Pediatric Travel Club, which gets its neckwear from Beau Ties.

Tall, who names all the ties and writes the product descriptions, said that, when Beau Ties first started, there were maybe five other bow tie manufacturers in the United States. Today, there are more than 50. To remain competitive, she said, Beau Ties keeps its prices in the \$45 to \$49 range, though some higher-end ties cost as much as \$75.

Beau Ties is unique in another respect, Smith added: It accepts old neckties from customers who want them converted into bow ties. Such "one-off" special orders are yet another way to maintain customer loyalty.

"Some guys will send in a hundred of them," Smith added. "We make an awful lot of custom ties here."

Like other industries, Beau Ties enjoys great benefits and faces challenges from being in the Green Mountain State. Its location far from its customer base increases the cost of shipping. For years, the company printed its catalogs on the East Coast until, as Tall put it, distribution costs became "exquisitely painful."

At the same time, Tall noted, "Vermont always has a certain cachet, and we certainly play that up in every letter we write."

"The core of this place is the manufacturing," Smith added. "I don't mean to sound schmaltzy, but I'm the one who goes out into the world to sell this stuff, and I'm always so proud. I never have a product that I don't think is amazing. And how fortunate am I? I get to see it get made every day."

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

VOTE EXPLANATION

● Ms. HARRIS. Mr. President, I was absent for vote No. 77 on Executive Calendar No. 200, the nomination of David Bernhardt to be Secretary of the Interior. Had I been present, I would have voted no on the nomination.●

NATIONAL LIBRARY WEEK

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I want to take a moment to join in the celebration of National Library Week. This year's theme, "Libraries = Strong

Communities," is fitting. Every day, our libraries help make our communities stronger and more vibrant, as they innovate and mobilize resources to provide programs and services that meet ever-evolving community needs.

That is why I have been proud to work during my time in the Senate on ways to support our Nation's libraries. Last December, on a bipartisan basis, I secured passage and enactment of my legislation to reauthorize and enhance the Museum and Library Services Act. This law authorizes Federal funding, a relatively modest investment, through the Institute of Museum and Library Services, IMLS, to enable libraries and museums to work in partnership at the State and local levels and with non-profits, universities, businesses, and others to support, educate, enlighten, and enrich our communities. For libraries, this law seeks to ensure they are equipped to serve community needs, in areas such as workforce, economic, and business development; digital and financial literacy; critical thinking; and new and emerging technologies. Critically, this new law ensures that increases in library formula funding will be shared more broadly across States and specifically smaller ones like Rhode Island.

Just last week, I hosted a conversation with our State's library professionals to follow-up on a similar roundtable I held in Rhode Island in 2016 as I began my work on the Museum and Library Services Act. It was inspiring to hear the many ways in which our libraries are hard at work transforming themselves to serve their diverse communities.

I was glad the director of IMLS, Dr. Kathryn Matthew, could join us for this event. We have a special duty in Rhode Island to elevate the work of IMLS, which is one of my predecessor, Senator Pell's, many lasting gifts to our Nation.

While the President's budget proposes to once again eliminate funding for IMLS, I have been able to instead secure an increase of \$11 million for this agency over the last 2 years. There is broad, bipartisan support for the work IMLS does, and I am continuing to work with my colleagues to increase funding so we can advance IMLS's mission.

My work on libraries extends to ones in our schools, which also need our care and attention. Studies show that effective school library programs, staffed by a certified school librarian, have a positive impact on student achievement and educational success. Knowing how to find and use information are essential skills for college, careers, and life in general. A good school library, staffed by a trained school librarian, is where students develop and hone these skills.

Yet, according to the American Library Association, while 91 percent of the over 90,000 public and private elementary and secondary schools in the Nation have a school library, only 61

percent have a full-time librarian. A National Education Association report about trends in school libraries found that students in the highest poverty schools were less likely to have libraries at their schools and there were significant disparities in staffing at schools with high percentages of minority students. Access to an effective school library program, staffed by a certified school librarian, is an issue of educational equity.

In 2015, I was pleased to work with the library community and my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to ensure that our main Federal elementary and secondary education law continued to specifically address the critical equity issue of public school libraries. Since my time in the other body, I have worked hard to ensure Federal support for our school libraries and I continue to fight for increased funding for the Innovative Approaches to Literacy, IAL, grant program authorized in the Every Student Succeeds Act, ESSA. IAL provides competitive awards to school libraries, as well as national not-for-profit organizations to support children and families in high-need, underserved communities. By providing age-appropriate books, supporting parental engagement programs, and reinforcing professional development, the IAL program helps to support literacy skills to ensure children are best positioned for success.

I encourage all of my colleagues to visit their local libraries and school libraries to see firsthand that libraries are no longer quaint and quiet places to find the latest books, although they still offer plenty of that. They are community hubs providing innovative programming and services to spark creativity, boost learning and STEM education, promote the use of emerging technologies, and develop new career pathways. In sum, they are strengthening our communities, our States, and our Nation.

VOLUNTEER RESPONDER INCENTIVE PROTECTION ACT

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I wish to introduce the Volunteer Responder Incentive Protection Act with my friend and colleague from Maryland, Senator CARDIN, which will benefit the brave women and men who volunteer at our local firehouses.

Across our Nation, volunteer firefighters play a critical role in helping to ensure the safety of our communities and the well-being of our neighbors. The State of Maine, for example, has approximately 9,785 firefighters who serve the State's 1.3 million citizens. Maine is largely a rural State, and more than 90 percent of firefighters are volunteers. Without these public-spirited citizens, many smaller communities would be unable to provide firefighting and other emergency services at all.

Often, communities seek to recruit and retain volunteers by offering mod-

est benefits. The legislation we are introducing today would support these efforts by helping to ensure that these nominal benefits to volunteers are not treated as regular employee compensation.

The Volunteer Responder Incentive Protection Act would allow communities to provide volunteer firefighters and Emergency Medical Service, or EMS workers, with up to \$600 per year of property tax reductions or other incentives, without those benefits being subject to Federal income tax and withholding. This would ease the administrative burden that local departments sometimes face when they reward their volunteers.

We should take care to protect our volunteer firefighters who serve this country with such bravery. Our legislation would help us achieve that goal, and I urge my colleagues to join us in supporting this bill.

ACCESS TO PRIMARY CARE

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a copy of my opening statement at the Senate Health Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee be printed in the RECORD.

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

ACCESS TO PRIMARY CARE

Mr. ALEXANDER. Dr. Lee Gross, of Florida testified last year at this Committee's fifth hearing on the cost of health care. He told us that, after seven years as a primary care doctor, he had an epiphany: too many government mandates and insurance companies were getting between doctors and patients and making primary care more expensive than it needed to be.

So in 2010, Dr. Gross created one of the first Direct Primary Care practices. Instead of working with insurance companies and government programs, Dr. Gross' patients pay him a flat monthly fee directly: \$60 a month per adult, \$25 a month for one child, and \$10 a month for each additional child.

Dr. Gross is one of more than 300,000 primary care doctors in the United States who most of us go to see for day-to-day medical care—receiving vaccines like the flu shot, annual physicals, and help managing chronic conditions, like diabetes. It is also our entry point to coordinate additional medical care, if, for example, we need to get our hip replaced or an MRI to diagnose a problem.

We heard from Dr. Brent James of the National Academies of Medicine at our second hearing that between 30 and 50 percent of what we spend on health care is unnecessary. I have asked for specific suggestions on what the federal government can do to lower the cost of health care for American families, and this year, I am committed to passing legislation based on that input to create better outcomes and better experiences at a lower cost.

Dr. Gross' practice is one of about a thousand similar clinics in the United States, and is a good example of how a primary care doctor can help reduce costs. The first way Dr. Gross does this is by helping with his patients' wellness. For \$60 a month, Dr. Gross can do EKGs and cortisone injections, manage chronic conditions like diabetes, asthma,

and hypertension, and remove minor skin cancers right in his office.

Second, by keeping you out of the emergency room. For \$60 a month, patients have unlimited office visits, and they can also email, text, call and use an app to contact his office—anytime, day or night. So for example, if you have stomach pains at 11 pm, you could text Dr. Gross, who knows that it might just be a side effect of a new medicine he prescribed you.

And third, primary care is patients' access point to more advanced care. When Dr. Gross refers people for additional care, he is able to provide cost and quality information about the different options, so his patients can choose the best option.

For example, one of his patients with rheumatoid arthritis was quoted \$1,800 for blood work, but Dr. Gross was able to find a laboratory to offer the blood tests for under \$100. This echoes what Adam Boehler, who leads the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation, recently told me. He estimated that primary care is only 3-7 percent of health care spending but affects as much as half of all health care spending. And as Dr. Roizen of the Cleveland Clinic has said before this Committee, regular visits to your primary care doctor, along with keeping your immunizations up to date and maintaining at least four measures of good health, such as a healthy body mass index and blood pressure, will help you avoid chronic disease about 80 percent of the time.

This is important because, according to Dr. Roizen, over 84 percent of all health care spending is on chronic conditions like asthma, diabetes, and heart disease. I believe we can empower primary care doctors, nurse practitioners, and physicians assistants to go even a step further.

At our fourth hearing, we heard about how the cost of health care is in a black box—patients have no idea how much a particular treatment or test will end up costing. Even if information on the cost and quality of health care is easily accessible, patients still have trouble comparing different health care options.

For example, earlier this year, hospitals began to post their prices online, as required by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, but to the average consumer, this information has proved to be incomprehensible.

And while the data may be incomprehensible today, it is a ripe opportunity for innovation from private companies, like Health Care Bluebook, a Tennessee company that testified a hearing last fall, and non-profit organizations to arrange the data so primary care doctors, nurse practitioners, and physicians assistants can help their patients have better outcomes and better experiences at lower costs.

There are other ways to lower health care costs through expanded access to primary care. Dr. Gross' direct primary care clinic is one example. Another is community health centers, which we talked about at our last hearing and that are where 27 million Americans go for their primary care. And employers are increasingly taking an active role in their employees' health and in the cost of health care.

One of our new committee members, Senator Braun, was an employer of a thousand people and was aggressive about helping his employees reduce health care costs. Like primary care doctors, more good data could help employers like Senator Braun more effectively lower health care costs. Employers are also employing a doctor on-site so employees don't have to take time off of work to see a primary care doctor.

On-site primary care makes it easier to keep employees healthy by helping to man-

age a chronic condition or get a referral to a specialist. Today, I am interested in hearing more about specific recommendations to improve access to affordable primary care.

ACCESS TO CARE: HEALTH CENTERS AND PROVIDERS IN UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a copy of my opening statement at the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee be printed in the RECORD.

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

ACCESS TO CARE: HEALTH CENTERS AND PROVIDERS IN UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES

Mr. ALEXANDER. This is the first hearing of the new Congress so let me take a few minutes to talk about what we hope to accomplish these next two years.

Number one, reducing health care costs. And number two, making sure a college degree is worth students' time and money.

On health care costs, this Committee has held five hearings on reducing the cost of health care. Testimony from Dr. Brent James, a member of the National Academy of Medicine, said that up to half of health care spending is unnecessary.

That startled me and it should startle the American people. That is a massive burden on American families, businesses, and state and federal budgets.

I sent a letter to health experts, including the witnesses at our five hearings, asking for specific recommendations to reduce health care costs. I'd like to encourage anyone with a specific recommendation to submit your comment by March 1 to lowerhealthcarecosts@help.senate.gov.

A second priority is updating the Higher Education Act to ensure that the expense of a college education is worth it for students. The last time we seriously addressed higher education was in 2007. A lot has happened since then.

In 2007, there was no iPhone. A micro-blogging company named Twitter had just gained its own separate platform and started to scale globally. And Amazon released something called Kindle. In a new book, New York Times columnist Tom Friedman puts his finger on the year 2007 as "the technological inflection point." So we need to take a look at this federal support for higher education that affects 20 million students and 6000 universities, colleges, and technical institutions. And our goal includes simplifying the federal aid application; a fairer way for students to repay their loans; and a new system of accountability for colleges.

I will be working on these priorities with Ranking Member Patty Murray, with members of the HELP Committee, and other Senators interested reaching a result on lowering health care costs and updating the Higher Education Act.

We hope to complete our work on both of these things in the first six months of this year.

And in addition, in these next few months, we need to reauthorize the Older Americans Act, which supports the organization and delivery of social and nutrition services to older adults and their caregivers and reauthorize the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act, important legislation that funds major grant programs that provide a social services response to issues of child abuse and neglect.

And today's topic—extending federal funding for community health centers, as well as

four other federal health programs, which are all set to expire at the end of this fiscal year.

Community health centers actually fit into a larger topic of great interest to this Committee, which is primary care. There are more than 300,000 primary care doctors in the United States, according to the American Medical Association. This is the doctor that most of us go to see for day-to-day medical care—an annual physical, flu vaccine, or help managing a chronic condition like diabetes. It is our access point to additional medical care, and can refer us to specialists, if, for example, we need to get our hip replaced or a MRI.

Adam Boehler, who leads the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation, estimated that primary care is only 2-7 percent of health care spending but could help to impact as much as half of all health care spending.

We will be having a hearing next week on how primary care can help control health care costs. Today, we are talking about a prime example of primary care: 27 million Americans receive their primary care and other services at community health centers.

For example, in Tennessee, after Lewis County's only hospital closed, the closest emergency room for its 12,000 residents was 30 minutes away. The old hospital building was turned into the Lewis Health Center, a community health center which operates as something between a clinic and full hospital.

Lewis Health Center estimates they can deal with about 90 percent of patients that walk in the door. The center has a full laboratory to run tests, can perform X-rays or give IVs, and keeps an ambulance ready to take patients to a partnering hospital if they need more care. Because the Lewis Health Center is a community health center, they charge patients based on a sliding scale which means more people have access to and can afford health care.

Community health centers like Lewis Health Center are one way American families can have access to affordable health care close to home. This includes a wide range of health care, including preventive care, help managing chronic conditions like asthma or high blood pressure, vaccines, and prenatal care. There are about 1,400 federally-funded health centers that provide outpatient care to approximately 27 million people, including 400,000 Tennesseans, at about 12,000 sites across the United States. These other locations could be a mobile clinic or at a homeless shelter or school.

Community health centers have also been an important part of combating the opioid crisis that has impacted virtually every community across the country.

Last year, the Department of Health and Human Services provided over \$350 million in funding specifically to support community health centers providing care for Americans in need of substance use disorder or mental health services.

And in 2017, 65,000 Americans received medication-assisted treatment for substance use disorders at a community health center. These centers accept private insurance, Medicare and Medicaid, and charge patients based on a sliding fee scale so that those who are in need of care receive it, regardless of ability to pay.

Community health centers also receive federal funding to help cover their costs. In Fiscal Year 2019, these centers received \$4 billion in mandatory funding and \$1.6 billion in discretionary funding. Congress has to act by the end of September to make sure community health centers continue to receive this federal funding and keep their doors open.

Two weeks ago, Senator Murray and I took the first step by introducing legislation that will extend funding for community health centers for five years at \$4 billion a year in mandatory funding.

The legislation also extends funding for four additional federal health programs set to expire in September: the Teaching Health Center Graduate Medical Education Program; National Health Service Corps; Special Diabetes Program; and Special Diabetes Program for Indians.

Today we will hear about how the community health centers program is working and how to ensure 27 million Americans can continue to have access to quality health care closer to their homes and at a more affordable cost.

Community health centers, and hospitals across the country, rely on a well-trained health care workforce.

Two federally funded workforce programs, which train doctors and nurses, expire this year.

The first is the Teaching Health Center Graduate Medical Education Program that helps train primary care doctors and dentists in community-based settings, often at community health centers.

And second, the National Health Service Corps, which provides scholarships and loan repayment for health care professionals who go to work in rural or underserved areas.

More than half of these doctors choose to work at one of the 12,000 community health centers and affiliated sites across the country as part of their service requirement.

I look forward to hearing from the witnesses today and learning more about all three of these programs, and discussing how we can work together to ensure funding for these programs is extended so Americans can continue to have access to affordable health care closer to home.

REMEMBERING JIM MOODY

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. President, today I rise to recognize the career and legacy of former U.S. Representative Jim Moody, who passed away on March 22, 2019. Born James Powers Moody, he was an influential leader in Democratic politics in Wisconsin in the 1970s and 1980s.

Born in 1935 in Virginia, Jim spent much of his childhood abroad. His father was an official with the American Red Cross, and his mother worked in relief efforts for refugees. Jim was heavily influenced by his parents' international focus, and he developed a passion for foreign cultures and global affairs at an early age. He attended school in Shanghai before graduating from an English-language high school in Athens, Greece.

After graduating from Haverford College in Pennsylvania in 1957, Jim worked in the former Yugoslavia and Iran with CARE, an international humanitarian organization. He joined the Peace Corps in the organization's early days and established the first Peace Corps programs in Pakistan and Bangladesh. He spoke many languages, including Greek, Farsi, Croatian, Spanish and French.

Jim received a master's degree in public administration from Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government in 1967 and a doctorate in economics from the University of

California at Berkeley in 1973. Eugene McCarthy's 1968 Presidential campaign inspired Jim's exploration of politics. He was elected to the Wisconsin State Assembly in 1976 and to the State Senate in 1978. With his mother at his side as his campaign manager, he ran for and was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1982 from Wisconsin's 5th Congressional District in southeastern Wisconsin, where he served five terms.

Moody was a progressive voice in Congress in the spirit of Wisconsin's greatest progressive, Robert M. "Fighting Bob" La Follette. He was an early advocate of gay rights and wilderness preservation. In 1991, he authored a federally funded universal health care bill to cover the 37 million Americans who lacked insurance at the time, including 550,000 Wisconsinites. He proposed paying for the coverage with higher taxes on corporations and wealthy individuals.

After an unsuccessful U.S. Senate race in 1992, he returned to his passion for international affairs. In 1995, he became the chief financial officer of the United Nations International Fund for Agricultural Development, which focuses on improving the living standards in the agricultural sectors of developing countries. He served on the board of the National Iranian American Council and as an elections observer in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and the Ukraine. His post congressional career also included work as professor, an economist and a financial adviser.

Jim Moody took his role as a public servant very seriously. It was a responsibility and an honor that he carried proudly. He cared deeply about the economic stability and well-being of his constituents and of people around the globe. He will be fondly remembered as one of Wisconsin's great progressive leaders.

REMEMBERING JAMES C. FOX

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, Judge James C. Fox, who served as a Federal District Court Judge for the Eastern District of North Carolina for more than 35 years, passed away Saturday, March 23, 2019, at the age of 90.

Judge Fox was born on November 6, 1928, in Atchison, KS. As a young boy, his family moved to Greensboro, NC, where he grew up. Judge Fox graduated from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 1950 and married Katharine deRosset Rhett on December 30, 1950. Judge Fox served as a corporal in the United States Army Reserve from 1951–1959.

Judge Fox attended law school at the University of North Carolina School of Law, where he graduated in 1957 with highest honors. Subsequently, he took a clerkship with Judge Donnell Gilliam who predated Judge Fox as a U.S. District Court Judge for the Eastern District of North Carolina. Judge Fox entered private practice in 1959 with the firm Carter & Murchison in New Han-

over County, NC, where he practiced for 20 years. While in private practice, Judge Fox served as the county attorney for New Hanover County for 13 years.

President Ronald Reagan nominated Judge Fox to serve as a U.S. District Court Judge for the Eastern District of North Carolina on September 13, 1982. Judge Fox served the residents of North Carolina for more than 35 years. He served as chief judge from 1990 to 1997 and assumed senior status on January 31, 2001. Even after assuming senior status, Judge Fox maintained a full caseload until he retired in 2017. Judge Fox was known as courteous but firm and was widely respected by everyone who came into his courtroom.

In addition to his decades of public service, Judge Fox served as director of the law alumni association for the University of North Carolina in 1964 and president of the law foundation at the University of North Carolina from 1977 to 1979. Judge Fox served on numerous civic boards, including the University of North Carolina Board of Visitors, the Boy Scouts, the United Way, the Family Service Society, Opportunities, Inc., Davis Healthcare, and the Children's Home Society. Judge Fox was also an active member of Ducks Unlimited. He loved the outdoors and spent significant time and resources on conservation management efforts.

Most importantly, Judge Fox was a devoted husband, father, and grandfather. I am grateful to Judge Fox for his service and to his family for sharing his time with the residents of North Carolina. He will be greatly missed.

TRIBUTE TO DIANA MILETE

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I rise today to honor the career of Diana Milete. Diana has spent her life in public service and has made a difference in the lives of tens of thousands of Ohioans.

Diana came to my congressional office when I was very first elected to the House and has been with us ever since, through all my time in the House and my entire 12 years in the Senate. When she retires at the end of this month, she will have spent more than three decades in Federal service.

Helping Ohioans is one of the most important things our office does, and as the head of our constituent services program, her work has touched the lives of more than 59,000 Ohioans. These were seniors trying to navigate Federal Agencies to get the Medicare and Social Security benefits they earned over a lifetime of work. They were veterans and their families trying to secure medals and VA benefits. They were Ohio workers trying to claim the tax credits they earned.

Diana went above and beyond the call of duty for so many Ohioans.

I remember 2½ years ago, right before the Fourth of July, our office received a request for assistance from a

man in Cleveland named Danny Salazar, who was trying to arrange visas for his family to visit him from the Dominican Republic. You may recognize the name Danny Salazar—he was the Cleveland Indians' star pitcher, and the reason he wanted his family to come visit was because he had been selected to play in the MLB All-Star Game in San Diego. Diana got right on the case, and, working with other members of our team, she was able to make sure Danny's family got visa appointments in time for the game. Danny's mother got to come watch the game with her son, and he sent our office a picture of him and his family at Petco Park—a picture that hung on Diana's wall.

Of course Diana's efforts weren't restricted to Major League Baseball players. Our office helps any Ohioan who needs it, and we have received piles of letters over the years from Ohioans writing to thank Diana for all her hard work for them.

After Diana helped her with her Social Security claim, a woman from Elyria wrote: "Diana, you are an angel in disguise. You literally saved my life and ended my despair." Another woman from Avon wrote to Diana, "Many thanks for doing the near impossible!"

Diana didn't stop with helping individual Ohioans. Over the years she worked on several cases related to ALS patients, who faced a mandatory waiting period of two years before they could receive disability benefits. Tragically, ALS is a fast-progressing disease, and many patients pass away before the 2-year waiting period is over. Diana brought the issue to our office's attention, and our legislative staff went to work. I joined my colleagues in the House and Senate to introduce legislation to fix this, and we eventually got it done. We reduced the 2-year waiting period to 5 months. This year, as Diana's time with our office comes to a close, I have joined a bipartisan group of colleagues to introduce legislation to eliminate the waiting period for ALS patients all together. That is how our office works best—we talk to Ohioans, dedicated workers in Ohio like Diana listen to their stories and bring their issues to the attention of our office, and our legislative staff works on a solution.

We are all going to miss Diana when she retires at the end of this month, but she has earned a long and happy retirement spent with her family in Lorain. Diana's impact on this office will be felt long after she is gone. She has built one of the best casework operations in the country, and I know her team is going to carry on Diana's legacy, serving Ohioans with compassion and dedication for years to come.

Diana, thank you for your service to the people of Ohio.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

REMEMBERING EVERETT CHAVEZ

• Mr. HEINRICH. Mr. President, it is an honor to remember and recognize the life of Governor Everett Chavez.

Governor Chavez devoted his life to the people of Santo Domingo Pueblo and to building a strong future for the next generation of leaders in Indian Country.

Chavez served three terms as the Governor of Kewa Pueblo, also known as Santo Domingo.

Governor Chavez also served as the superintendent of the Santa Fe Indian School, mentoring Native youth and setting high expectations for their educational achievements.

He was a proud graduate of the University of New Mexico, where he received a degree in electrical engineering.

Thanks to his dedication, many students received scholarships for college and put their education to work in their communities.

Governor Chavez was powerful at influencing policy to benefit Indian Country at the highest levels of government.

Governor Chavez served on President Obama's advisory committee for Native American and Alaskan Natives.

He worked with New Mexico Secretary of State Maggie Toulouse Oliver to increase voter registration and election participation in Native communities.

He was constantly building partnerships and implementing major initiatives in his community.

He was hard at work serving others until the very end.

New Mexico has lost one of our greatest leaders.

My thoughts are with Governor Chavez's family.

His legacy will endure in all of those he inspired through his selfless actions.●

TRIBUTE TO CHARLES "CHUCK" JOHNSON

• Ms. ROSEN. Mr. President, today I have the privilege of recognizing the distinguished service of Commander Charles "Chuck" Johnson, a highly respected Korean and Vietnam war veteran. Having enlisted in the U.S. Army at age 16 before completing his high school education, Chuck served his country honorably for 21 years on the front lines of combat in both Korea and Vietnam.

Chuck's commitment to serve did not waver after returning home, and he has spent much of his civilian life advocating and caring for Nevada's veterans, fighting to ensure that their service is never forgotten. Commander of the Southern Nevada chapter of the Korean War Veterans Association, Chuck played a critical role in establishing a Korean War Memorial at the Veterans Memorial Cemetery in Boul-

der City, NV, which stands as a testament to the more than 9,000 Korean war veterans buried there. Chuck persisted for over 24 years to see this project come to fruition, and as a community, we are beyond grateful for his dedication to this worthy cause.

Known as a leader and community servant throughout southern Nevada, Chuck was most recently recognized as News 3 Las Vegas's Veteran of the Month. Throughout the month of March, we saluted Chuck for his tireless work to make our community, State, and country a better, safer, and more just place. I am grateful for Commander Johnson's sacrifice and patriotism and look forward to observing his continued work on behalf of veterans in Nevada and beyond.●

TRIBUTE TO JESSICA HEINZ

• Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, today I recognize Jessica Heinz, an intern in my Washington, DC, office, for all the hard work she has done on behalf of myself, my staff, and the State of South Dakota.

Jessica is a graduate of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She is currently pursuing her master of science degree in terrorism and security policy at American University. Jessica is a dedicated and diligent worker who has been devoted to getting the most out of her internship experience and has been a true asset to the office.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Jessica for all of the fine work she has done and wish her continued success in the years to come.●

RECOGNIZING VERMONT MEALS ON WHEELS

• Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I would like to recognize the tremendous work of Vermont's Meals on Wheels programs. Last year, Meals on Wheels prepared and home-delivered nearly 800,000 freshly cooked nutritious meals to more than 5,700 Vermont seniors. In our State the second oldest in the Nation, these meals are essential to helping ensure that older Vermonters, particularly those living in rural areas, have access to adequate nutrition.

These meals are made possible by the hard work of hundreds of dedicated professionals and volunteers at Vermont's five Area Agencies on Aging, local Meals on Wheels providers, and senior centers. From the chefs who prepare the nutritious meals, to the senior center staff that coordinate deliveries, to the volunteer drivers who deliver the meals, Vermont's Meals on Wheels network is a critically important part of our social safety net for older Vermonters.

Of course, Meals on Wheels is much more than just delivering a nutritious meal, as important as that is. Volunteer drivers also provide invaluable social interaction and companionship for the seniors they visit, which goes a

long way to combat the effects of isolation that many older Vermonters face, especially if they live alone or in a more rural community. Without this social interaction, seniors are more likely to have feelings of loneliness and depression, which puts them at higher risk for dementia, chronic disease, falls, and hospitalization.

The regular visits by Meals on Wheels volunteers serve another purpose, as well. The drivers check to make sure that the seniors are safe, secure, and warm. They know each person they visit and recognize immediately if something doesn't seem right. It is no exaggeration to say that Meals on Wheels volunteers have averted tragedies and even saved lives after finding seniors who have fallen or are in the midst of a medical emergency.

Last month was "March for Meals," when Meals on Wheels programs across the country commemorate the March 1972 signing into law of an amendment to the Older Americans Act of 1965 to create a national nutrition program for seniors 60 years and older. As we often do, many of my Vermont staff rode along with Meals on Wheels volunteers across the State to see the wonderful work they are doing and highlight the importance of Meals on Wheels in the lives of thousands of Vermonters.

Let me end by thanking the Meals on Wheels staff and volunteers in Vermont for their remarkable work.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Ms. Ridgway, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

In executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations and a withdrawal which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 11:24 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 1644. An act to restore the open internet order of the Federal Communications Commission.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bills were read the first time:

H.R. 1644. An act to restore the open internet order of the Federal Communications Commission.

H.R. 1957. An act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modernize and im-

prove the Internal Revenue Service, and for other purposes.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-969. A communication from the Acting Secretary of Defense, transmitting the report of three (3) officers authorized to wear the insignia of the grade of vice admiral in accordance with title 10, United States Code, section 777a, this will not cause the Department to exceed the number of frocked officers authorized; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-970. A communication from the Senior Official performing the duties of the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting the report of an officer authorized to wear the insignia of the grade of rear admiral (lower half) in accordance with title 10, United States Code, section 777, this will not cause the Department to exceed the number of frocked officers authorized; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-971. A communication from the Chief Counsel, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Suspension of Community Eligibility; West Virginia: Fairmont, City of, Marion County" ((44 CFR Part 64) (Docket No. FEMA-2019-0003)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 10, 2019; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-972. A communication from the Regulation Policy Development Coordinator, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Release of Information from Department of Veterans Affairs' Records" (RIN2900-AQ27) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 5, 2019; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

EC-973. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "FY 2018 Report to Congress: Review of Medicare's Program for Oversight of Accrediting Organizations and the Clinical Laboratory Improvement Validation Program"; to the Committees on Finance; and Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-974. A communication from the Director of Regulations and Policy Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Implementing the Food and Drug Administration Food Safety Modernization Act; Technical Amendment" (RINs 0910-AG10, 0910-AG35, 0910-AG36) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 5, 2019; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-975. A communication from the Deputy Director, Office of National Security, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Privacy Act; Implementation" (RIN0991-AC10) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 10, 2019; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-976. A communication from the Chief Counsel, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security,

transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Factors Considered When Evaluating a Governor's Request for Individual Assistance for a Major Disaster" (RIN1660-AA83) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 10, 2019; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-977. A communication from the Deputy General Counsel, Office of General Counsel, Small Business Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Civil Monetary Penalties Inflation Adjustments" (RIN3245-AH03) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 10, 2019; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS

The following petitions and memorials were laid before the Senate and were referred or ordered to lie on the table as indicated:

POM-30. A resolution adopted by the Town Commission of Lauderdale-By-The-Sea, Florida expressing the Commission's opposition to legislation prohibiting local regulation of vacation rentals; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

POM-31. A resolution adopted by the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco, California, relative to new Title X regulations; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

POM-32. A petition from a citizen of the State of Ohio relative to the Ohio State Supreme Court; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

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 Ms. SMITH (for herself and Mr. CASSIDY):

S. 1140. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act with respect to the treatment under section 351(k)(7) of such Act (relating to exclusivity for reference products) of certain products deemed to have a biological product license pursuant to section 7002 of the Biologics Price Competition and Innovation Act of 2009; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. STABENOW (for herself and Mr. BURR):

S. 1141. A bill to provide predictability and certainty in the tax law, create jobs, and encourage investment; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. HEINRICH (for himself, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. BENNET, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. SMITH, Mr. REED, Mr. BOOKER, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, and Ms. HASSAN):

S. 1142. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide tax credits for energy storage technologies, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

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

S. 1143. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to improve testing and inspections for lead on military installations, in Department of Defense housing and schools, and in military dependent children, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. RUBIO:

S. 1144. A bill to amend the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 to improve mapping under the National Flood Insurance Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. SHELBY:

S. 1145. A bill to repeal the current Internal Revenue Code and replace it with a flat tax, thereby guaranteeing economic growth and fairness for all Americans; to the Committee on Finance.

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

S. 1146. A bill to amend the Older Americans Act of 1965 to require the Assistant Secretary for Aging to identify and disseminate best practices for the National Family Caregiver Support program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. LEAHY, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. REED, Mr. CARPER, Ms. STABENOW, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. BROWN, Mr. CASEY, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. TESTER, Mr. UDALL, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. WARNER, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. BENNET, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. COONS, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. SCHATZ, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. MURPHY, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. KING, Mr. KAINE, Ms. WARREN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. PETERS, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Ms. HASSAN, Ms. HARRIS, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Ms. SMITH, Mr. JONES, and Ms. ROSEN):

S. 1147. A bill to amend the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 to provide for additional disclosure requirements for corporations, labor organizations, Super PACs and other entities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

By Mr. HOEVEN (for himself and Mrs. SHAHEEN):

S. 1148. A bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to require the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration to give preferential consideration to individuals who have successfully completed air traffic controller training and veterans when hiring air traffic control specialists; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. DAINES (for himself, Mr. ROBERTS, and Mr. THUNE):

S. 1149. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make permanent the deduction for qualified business income; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. DAINES (for himself, Mr. SASSE, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. CRAMER, Ms. ERNST, and Mr. LANKFORD):

S. 1150. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a child tax credit for pregnant moms with respect to their unborn children; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. SCOTT of Florida (for himself and Mr. RUBIO):

S. 1151. A bill to prohibit contracting with persons that have business operations with the Maduro regime, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. BOOZMAN (for himself and Mr. COTTON):

S. 1152. A bill to provide for the transfer of administrative jurisdiction over certain parcels of Federal land in Arlington, Virginia, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Ms. BALDWIN (for herself, Mr. BRAUN, Mrs. SHAHEEN, and Mrs. FISCHER):

S. 1153. A bill to explicitly make unauthorized access to Department of Education information technology systems and the misuse of identification devices issued by the Department of Education a criminal act; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. TESTER (for himself and Mrs. BLACKBURN):

S. 1154. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to establish an advisory committee on the implementation by the Department of Veterans Affairs of an electronic health record; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. CASSIDY (for himself, Mrs. CAPITO, and Mr. KENNEDY):

S. 1155. A bill to terminate the prohibitions on the exportation and importation of natural gas, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. SCHATZ (for himself, Mr. MORAN, and Mr. REED):

S. 1156. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to require the Secretary of each military department to develop resilience plans for installations of the Department of Defense, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. TESTER (for himself and Mr. KAINE):

S. 1157. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to establish a scholarship program for educators of rural students and provide for loan forgiveness for rural educators, to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to provide professional development grants for rural elementary schools and secondary schools, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. TESTER:

S. 1158. A bill to establish a 5-year ban on individuals appointed to Executive Schedule positions and Members of Congress engaging in lobbying activities at the Federal level; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BENNET (for himself, Ms. MURKOWSKI, and Mr. CASEY):

S. 1159. A bill to amend the Older Americans Act of 1965 to establish the Office of Inclusivity and Sexual Health and a rural outreach grant program carried out by that Office, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. SMITH:

S. 1160. A bill to amend the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act to increase support for mental health; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. TESTER (for himself and Mr. UDALL):

S. 1161. A bill to support the education of Indian children; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

By Mr. CRUZ (for himself, Ms. ERNST, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. CRAMER, and Mr. BRAUN):

S. 1162. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make permanent the individual tax provisions of the tax reform law, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. CRAPO (for himself, Ms. STABENOW, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. KING, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, and Mr. RISCH):

S. 1163. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for an exclusion for assistance provided to participants in certain veterinary student loan repayment or forgiveness programs; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. HYDE-SMITH (for herself, Mrs. CAPITO, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. WICKER, and Mr. DAINES):

S. 1164. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit black market adop-

tion of children, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. PORTMAN (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. LANKFORD, and Mr. CARPER):

S. 1165. A bill to clarify responsibilities related to unaccompanied alien children, to provide additional protections and tracking mechanisms for such children, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. BLACKBURN (for herself and Ms. BALDWIN):

S. 1166. A bill to direct the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information to make grants for the establishment or expansion of internet exchange facilities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mrs. MURRAY (for herself, Mr. KING, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Ms. SMITH, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. PETERS, Mr. REED, Ms. WARREN, and Mr. WYDEN):

S. 1167. A bill to require the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information to establish a State Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. BLUNT (for himself, Mr. LANKFORD, and Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina):

S. 1168. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to ensure campus access at public institutions of higher education for religious groups; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. GARDNER (for himself, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. CASSIDY, and Mr. BENNET):

S. 1169. A bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act with respect to citizen petitions; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. ENZI (for himself, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. BRAUN, Mr. BLUNT, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. INHOFE, Ms. MCSALLY, Mr. THUNE, Mr. SASSE, Mr. ROMNEY, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina, Ms. ERNST, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. WICKER, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. DAINES, Mr. LANKFORD, and Mr. GRAHAM):

S. 1170. A bill to amend the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 to establish additional criteria for determining when employers may join together in a group or association of employers that will be treated as an employer under section 3(5) of such Act for purposes of sponsoring a group health plan, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. TILLIS (for himself and Ms. WARREN):

S. 1171. A bill to suspend the current compensation packages for all officers of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. VAN HOLLEN (for himself, Mr. REED, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. HARRIS, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. SMITH, Mr. BOOKER, Ms. WARREN, Mr. BROWN, and Mr. CARDIN):

S. 1172. A bill to require full funding of part A of title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. CASEY (for himself and Mr. ALEXANDER):

S. 1173. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize the Emergency Medical Services for Children program; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. SCHATZ (for himself, Mr. BROWN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, and Mr. MERKLEY):

S. 1174. A bill to provide that 12 weeks of leave made available to a Federal employee shall be paid leave, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself and Mr. Kaine):

S. 1175. A bill to improve the public service loan forgiveness program; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. CASEY (for himself and Mr. BROWN):

S. 1176. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to promote the matriculation, and increase in the graduation rates, of individuals with disabilities within higher education; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself, Mr. SULLIVAN, and Mr. KING):

S. 1177. A bill to establish a congressionally chartered seaway development corporation in the Arctic, consistent with customary international law, with the intention of uniting Arctic nations in a cooperative Arctic shipping union, where voluntary collective maritime shipping fees will help fund the infrastructural and environmental demands of safe and reliable shipping in the region; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. MARKEY (for himself, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. MENENDEZ, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. MERKLEY, and Ms. SMITH):

S. 1178. A bill to require aircraft manufacturers to offer or provide non-required safety enhancing equipment of an aircraft without additional charge to an air carrier, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself, Mr. SCHATZ, and Mr. SULLIVAN):

S. 1179. A bill to amend the Arctic Research and Policy Act of 1984 to modify the membership of the Arctic Research Commission, to establish an Arctic Executive Steering Committee, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. UDALL (for himself, Ms. BALDWIN, Ms. CANTWELL, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. HEINRICH, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MERKLEY, Mrs. MURRAY, Ms. SMITH, Mr. TESTER, and Ms. WARREN):

S. 1180. A bill to extend the full Federal medical assistance percentage to urban Indian organizations; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. HASSAN (for herself and Ms. COLLINS):

S. 1181. A bill to amend the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act to provide for better protections for children raised in kinship families outside of the foster care system; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mrs. HYDE-SMITH:

S. 1182. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 201 West Cherokee Street in Brookhaven, Mississippi, as the "Deputy Donald William Durr, Corporal Zach Moak, and Patrolman James White Memorial Post Office Building"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

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

S. 1183. A bill to establish an energy storage and microgrid grant and technical assistance program; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. RUBIO:

S. 1184. A bill to reform the inspection process of housing assisted by the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. LEAHY:

S. 1185. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to disallow any deduction for punitive damages, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Mr. YOUNG, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. COLLINS, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. CASEY, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. Kaine, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. COONS, and Mr. BOOKER):

S. 1186. A bill to promote democracy and human rights in Burma, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mrs. GILLIBRAND:

S. 1187. A bill to prevent childhood exposure to chlorpyrifos through certain school meal programs; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Mr. PERDUE):

S. 1188. A bill to promote United States-Mongolia trade by authorizing duty-free treatment for certain imports from Mongolia, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. GARDNER (for himself and Mr. MENENDEZ):

S. 1189. A bill to require the Secretary of State to determine whether the Russian Federation should be designated as a state sponsor of terrorism and whether Russian-sponsored armed entities in Ukraine should be designated as foreign terrorist organizations; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mrs. CAPITO (for herself and Mrs. SHAHEEN):

S. 1190. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for payments for certain rural health clinic and Federally qualified health center services furnished to hospice patients under the Medicare program; to the Committee on Finance.

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

S. 1191. A bill to reauthorize section 340H of the Public Health Service Act to continue to encourage the expansion, maintenance, and establishment of approved graduate medical residency programs at qualified teaching health centers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. WYDEN (for himself, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. BENNET, Mr. CARPER, Mr. BROWN, and Ms. CORTEZ MASTO):

S. 1192. A bill to set minimum standards for tax return preparers; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MANCHIN (for himself, Mr. JONES, Mr. WARNER, Mr. Kaine, Ms. DUCKWORTH, and Mr. BROWN):

S. 1193. A bill to amend the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 to extend the period during which certain reclamation fees are required to be paid; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Ms. WARREN (for herself, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. UDALL, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. BOOKER, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL):

S. 1194. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to establish a free on-line tax preparation and filing service and programs that allow taxpayers to access third-party provided tax return information; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself, Mr. DAINES, Mr. TESTER, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. BROWN, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. JONES, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Ms. ROSEN, Ms. SINEMA, Mr. BENNET, Ms. CANTWELL, Ms. WARREN, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. HOEVEN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. COONS, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. PETERS, Mr. BOOZMAN, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. UDALL, Ms. SMITH, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. RUBIO, and Mr. MENENDEZ):

S. 1195. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to clarify presumption relating to the exposure of certain veterans who served in the vicinity of the Republic of Vietnam, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Ms. BALDWIN (for herself and Mr. JOHNSON):

S. 1196. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1715 Linnerud Drive in Sun Prairie, Wisconsin, as the "Fire Captain Cory Barr Post Office Building"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. MARKEY:

S. 1197. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to establish a tax credit for construction of new all-electric homes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. WICKER, and Mr. LEAHY):

S. 1198. A bill to ensure that significantly more students graduate college with the international knowledge and experience essential for success in today's global economy through the establishment of the Senator Paul Simon Study Abroad Program in the Department of Education; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Mr. BURR):

S. 1199. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to revise and extend the poison center network program; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. MERKLEY (for himself, Mr. GARDNER, Ms. ROSEN, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. BENNET, Mr. SULLIVAN, Ms. HARRIS, Mr. PAUL, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. PETERS, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. KING, Mr. SANDERS, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. WYDEN, Ms. WARREN, Ms. HIRONO, and Mr. CRAMER):

S. 1200. A bill to create protections for depository institutions that provide financial services to cannabis-related legitimate businesses and service providers for such businesses, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. MANCHIN (for himself, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. CRAMER, and Mr. DAINES):

S. 1201. A bill to amend the fossil energy research and development provisions of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 to enhance fossil fuel technology, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. MARKEY (for himself and Mr. PORTMAN):

S. 1202. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for a permanent independence at Home medical practice program under the Medicare program; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself, Mr. KAINE, Ms. WARREN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. HARRIS, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. BOOKER, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. HASSAN, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. SANDERS, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BENNET, Mr. CASEY, and Ms. ROSEN):

S. 1203. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 in order to improve the public service loan forgiveness program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. CASEY (for himself, Mr. KAINE, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. SMITH, and Ms. HASSAN):

S. 1204. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Education to establish an Advisory Commission on Serving and Supporting Students with Mental Health Disabilities in Institutions of Higher Education, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. WYDEN, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL):

S. 1205. A bill to amend the Equal Credit Opportunity Act to require creditors to request demographic information from applicants for certain types of credit in order to prevent discriminatory lending practices with respect to those applicants, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. MERKLEY (for himself and Mr. KENNEDY):

S. 1206. A bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to prohibit aircraft from having in place cameras and microphones that can monitor passengers; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. ROMNEY (for himself, Ms. SINEMA, and Ms. MCSALLY):

S. 1207. A bill to approve the settlement of the water rights claims of the Navajo Nation in Utah, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself and Mrs. GILLIBRAND):

S. 1208. A bill to amend the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 with respect to payments to certain public safety officers who have become permanently and totally disabled as a result of personal injuries sustained in the line of duty, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CASSIDY (for himself and Mr. DURBIN):

S. 1209. A bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act with respect to approval of abbreviated new drug applications; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. DURBIN, and Mr. ROUNDS):

S. 1210. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to increase and make permanent the exclusion for benefits provided to volunteer firefighters and emergency medical responders; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. HOEVEN (for himself, Mr. CRAMER, and Ms. MCSALLY):

S. 1211. A bill to provide for improvements to Tribal transportation facilities and Tribal transportation safety, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

By Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. SCHUMER, Ms. BALDWIN, and Mr. MERKLEY):

S. 1212. A bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to expand and clarify the

prohibition on inaccurate caller identification information and to require providers of telephone service to offer technology to subscribers to reduce the incidence of unwanted telephone calls and text messages, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Ms. WARREN (for herself, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. HARRIS, Ms. BALDWIN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. BOOKER, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL):

S. 1213. A bill to provide health insurance reform, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MARKEY:

S. 1214. A bill to establish and protect individual and collective privacy rights, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. INHOFE (for himself and Mr. REED) (by request):

S. 1215. A bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2020 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. INHOFE:

S. 1216. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend the depreciation rules for property used predominantly within an Indian reservation; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. INHOFE:

S. 1217. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to eliminate the taxable income limit on percentage depletion for oil and natural gas produced from marginal properties; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. VAN HOLLEN (for himself, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Ms. DUCKWORTH):

S. 1218. A bill to require the review of the service of certain members of the Armed Forces during World War I to determine if such members should be awarded the Medal of Honor, to authorize the award of the Medal of Honor based on the results of the review, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. PORTMAN (for himself, Mr. COONS, and Mr. KING):

S. 1219. A bill to provide for the discharge of parent borrower liability if a student on whose behalf a parent has received certain student loans becomes disabled; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

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

S. 1220. A bill to amend the Federal Advisory Committee Act to increase the transparency of Federal advisory committees, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. PETERS (for himself and Ms. STABENOW):

S. Res. 159. A resolution designating April 24, 2019, as "Meningitis B Awareness Day"; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. JONES (for himself, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. REED, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. WICKER, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, Mr. PETERS, Mr. TILLIS, and Mr. BROWN):

S. Res. 160. A resolution recognizing the contributions of defense laboratories to the

technological dominance of the United States Armed Forces and supporting the designation of April 25, 2019, as "Department of Defense Laboratory Day 2019"; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. WICKER (for himself and Mr. COONS):

S. Res. 161. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of World Malaria Day; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Ms. WARREN (for herself and Ms. COLLINS):

S. Res. 162. A resolution supporting the designation of April 2019 as "National Donate Life Month"; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

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

S. Res. 163. A resolution commending and congratulating the Lady Bears of Baylor University on winning the 2019 National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I women's basketball championship; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. WARNER (for himself and Mr. KAINE):

S. Res. 164. A resolution commending the University of Virginia men's basketball team for winning the 2019 National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I Men's Basketball Championship; considered and agreed to.

By Ms. DUCKWORTH (for herself, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. REED, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. BROWN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. COONS, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. KING, Mr. PETERS, Mr. CASSIDY, and Mr. VAN HOLLEN):

S. Res. 165. A resolution recognizing the importance of vaccinations and immunizations in the United States; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. BLUNT (for himself and Mr. HAWLEY):

S. Res. 166. A resolution expressing support for the designation of May 1, 2019, as "Silver Star Service Banner Day"; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. DAINES (for himself, Mr. KING, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. BENNET, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. GARDNER, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. BLUNT, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. REED, Mr. HOEVEN, Ms. STABENOW, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. UDALL, Ms. MCSALLY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. WARNER, Mr. ENZI, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. BOOZMAN, Ms. COLLINS, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, Mr. TILLIS, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. CARDIN, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. PETERS, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. WICKER, and Mr. BROWN):

S. Res. 167. A resolution designating the week of April 20, 2019, through April 28, 2019, as "National Park Week"; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. REED (for himself, Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina, Mr. JONES, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. BRAUN, Ms. CANTWELL, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. CARPER, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. COONS, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. ENZI, Ms. ERNST, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Ms. HASSAN, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. PETERS, Mr. ROBERTS, Ms. ROSEN, Mr. TESTER, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. WICKER, Mr. YOUNG, and Mr. PERDUE):

S. Res. 168. A resolution designating April 2019 as "Financial Literacy Month"; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. MERKLEY (for himself, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. WYDEN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, and Mr. KAINE):

S. Res. 169. A resolution requesting a statement under section 502B(c) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 with respect to violations of human rights by the Government of Saudi Arabia; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Ms. BALDWIN (for herself, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. COLLINS, and Mrs. SHAHEEN):

S. Res. 170. A resolution recognizing the Fifth Anniversary of the Chibok Girls Kidnapping by the Boko Haram Terrorist Organization and calling on the Government of Nigeria to redouble efforts to bring an end to the conflict in northeast and central Nigeria and to provide assistance to the victims; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. MERKLEY (for himself, Mr. COONS, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, and Mrs. FEINSTEIN):

S. Res. 171. A resolution expressing the sense of Congress regarding restoring United States bilateral assistance to the West Bank and Gaza; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. SCHATZ (for himself and Ms. HIRONO):

S. Con. Res. 14. A concurrent resolution authorizing the use of Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center for an event to celebrate the birthday of King Kamehameha I; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 29

At the request of Mr. WARNER, the names of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) were added as cosponsors of S. 29, a bill to establish the Office of Critical Technologies and Security, and for other purposes.

S. 151

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the names of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS), the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. KENNEDY), the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) and the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. HASSAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 151, a bill to deter criminal robocall violations and improve enforcement of section 227(b) of the Communications Act of 1934, and for other purposes.

S. 203

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 203, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend the railroad track maintenance credit, and for other purposes.

S. 213

At the request of Mr. JOHNSON, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BRAUN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 213, a bill to amend the SOAR Act.

S. 255

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 255, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to in-

clude individuals receiving Social Security Disability Insurance benefits under the work opportunity credit, increase the work opportunity credit for vocational rehabilitation referrals, qualified SSI recipients, and qualified SSDI recipients, expand the disabled access credit, and enhance the deduction for expenditures to remove architectural and transportation barriers in the handicapped and elderly.

S. 296

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) 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. 323

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 323, a bill to direct the Secretary of Education to establish the Recognition Inspiring School Employees (RISE) Program recognizing excellence exhibited by classified school employees providing services to students in prekindergarten through high school.

S. 342

At the request of Mr. YOUNG, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 342, a bill to reauthorize title VI of the Higher Education Act of 1965 in order to improve and encourage innovation in international education, and for other purposes.

S. 386

At the request of Mr. LEE, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 386, a bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to eliminate the per-country numerical limitation for employment-based immigrants, to increase the per-country numerical limitation for family-sponsored immigrants, and for other purposes.

S. 427

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the names of the Senator from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA) and the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) were added as cosponsors of S. 427, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to enhance activities of the National Institutes of Health with respect to research on autism spectrum disorder and enhance programs relating to autism, and for other purposes.

S. 509

At the request of Mr. MURPHY, the names of the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS), the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) and the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) were added as cosponsors of S. 509, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the United States Coast Guard.

S. 586

At the request of Mr. ROBERTS, the name of the Senator from South Da-

kota (Mr. THUNE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 586, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to remove the 96-hour physician certification requirement for inpatient critical access hospital services.

S. 622

At the request of Mr. JONES, the names of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN), the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL), the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON) and the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) were added as cosponsors of S. 622, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to repeal the requirement for reduction of survivor annuities under the Survivor Benefit Plan by veterans' dependency and indemnity compensation, and for other purposes.

S. 651

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 651, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to increase the age requirement with respect to eligibility for qualified ABLE programs.

S. 684

At the request of Mr. HEINRICH, the names of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CRAMER) and the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. SMITH) were added as cosponsors of S. 684, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the excise tax on high-cost employer-sponsored health coverage.

S. 693

At the request of Ms. WARREN, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) was added as a cosponsor of S. 693, a bill to amend title 36, United States Code, to require that the POW/MIA flag be displayed on all days that the flag of the United States is displayed on certain Federal property.

S. 696

At the request of Mr. MERKLEY, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 696, a bill to designate the same individual serving as the Chief Nurse Officer of the Public Health Service as the National Nurse for Public Health.

S. 715

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. HASSAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 715, a bill to improve the productivity and energy efficiency of the manufacturing sector by directing the Secretary of Energy, in coordination with the National Academies and other appropriate Federal agencies, to develop a national smart manufacturing plan and to provide assistance to small- and medium-sized manufacturers in implementing smart manufacturing programs, and for other purposes.

S. 716

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 716, a bill to impose sanctions

under the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act to combat corruption, money laundering, and impunity in Guatemala, and for other purposes.

S. 750

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the names of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN), the Senator from Nevada (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO), the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) and the Senator from Arizona (Ms. MCSALLY) were added as cosponsors of S. 750, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend the new markets tax credit, and for other purposes.

S. 785

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 785, a bill to improve mental health care provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

S. 852

At the request of Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Ms. ROSEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 852, a bill to provide for the consideration of a definition of anti-Semitism for the enforcement of Federal antidiscrimination laws concerning education programs or activities.

S. 867

At the request of Ms. HASSAN, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 867, a bill to protect students of institutions of higher education and the taxpayer investment in institutions of higher education by improving oversight and accountability of institutions of higher education, particularly for-profit colleges, improving protections for students and borrowers, and ensuring the integrity of postsecondary education programs, and for other purposes.

S. 895

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 895, a bill to provide for a permanent extension of the enforcement instruction on supervision requirements for outpatient therapeutic services in critical access and small rural hospitals.

S. 901

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 901, a bill to amend the Older Americans Act of 1965 to support individuals with younger onset Alzheimer's disease.

S. 926

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the names of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS), the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) were added as cosponsors of S. 926, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue

Code of 1986 to ensure that kombucha is exempt from any excise taxes and regulations imposed on alcoholic beverages.

S. 948

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 948, a bill to provide incentives to physicians to practice in rural and medically underserved communities, and for other purposes.

S. 988

At the request of Mrs. CAPITO, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 988, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to prohibit prescription drug plan sponsors and MA-PD organizations under the Medicare program from retroactively reducing payment on clean claims submitted by pharmacies.

S. 1013

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the names of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) and the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) were added as cosponsors of S. 1013, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize school-based health centers, and for other purposes.

S. 1026

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1026, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow workers an above-the-line deduction for union dues and expenses and to allow a miscellaneous itemized deduction for workers for all unreimbursed expenses incurred in the trade or business of being an employee.

S. 1043

At the request of Mr. LEE, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. LANKFORD) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1043, a bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to provide compensatory time for employees in the private sector.

S. 1062

At the request of Mrs. FISCHER, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1062, a bill to provide authorization for nonpecuniary damages in an action resulting from a cruise ship accident occurring on the high seas.

S. 1081

At the request of Mr. MANCHIN, the names of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN), the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW), the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) and the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. SMITH) were added as cosponsors of S. 1081, a bill to amend title 54, United States Code, to provide permanent, dedicated funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund, and for other purposes.

S. 1125

At the request of Mr. TILLIS, the names of the Senator from Wyoming

(Mr. ENZI), the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN), the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE) and the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) were added as cosponsors of S. 1125, a bill to amend the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act.

S. CON. RES. 5

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mrs. FISCHER) was added as a cosponsor of S. Con. Res. 5, a concurrent resolution supporting the Local Radio Freedom Act.

S. CON. RES. 13

At the request of Mr. GARDNER, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. Con. Res. 13, a concurrent resolution reaffirming the United States commitment to Taiwan and to the implementation of the Taiwan Relations Act.

S. RES. 85

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the name of the Senator from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 85, a resolution recognizing the 100th anniversary of the founding of Easterseals, a leading advocate and service provider for children and adults with disabilities, including veterans and older adults, and their caregivers and families.

S. RES. 120

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 120, a resolution opposing efforts to delegitimize the State of Israel and the Global Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions Movement targeting Israel.

S. RES. 144

At the request of Mr. DAINES, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 144, a resolution designating May 5, 2019, as the "National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Native Women and Girls".

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. INHOFE (for himself and Mr. REED) (by request):

S. 1215. A bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2020 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, Senator REED and I are today introducing, by request, the Administration's proposed National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2020. As is the case with any bill that is introduced by request, we introduce this bill for the purpose of placing the Administration's proposals before Congress and the public without expressing our own views on the substance of these proposals. As Chairman and Ranking Member of the Armed Services Committee, we look forward

to giving the Administration's requested legislation our most careful review and thoughtful consideration.

By Mr. ENZI (for himself, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. BRAUN, Mr. BLUNT, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. INHOFE, Ms. MCSALLY, Mr. THUNE, Mr. SASSE, Mr. ROMNEY, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. SCOTT, of South Carolina, Ms. ERNST, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. WICKER, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. DAINES, Mr. LANKFORD, and Mr. GRAHAM):

S. 1170. A bill to amend the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 to establish additional criteria for determining when employers may join together in a group or association of employers that will be treated as an employer under section 3(5) of such Act for purposes of sponsoring a group health plan, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I rise to introduce the Association Health Plans Act of 2019. I have been championing association health plans, which I sometimes call small business health plans, for more than 15 years. As a small business owner, I understand firsthand the difficulties these employers face trying to provide health insurance for their employees. Small business owners want to provide comprehensive health insurance to their employees, but it can be a real struggle to afford those plans. In part due to these pressures, the number of small businesses offering coverage has dropped substantially over the years, from 47 percent in 2000 to 30 percent in 2017.

Few families are shielded from the rising costs of healthcare and, by extension, the rising cost of health insurance, but among the hardest hit are American small businesses.

Small businesses have limited ability to pool risk and lack coverage in the market, so they often end up paying more for health insurance than large employers who have more buying power. According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, small businesses pay about 8 to 18 percent more on average than large businesses for the same health insurance policy.

To put it another way, one family shoe store probably can't get an insurance company to play ball, but 1,000 family shoe stores probably could. This is the premise of the association health plans. Let's let small businesses band together and leverage their shared power in numbers to obtain comprehensive and affordable health insurance as though they were a single large employer.

This does not mean they are allowed to cut corners. The coverage offered to association members is subject to the consumer protection requirements that apply to large employers. That includes important consumer protections

established on a bipartisan basis under the Employee Retirement Income Security Act, ERISA, the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, HIPAA, and the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act, COBRA. Association health plans also comply with the Affordable Care Act requirements for large-employer health plans.

Association health plans are not a new concept. They have long been permitted under Federal law. For example, the Wyoming Chambers Health Benefit Plan has served Wyoming's Chambers of Commerce since 2007. It currently offers comprehensive and affordable coverage to 11 local Chambers of Commerce, 52 employers, and 255 employees.

Last year, the Trump administration issued a new rule that made it easier for small businesses to band together for the purposes of offering an association health plan. Specifically, the Department of Labor created a new "pathway" for forming the association so that small businesses can band together by common industry or common geography. For example, flower shops across the Nation might band together to offer an association health plan, or small businesses in unrelated professions might band together just within my State of Wyoming.

The final rule also allowed self-employed Americans to receive coverage through association health plans established under the new pathway. It did not rescind the old pathway, so association health plans in existence before the final rule can continue to operate unchanged, or new ones can use that pathway to form.

The final rule also does not change existing ERISA preemption rules that authorize broad State insurance regulation of association health plans either through health insurance issuers or directly in the case of self-insured association health plans. I will repeat that again. The final rule does not change existing ERISA preemption rules that authorize broad State insurance regulation of association health plans either through health insurance issuers or directly in the case of self-insured association health plans.

Roughly 30 association health plans have formed under the new pathway since the Department of Labor finalized the rule. For example, the Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce formed an association health plan covering 500 small businesses and 100 sole proprietors. The Georgia Chamber of Commerce began taking steps to launch a new self-insured association health plan that could eventually enroll 800,000 people. Two Michigan small business associations joined forces to create an association health plan that has enrolled nearly 400 small businesses throughout the State.

There are likely more to come. According to the Congressional Budget Office, about 4 million people are expected to enroll in association health

plans by 2023, including 400,000 who would otherwise be uninsured.

All of this is to demonstrate one simple fact: Association health plans work. They provide coverage to people who would not otherwise have it, and they provide comprehensive health benefits at an affordable price.

Unfortunately, a Federal district judge vacated the Labor Department's final rule, threatening to disrupt coverage for tens of thousands of enrollees in association health plans formed under the final rule and threatening to restrict the ability of small businesses, working families, and self-employed Americans to band together to obtain affordable and high-quality health insurance in the future.

My bill will simply codify the Labor Department's final rule to provide certainty for current enrollees and to ensure the pathway remains available for new association health plans to form. It is not intended to disrupt the State authority. That is important so we don't need to build another Washington bureaucracy, and you can be assured of better help if you need it. Our State insurance commissioners are much closer to the real problems confronted by insurance consumers and are better able to deal with those issues at a local level. It is also not intended to affect association health plans created by other means than the pathway established in the final rule.

There has been a lot of discussion in the Senate lately about protections for people with preexisting conditions. I support protecting people with preexisting conditions. Every Republican Senator I know does too. It is important to point out that robust coverage doesn't mean very much if you can't afford to buy it. Unfortunately, that has been the experience for a lot of small business owners and self-employed Americans in my State. Association health plans can help solve this problem for small businesses. The Labor Department's final rule didn't just expand eligibility for a type of health insurance that has long been available for some small business owners in the United States. It made the promise of comprehensive and affordable health insurance coverage a reality for the same Americans who have identified the cost of health insurance as the No. 1 problem facing small businesses for the last 30 years.

This is not to say there is not more that can be done. The final rule is an important step forward, but it is not a silver bullet. There is more Congress can do to advance association health plans, and there is more Congress can do to improve our healthcare system and address the issues of rising healthcare costs and rising drug prices, all while ensuring protections for people with preexisting conditions, but one thing we can do immediately to help people with preexisting conditions is to pass the bill I am introducing today. The district court judge struck down the Labor Department's final

rule and did not issue a stay, so thousands of currently covered individuals are at risk of losing their health insurance coverage. Passing this bill will ensure that they do not.

Small businesses ought to have the opportunity to band together and leverage their combined strength so they can negotiate and provide their employees with comprehensive and affordable health insurance coverage. That coverage should be subject to the same consumer protection requirements that apply to large employers offering similar coverage. Small businesses and their employees are the bedrock of our country's economy, and proper health insurance coverage is a key element of family well-being and peace of mind. This bill will strengthen those foundations so we can continue to prosper as a country.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 159—DESIGNATING APRIL 24, 2019, AS “MENINGITIS B AWARENESS DAY”

Mr. PETERS (for himself and Ms. STABENOW) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 159

Whereas it is the custom of the Senate to increase awareness of serious illnesses that affect the lives of the people of the United States;

Whereas meningococcal disease, more commonly referred to as “bacterial meningitis”, is any infection caused by the bacterium *Neisseria meningitidis*;

Whereas meningococcal disease is uncommon, and the flu-like symptoms of the disease make diagnosis difficult;

Whereas meningococcal disease can cause serious illnesses, such as—

(1) an infection of the lining of the brain and spinal column known as “meningitis”; and

(2) blood infections known as “sepsis”;

Whereas the disease strikes quickly and may lead to severe or permanent disabilities, such as hearing loss, brain damage, seizures, and limb amputation, and may even lead to death within 24 to 48 hours;

Whereas, although 1 in 10 people are carriers of *Neisseria meningitidis* bacteria with no signs or symptoms of disease, *Neisseria meningitidis* bacteria may sometimes cause illnesses;

Whereas there are different strains of meningococcal disease, including strains caused by *Neisseria meningitidis* serogroups A, C, W, Y, and B;

Whereas vaccines exist to help provide protection against all strains of meningococcal disease caused by the serogroups common in the United States;

Whereas meningococcal disease is spread from person to person via the exchange of *Neisseria meningitidis* bacteria through respiratory and throat secretions during close or lengthy contact, including contact such as—

(1) sharing beverages or eating utensils;

(2) kissing; and

(3) spending time in close contact with someone who is sick or who carries the bacteria;

Whereas community settings in which large groups of people gather, such as college

campuses, may increase the risk of transmission of meningococcal disease;

Whereas, because of the way meningococcal disease is spread through close personal contact, the social behavior of young adults ages 16 to 23 increases the risk of those adults contracting the disease;

Whereas students in dormitory settings and at crowded events are particularly vulnerable to meningococcal disease;

Whereas college students ages 18 to 24 were found to be 3.5 times more likely to contract meningitis B, the strain of meningococcal disease caused by serogroup B, compared to their peers not in school;

Whereas the single best way to help prevent all common strains of meningococcal disease is to be vaccinated with—

(1) a MenACWY vaccine to protect against the strains of meningococcal disease caused by serogroups A, C, W, and Y; and

(2) a separate MenB vaccine to protect against the strain of meningococcal disease caused by serogroup B;

Whereas the incidence of meningococcal disease in the United States has steadily declined from 1.20 cases per 100,000 individuals in 1995 to a historic low of 0.11 cases per 100,000 individuals in 2017;

Whereas, although vaccines for serogroups A, C, W, and Y have been available for many years, a vaccine for serogroup B was not available until 2014;

Whereas, despite the existence of a vaccine for serogroup B since 2014, meningitis B has been responsible for all United States college campus outbreaks since 2011, with some cases resulting in death;

Whereas, because the strain of meningococcal disease caused by serogroup B requires a new, separate vaccination, students heading to college may mistakenly think that, if they received the MenACWY vaccine, they are protected against all strains of the disease, and may not realize that they are not protected against the strain caused by serogroup B;

Whereas, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *Neisseria meningitidis* serogroup B accounts for approximately half of all cases of meningococcal disease among individuals ages 15 to 22 in the United States;

Whereas vaccination for serogroups A, C, W, and Y is routinely recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention;

Whereas the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that decisions to vaccinate adolescents and young adults ages 16 to 23 against the strain of meningococcal disease caused by serogroup B should be made at the individual level with health care providers;

Whereas a recent study found that many doctors are not talking to patients about the MenB vaccine, including 49 percent of pediatricians and 69 percent of family physicians who do not regularly discuss the MenB vaccine during routine visits with individuals ages 16 to 18;

Whereas meningitis vaccines are covered by public and private health insurance plans, and individuals should be encouraged to contact health insurance plans to determine coverage of MenACWY and MenB vaccines;

Whereas the Federal Vaccines for Children program covers both MenACWY and MenB vaccines for—

(1) children and adults who have no health insurance or whose health insurance does not cover those vaccines; and

(2) children less than 19 years of age who are American Indian, Alaska Native, or eligible for Medicaid or other State health plan coverage;

Whereas, in 2012, before meningitis B vaccines were available in the United States,

Kimberly Coffey, a 17-year-old high school senior on Long Island, New York, died from meningitis B;

Whereas Patti Wukovits, R.N., the mother of Kimberly Coffey, created the Kimberly Coffey Foundation, a vital organization with the mission of—

(1) providing education to the public and health care professionals about meningococcal disease; and

(2) advocating for two types of vaccination for meningococcal disease;

Whereas the goal of the Kimberly Coffey Foundation is to ensure that no other family will endure the loss of a child or have a loved one experience the devastating effects of meningococcal disease;

Whereas June 15, 2019, marks the seventh anniversary of the death of Kimberly Coffey;

Whereas 19-year-old Emily Nicole Stillman, while a sophomore at Kalamazoo College in Kalamazoo, Michigan, tragically contracted bacterial meningitis before meningitis B vaccines were available in the United States;

Whereas, on February 2, 2013, after just 36 hours in the hospital, Emily Nicole Stillman passed away;

Whereas, in 2014, Alicia Stillman, the mother of Emily Nicole Stillman, created the Emily Stillman Foundation—

(1) to preserve the memory of Emily Nicole Stillman;

(2) to advocate for organ and tissue donation; and

(3) to advocate for the increased availability of vaccines for all vaccine-preventable diseases, including the increased availability of meningitis vaccines for children;

Whereas February 2019 marked the sixth anniversary of the death of Emily Stillman;

Whereas the Meningitis B Action Project, a joint initiative of the Kimberly Coffey Foundation and the Emily Stillman Foundation, is committed to raising awareness about meningococcal disease throughout the United States;

Whereas students, parents, educators, and health care providers should learn about all strains of meningococcal disease and how to protect against all strains of the disease; and

Whereas April 24, 2019, should be designated as “Meningitis B Awareness Day” to coincide with the observance of World Meningitis Day: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates April 24, 2019, as “Meningitis B Awareness Day”; and

(2) encourages—

(A) all individuals to contact health insurance plans to determine coverage of MenACWY and MenB vaccines; and

(B) students, parents, educators, and health care providers to learn about all strains of meningococcal disease and how to protect against all strains of the disease.

SENATE RESOLUTION 160—RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF DEFENSE LABORATORIES TO THE TECHNOLOGICAL DOMINANCE OF THE UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES AND SUPPORTING THE DESIGNATION OF APRIL 25, 2019, AS “DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE LABORATORY DAY 2019”

Mr. JONES (for himself, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. REED, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. WICKER, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, Mr. PETERS, Mr. TILLIS, and Mr. BROWN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Armed Services:

S. RES. 160

Whereas the national network of laboratories, research and development centers, and engineering centers that are owned and funded by the Department of Defense (referred to in this preamble as the “defense laboratories”) should be commended as reservoirs of technical talent available to support—

- (1) immediate, tactical military innovation; and
- (2) foundational research, science, and engineering to address long-term challenges;

Whereas the national security innovation emanating from the defense laboratories will be predicated on—

- (1) a sufficient pipeline of trained and experienced scientists and engineers eligible for a security clearance; and

- (2) the facilities, infrastructure, instrumentation, and support capabilities needed—

- (A) to attract and retain those scientists and engineers; and

- (B) to bolster the activities of those scientists and engineers to meet the technology problems of the Department of Defense;

Whereas research and development supported by the Department of Defense has—

- (1) led to new products and processes for state-of-the-art Armed Forces weapons and technology; and

- (2) technically informed new approaches and concepts of operation that will be needed to keep the Armed Forces ahead of future adversaries of the United States;

Whereas defense laboratories—

- (1) are critical elements of the innovation ecosystem; and

- (2) compose indispensable elements in the technology transfer community when leveraged with partners in—

- (A) State and local governments;
- (B) regional organizations;
- (C) academia; and
- (D) nonprofit research institutions;

Whereas defense laboratories have earned prestigious national and international awards for research and technology transfer efforts, providing a foundation of technological leadership for—

- (1) the Armed Forces; and
- (2) the United States;

Whereas the innovations that are produced at defense laboratories fuel economic growth by creating new industries, companies, and jobs; and

Whereas April 25, 2019, is an appropriate day to designate as “Department of Defense Laboratory Day 2019”: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

- (1) supports the designation of April 25, 2019, as “Department of Defense Laboratory Day 2019” in celebration of all of the work and accomplishments of the national network of laboratories, research and development centers, and engineering centers that are owned and funded by the Department of Defense (referred to in this resolution as the “defense laboratories”);

- (2) recognizes that a key to maintaining the innovation and competitiveness of the United States in a global economy is to continue to support federally sponsored research and development;

- (3) acknowledges that the knowledge base, technologies, and techniques generated in the national network of defense laboratories serve as a foundation for additional efforts relating to the Armed Forces in the defense industrial base;

- (4) commits to find ways to increase investment in the national network of defense laboratories in order to increase support of—

- (A) federally sponsored research and development;

- (B) critical scientific, technical, engineering, and mathematics (referred to in this resolution as “STEM”) personnel;

- (C) STEM development activities; and

- (D) necessary supporting infrastructure and facilities;

- (5) encourages defense laboratories, Federal agencies, and Congress to hold an outreach event on April 25, 2019, “Department of Defense Laboratory Day 2019”, to make the public more aware of the important contributions that defense laboratories make to national defense and economic prosperity; and

- (6) recognizes the outstanding dedication, qualifications, service, and accomplishments of the scientists, engineers, technicians, and support staff of the defense laboratories.

SENATE RESOLUTION 161—SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF WORLD MALARIA DAY

Mr. WICKER (for himself and Mr. COONS) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 161

Whereas April 25 of each year is recognized internationally as World Malaria Day;

Whereas malaria is a leading cause of death and disease in many developing countries, despite being preventable and treatable;

Whereas fighting malaria is in the national interest of the United States because—

- (1) reducing the risk of malaria protects members of the Armed Forces and other people of the United States serving overseas in malaria-endemic regions; and

- (2) reducing malaria deaths helps to lower risks of instability in less developed countries;

Whereas United States support for efforts to fight malaria—

- (1) is in the diplomatic, economic, and humanitarian interests of the United States;

- (2) generates goodwill toward the United States; and

- (3) highlights the values of the people of the United States through the work of governmental, nongovernmental, and faith-based organizations of the United States;

Whereas, in 2017, 87 countries and areas had ongoing malaria transmissions;

Whereas nearly ½ of the population of the world is at risk for malaria, with the World Health Organization African region carrying a disproportionately high burden, with 92 percent of malaria cases and 93 percent of malaria deaths in the world;

Whereas young children and pregnant women are particularly vulnerable to, and disproportionately affected by, malaria;

Whereas children under the age of 5 account for an estimated 61 percent of malaria deaths each year;

Whereas the World Malaria Report 2018 published by the World Health Organization states that, in 2017, approximately 435,000 people died from malaria, which is a decrease of approximately 50 percent, as compared to 2000;

Whereas the United States Government has played a leading role in the recent progress made toward reducing the global burden of malaria, particularly through the President’s Malaria Initiative and the contribution of the United States to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria; and

Whereas the United States Government is pursuing a comprehensive approach to ending malaria deaths through the President’s Malaria Initiative, which is led by the United States Agency for International Development and implemented with assistance from the Centers for Disease Control and

Prevention, the Department of State, the Department of Health and Human Services, the National Institutes of Health, the Department of Defense, and private sector entities: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

- (1) supports the goals and ideals of World Malaria Day;

- (2) recognizes the importance of reducing malaria prevalence and deaths to improve overall child and maternal health, especially in sub-Saharan Africa;

- (3) commends the recent progress made toward reducing global malaria morbidity, mortality, and prevalence, particularly through the efforts of the President’s Malaria Initiative and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria;

- (4) welcomes ongoing public-private partnerships to research and develop more effective and affordable tools for malaria surveillance, diagnostics, treatment, and prevention;

- (5) recognizes the goals, priorities, and authorities to combat malaria set forth in the United States Leadership Against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria Act of 2003 (Public Law 108-25; 117 Stat. 711) and the Tom Lantos and Henry J. Hyde United States Global Leadership Against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria Reauthorization Act of 2008 (Public Law 110-293; 122 Stat. 2918);

- (6) supports continued leadership by the United States in bilateral, multilateral, and private sector efforts to combat malaria and to work with endemic countries in developing and effectively executing their own national responses to malaria; and

- (7) encourages other members of the international community to sustain and increase their support for, and financial contributions to, efforts to combat malaria worldwide.

Mr. JONES. Mr. President, today I wish to offer a resolution recognizing the critical contributions the laboratories of the Department of Defense make to the national security of this country. The 63 Laboratories, Warfare Centers, and Engineering Centers of the Department of Defense spread across 22 states and the District of Columbia are important components of the U.S. warfighting establishment and are instrumental in maintaining the technological edge of our military forces. My resolution would highlight the contributions of these laboratories by designating April 25, 2019, as “Department of Defense Laboratory Day 2019” in order to celebrate the work and accomplishments of the men and women in those defense labs. Many of the technological advantages upon which our military rests are rooted in the diligent, dedicated work and innovative mindset of the scientists and engineers in our defense labs. Their work drives not only the near-term, tactical innovations needed to support our soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines in the wars of the past century, but they are critical foundations of research that will fuel the processes and technologies needed for the next century and beyond. In addition to the cutting-edge research and development of new technologies, our defense laboratories are a resource to the national economy and innovation ecosystem of the nation—providing the people, facilities, experience, operational problems, and capabilities for technology transfer that support the warfighter, industry,

academia, other parts of federal government, and even many of our allies and partners throughout the world. The nearly 76,000 scientists and engineers employed by the Department of Defense labs are exemplars of public service, and the outstanding dedication, qualifications, service, and accomplishments of these scientists, engineers, technicians, and support staff of the defense laboratories should make all Americans proud.

In recognizing the men and women of the defense labs, I am especially proud of the contributions Alabama makes. As the home to multiple Army laboratories—including the Aviation and Missile Center, Space and Missile Defense Technical Center, and the Army Aeromedical Research Laboratory—Alabama punches far above its weight in terms of contributions of people, facilities and resources to the defense laboratory network. This results in one of the highest per capita concentrations of scientists and engineers in the country, with an extraordinary economic impact on the State. Not only do these labs provide thousands of jobs in Alabama, they bring in billions of dollars in investments and return those dollars back into the communities in which they reside.

The network of Department of Defense laboratories is not just an asset for the Department, but is a national asset as well. With over a hundred DoD-funded Nobel prizes, and thousands of patents and publications, defense laboratories are technological and economic engines on par with any industry or university laboratory. I applaud the work of the defense labs, and all of the scientists and engineers that make them successful, especially those in Alabama. I urge my colleagues to support the contributions of the labs by supporting the proclamation of April 25th as the 2019 Laboratory Day.

SENATE RESOLUTION 162—SUPPORTING THE DESIGNATION OF APRIL 2019 AS “NATIONAL DONATE LIFE MONTH”

Ms. WARREN (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions:

S. RES. 162

Whereas, in April 2019, more than 113,000 individuals were on the official waiting list for organ donation managed by the Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network established under section 372 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 274) (referred to in this preamble as the “national transplant waiting list”);

Whereas, in 2018, 36,529 transplant procedures were performed in the United States with organs from 10,721 deceased donors and 6,841 living donors, yet on average, 20 people die each day while waiting for an organ donation;

Whereas more than 150,000,000 people in the United States are registered to be organ and tissue donors, yet the demand for donated organs outweighs the supply of organs made available each day;

Whereas, in 2018, a record was set for the number of organ transplants performed in a single year, for the sixth consecutive year, yet every 10 minutes, 1 person is added to the national transplant waiting list;

Whereas organ donation from a single deceased donor can benefit up to 8 individuals, and tissue donation from a single deceased donor can benefit an additional 75 individuals;

Whereas a living donor can donate a kidney or a portion of a lung or the liver to save the life of another individual; and

Whereas April is traditionally recognized as “National Donate Life Month”: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the designation of April 2019 as “National Donate Life Month”;

(2) supports the goals and ideals of National Donate Life Month;

(3) supports promoting awareness of organ and tissue donation by increasing public awareness;

(4) encourages States, localities, and territories of the United States to support the goals and ideals of National Donate Life Month by issuing a proclamation to designate April as “National Donate Life Month”;

(5) commends each individual who—

(A) is a registered organ donor who may have a positive effect on the life of another individual; or

(B) indicates a wish to become an organ and tissue donor;

(6) acknowledges the grief of families who face the loss of loved ones and commends the families who, in their grief, choose to donate the organs and tissues of deceased family members;

(7) recognizes the generous contribution made by each living individual who has donated an organ or tissue to save and enhance the life of another individual;

(8) acknowledges the advances in medical technology that have enabled organ transplantation with organs donated by living individuals to become a viable treatment option for an increasing number of patients;

(9) commends the medical professionals and organ donation and transplantation experts who have worked to improve organ donation of deceased and living individuals and to increase the number of deceased and living donors, thus saving more lives; and

(10) salutes each individual who has helped to give the gift of life by supporting, promoting, and encouraging organ and tissue donation.

SENATE RESOLUTION 163—COMMENDING AND CONGRATULATING THE LADY BEARS OF BAYLOR UNIVERSITY ON WINNING THE 2019 NATIONAL COLLEGIATE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION DIVISION I WOMEN’S BASKETBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

Mr. CORNYN (for himself and Mr. CRUZ) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 163

Whereas, on April 7, 2019, the women’s basketball team of Baylor University, the Lady Bears, won its third National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I women’s basketball championship (referred to in this preamble as the “national championship”) by defeating the University of Notre Dame by a score of 82–81 and completing the season with an impressive overall record of 37–1;

Whereas Head Coach Kim Mulkey is the only woman in the history of women’s bas-

ketball to have played and coached a national championship team and has now led the Lady Bears to 3 national championship titles during her tenure at Baylor University;

Whereas junior forward Lauren Cox served to bring her team together throughout the season and played with commendable skill and spirit during the national championship game, scoring 8 points and 8 rebounds before leaving the game due to an injury;

Whereas point guard Chloe Jackson, named the Most Outstanding Player of the Final Four, showed immense fortitude and exemplary leadership by rallying her team during the last quarter of the game to honor her injured teammate and bring home a victory for the Lady Bears with a tiebreaking layup in the last 3.9 seconds of the fourth quarter;

Whereas all of the following players should be congratulated for their teamwork, dedication, and display of impressive athletic talent: NaLyssa Smith, Didi Richards, Trinity Oliver, Honesty Scott-Grayson, Aquira DeCosta, Moon Ursin, Lauren Cox, Juicy Landrum, Kalani Brown, Chloe Jackson, Queen Egbo, and Caitlin Bickle;

Whereas the Lady Bears displayed impressive courage and composure facing off against the Fighting Irish of the University of Notre Dame, defenders of the 2018 national championship title;

Whereas the women of Baylor University’s 2018–2019 women’s basketball team have continuously pursued excellence in not only athletics, but academics as well;

Whereas the Lady Bears have proven themselves a paragon of hard work and sportsmanship, as exemplified by an impressive season of 37 wins and only 1 loss and championship titles in both the Big 12 women’s basketball tournament and the Big 12 regular season;

Whereas the accomplishments of the Lady Bears in their 2018–2019 season inspire strength, unity, and cooperation in the hearts of women across the State of Texas; and

Whereas the Lady Bears are the pride of their loyal fans, current students, alumni, and the Lone Star State: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate congratulates the Lady Bears of Baylor University on winning the 2019 National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I women’s basketball championship and completing a successful 2018–2019 season.

SENATE RESOLUTION 164—COMMENDING THE UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA MEN’S BASKETBALL TEAM FOR WINNING THE 2019 NATIONAL COLLEGIATE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION DIVISION I MEN’S BASKETBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

Mr. WARNER (for himself and Mr. Kaine) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 164

Whereas on Monday, April 8, 2019, the University of Virginia men’s basketball team (referred to in this preamble as the “Virginia Cavaliers”) won the 2019 National Collegiate Athletic Association (referred to in this preamble as the “NCAA”) Division I Men’s Basketball Championship by defeating the Texas Tech Red Raiders by a score of 85–77 at U.S. Bank Stadium in Minneapolis, Minnesota;

Whereas the Virginia Cavaliers made history by winning the first National Championship in men’s basketball for the University of Virginia;

Whereas the Virginia Cavaliers were regular season co-champions of the Atlantic Coast Conference (referred to in this preamble as the “ACC”), marking the fourth time the team has won this title in the past 6 seasons;

Whereas the Virginia Cavaliers finished the 2018–2019 season with a record of 35–3 and as the top-ranked scoring defense in the country, holding opponents to just 55.5 points per game;

Whereas Tony Bennett, the head coach of the Virginia Cavaliers, has, along with his staff, established a program built on “The Five Pillars” — Humility, Passion, Unity, Servanthood, and Thankfulness;

Whereas Coach Bennett has, in his 10 seasons at the University of Virginia, been named National Coach of the Year 3 times, placing him second all-time behind legendary coach John Wooden;

Whereas for the second consecutive season, Coach Bennett was named ACC Coach of the Year;

Whereas De’Andre Hunter and Kyle Guy received All-ACC First Team honors for the 2018–2019 season;

Whereas Ty Jerome received All-ACC Second Team honors for the 2018–2019 season;

Whereas De’Andre Hunter was named ACC Defensive Player of the Year and was named to the ACC All-Defensive Team;

Whereas to advance to the Final Four, true freshman Kihei Clark executed a precision half-court pass to teammate Mamadi Diakite, setting up his buzzer-beating tying basket;

Whereas the pass from Clark to Diakite was termed “the play of the century” by teammate Ty Jerome;

Whereas De’Andre Hunter finished the championship game with 27 points and 9 rebounds in 44 minutes;

Whereas Kyle Guy finished the championship game with 24 points and a 53.3 field goal percentage in 45 minutes;

Whereas De’Andre Hunter, Kyle Guy, and Ty Jerome—all part of the Virginia Cavaliers’ 2016 recruiting class — scored 67 of Virginia’s 85 points in the championship game;

Whereas Kyle Guy was 11-for-11 in his final free throws of the tournament;

Whereas the Virginia Cavaliers made all 12 of their free throws during overtime of the championship game;

Whereas the entire Virginia Cavaliers team will forever be remembered for their resilience in overcoming defeat in the 2018 NCAA Tournament by winning the national championship just 1 year later;

Whereas the Virginia Cavaliers represented the Commonwealth of Virginia with remarkable class, sportsmanship, dedication, and teamwork; and

Whereas the Virginia Cavaliers brought pride to the Commonwealth of Virginia, the City of Charlottesville, and the greater University of Virginia community: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) congratulates and honors the University of Virginia men’s basketball team for their performance in the 2019 National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I Men’s Basketball Tournament;

(2) highlights and celebrates the grit, resilience, and commitment to excellence of the players, coaches, managers, parents, and families of the Virginia Cavaliers; and

(3) respectfully requests that the Secretary of the Senate transmit an enrolled copy of this resolution to—

(A) the President of the University of Virginia, James E. Ryan;

(B) the Director of Athletics at the University of Virginia, Carla Williams; and

(C) the head coach of the University of Virginia men’s basketball team, Tony Bennett.

SENATE RESOLUTION 165—RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF VACCINATIONS AND IMMUNIZATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES

Ms. DUCKWORTH (for herself, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. REED, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. BROWN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. COONS, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. KING, Mr. PETERS, Mr. CASSIDY, and Mr. VAN HOLLEN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 165

Whereas the contributions of Louis Pasteur and Edward Jenner to the discovery of the principles of vaccinology are among the most consequential health findings in human history;

Whereas a vaccine made possible the eradication of smallpox, saving millions of lives;

Whereas, because of the vaccine for polio, a highly infectious disease caused by the poliovirus, the international community—

(1) has eliminated polio in all but 3 countries; and

(2) has saved an estimated 15,000 Americans from paralysis annually;

Whereas vaccines have dramatically reduced the spread of debilitating and potentially life-threatening diseases, including—

- (1) diphtheria;
- (2) tetanus;
- (3) measles;
- (4) mumps; and
- (5) rubella;

Whereas vaccines have prevented the spread of infectious and potentially fatal diseases, including—

- (1) chickenpox;
- (2) shingles;
- (3) influenza;
- (4) hepatitis A;
- (5) hepatitis B;
- (6) meningococcal disease;
- (7) pneumococcal disease;
- (8) rotavirus;
- (9) pertussis (also known as “whooping cough”); and
- (10) meningitis;

Whereas the vaccine-preventable human papillomavirus (also known as “HPV”) is known to cause certain types of cancer;

Whereas the scientific and medical communities are in overwhelming consensus that vaccines are effective and safe;

Whereas misinformation about vaccine safety and the dissemination of unfounded and debunked theories about the dangers of vaccinations pose a great risk to public health;

Whereas scientifically sound education and outreach campaigns about the importance of vaccination and immunization are fundamental for a well-informed public;

Whereas communities with low vaccination rates compromise, in a particular way, the health and livelihood of—

- (1) infants;
- (2) young children;
- (3) seniors;
- (4) individuals with immunodeficiency disorders; and
- (5) individuals with weakened or compromised immune systems, including individuals taking medication that affects the immune system, such as medications to treat cancer;

Whereas substantial research has shown that vaccination is a highly cost-effective form of preventive medicine;

Whereas the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (referred to in this preamble as the “CDC”) estimates that, between 1994

and 2013, vaccinations saved nearly \$295,000,000,000 in direct costs and \$1,380,000,000,000 in total societal costs in the United States;

Whereas vaccines in the United States—

- (1) undergo extensive safety and efficacy testing before licensure by the Food and Drug Administration; and
- (2) are continually monitored for adverse events;

Whereas there are 4 post-marketing surveillance systems in the United States tracking adverse events after vaccination;

Whereas the CDC estimates that—

(1) vaccinations will prevent more than 21,000,000 hospitalizations and 732,000 deaths among children born between 1994 and 2013; and

(2) vaccines save the lives of an estimated 2,500,000 children under age 5 each year;

Whereas 1 in 5 children worldwide lack access to common vaccines and, as a result, an estimated 1,500,000 people die each year from vaccine-preventable diseases or complications of vaccine-preventable diseases, such as diarrhea and pneumonia;

Whereas strong investments in biomedical research to improve existing vaccines and develop many more life-saving vaccines are beneficial to all people;

Whereas a robust immunization infrastructure, by preventing and isolating outbreaks of infectious diseases at the source, is essential to the public health and well-being of the people of the United States;

Whereas each State determines the vaccination requirements for the people of that State;

Whereas State vaccination requirements are informed by recommendations approved by the CDC and developed by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices;

Whereas encouraging high vaccination rates and promoting vaccine confidence in the United States protects the people of the United States from contracting and spreading vaccine-preventable diseases;

Whereas the World Health Organization (referred to in this preamble as the “WHO”) recently identified vaccine hesitancy as a health threat for 2019;

Whereas addressing the many factors that contribute to vaccine hesitancy is crucial to increasing vaccination rates and improving or achieving herd immunity;

Whereas routine and up-to-date vaccination is the most effective method available to prevent the transmission of potentially fatal infectious diseases; and

Whereas the United States has been a leader in promoting vaccinations around the world through—

- (1) the United States Agency for International Development;
- (2) the CDC;
- (3) Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance;
- (4) the Global Polio Eradication Initiative;
- (5) the United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund (commonly known as “UNICEF”);
- (6) the WHO; and
- (7) many other multilateral and non-governmental organizations: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) commends the international community, global and domestic health organizations, the private sector, school and community leaders, and faith-based organizations for their tireless work and immense contributions to bolstering global and domestic health through vaccination;

(2) affirms that vaccines and immunizations save lives and are essential to maintain—

- (A) the public health; and
- (B) the economic and national security of the United States;

(3) recognizes that—

(A) low vaccination rates or the lack of vaccination can create an environment in which a public health crisis could emerge;

(B) vaccines—

(i) are approved by the Food and Drug Administration (referred to in this resolving clause as the “FDA”) as safe and effective; and

(ii) meet the gold standard of safety established by the FDA; and

(C) the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention advises medical providers and parents in the United States that the benefits of currently recommended vaccines greatly outweigh the risks of those vaccines;

(4) encourages a continued commitment to biomedical research—

(A) to improve vaccines; and

(B) to develop new vaccines against other infectious and fatal diseases; and

(5) urges all people, in consultation with their health care providers, to follow the scientific evidence and consensus of medical experts in favor of timely vaccinations to protect—

(A) the individual vaccinated; and

(B) the children, family, and community of the individual vaccinated.

SENATE RESOLUTION 166—EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE DESIGNATION OF MAY 1, 2019, AS “SILVER STAR SERVICE BANNER DAY”

Mr. BLUNT (for himself and Mr. HAWLEY) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 166

Whereas the Senate has always honored the sacrifices made by the wounded and ill members of the Armed Forces;

Whereas the Silver Star Service Banner has come to represent the members of the Armed Forces and veterans who were wounded or became ill in combat in the wars fought by the United States;

Whereas the Silver Star Families of America was formed to help the people of the United States remember the sacrifices made by the wounded and ill members of the Armed Forces by designing and manufacturing Silver Star Service Banners and Silver Star Flags for that purpose;

Whereas the sole mission of the Silver Star Families of America is to evoke memories of the sacrifices made by members of the Armed Forces and veterans on behalf of the United States through the presence of a Silver Star Service Banner in a window or a Silver Star Flag flying;

Whereas the sacrifices made by members of the Armed Forces and veterans on behalf of the United States should never be forgotten; and

Whereas May 1, 2019, is an appropriate date to designate as “Silver Star Service Banner Day”: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the designation of May 1, 2019, as “Silver Star Service Banner Day”; and

(2) calls upon the people of the United States to observe Silver Star Service Banner Day with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities.

SENATE RESOLUTION 167—DESIGNATING THE WEEK OF APRIL 20, 2019, THROUGH APRIL 28, 2019, AS “NATIONAL PARK WEEK”

Mr. DAINES (for himself, Mr. KING, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. BENNET, Mr.

PORTMAN, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. GARDNER, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. BLUNT, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. REED, Mr. HOEVEN, Ms. STABENOW, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. UDALL, Ms. MCSALLY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. BARASSO, Mr. WARNER, Mr. ENZI, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. BOOZMAN, Ms. COLLINS, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, Mr. TILLIS, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. CARDIN, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. PETERS, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. WICKER, and Mr. BROWN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 167

Whereas, on March 1, 1872, Congress established Yellowstone National Park as the first national park for the enjoyment of the people of the United States;

Whereas, on August 25, 1916, Congress established the National Park Service with the mission to preserve unimpaired the natural and cultural resources and values of the National Park System for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of current and future generations;

Whereas the National Park Service continues to protect and manage the majestic landscapes, hallowed battlefields, and iconic cultural and historical sites of the United States;

Whereas the units of the National Park System can be found in every State and many territories of the United States and many of the units embody the rich natural and cultural heritage of the United States, reflect a unique national story through people and places, and offer countless opportunities for recreation, volunteerism, cultural exchange, education, civic engagement, and exploration;

Whereas the national parks of the United States continue to attract record-breaking numbers of visitors, with approximately 318,200,000 recreational visits to these incredible places in 2018, the third highest level since recordkeeping began in 1904;

Whereas visits and visitors to the national parks of the United States are important economic drivers for the economy, responsible for an estimated \$18,200,000,000 in spending in 2017;

Whereas the dedicated employees of the National Park Service carry out their mission to protect the national parks of the United States so that the vibrant culture, diverse wildlife, and priceless resources of the parks will endure for perpetuity; and

Whereas the people of the United States have inherited the remarkable legacy of the National Park System and are entrusted with the preservation of the National Park System throughout its second century: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates the week of April 20, 2019, through April 28, 2019, as “National Park Week”; and

(2) encourages the people of the United States and the world to visit and experience the treasured national parks of the United States.

SENATE RESOLUTION 168—DESIGNATING APRIL 2019 AS “FINANCIAL LITERACY MONTH”

Mr. REED (for himself, Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina, Mr. JONES, Mr. BARASSO, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. BRAUN, Ms. CANTWELL, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. CARPER, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. COONS, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. CRAPO,

Mr. DURBIN, Mr. ENZI, Ms. ERNST, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Ms. HASSAN, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. PETERS, Mr. ROBERTS, Ms. ROSEN, Mr. TESTER, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. WICKER, Mr. YOUNG, and Mr. PERDUE) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 168

Whereas, according to the report entitled “Economic Well-Being of U.S. Households” by the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, 40 percent of adults in the United States cannot cover an unexpected expense of \$400;

Whereas, according to the report entitled “2017 National Survey of Unbanked and Underbanked Households” by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, approximately 25 percent of households in the United States are unbanked or underbanked and therefore have limited or no access to savings, lending, and other basic financial services;

Whereas, according to the 2018 Consumer Financial Literacy Survey final report of the National Foundation for Credit Counseling—

(1) a majority (61 percent) of adults in the United States had credit card debt during the 1-year period ending on the date of publication of the report;

(2) nearly $\frac{2}{3}$ (38 percent) of adults in the United States carry credit card debt from month to month; and

(3) approximately 41 percent of adults in the United States maintain a budget;

Whereas, according to the statistical release of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System for the fourth quarter of 2018 entitled “Household Debt and Credit”—

(1) outstanding household debt in the United States was \$869,000,000,000 higher than the previous peak of \$12,680,000,000,000 in the third quarter of 2008; and

(2) outstanding student loan balances have more than doubled in the last decade to approximately \$1,500,000,000,000;

Whereas, according to the 2018 report entitled “Survey of the States: Economic and Personal Finance Education in Our Nation’s Schools”, the most recent biennial report of that name by the Council for Economic Education—

(1) only 22 States require students to take an economics course as a high school graduation requirement; and

(2) only 17 States require students to take a personal finance course as a high school graduation requirement, either independently or as part of an economics course;

Whereas, according to the Gallup-HOPE Index, only 57 percent of students in the United States have money in a bank or credit union account;

Whereas expanding access to the safe, mainstream financial system will provide individuals with less expensive and more secure options for managing finances and building wealth;

Whereas quality personal financial education is essential to ensure that individuals are prepared—

(1) to manage money, credit, and debt; and

(2) to become responsible workers, heads of household, investors, entrepreneurs, business leaders, and citizens;

Whereas increased financial literacy—

(1) empowers individuals to make wise financial decisions; and

(2) reduces the confusion caused by an increasingly complex economy;

Whereas a greater understanding of, and familiarity with, financial markets and institutions will lead to increased economic activity and growth; and

Whereas, in 2003, Congress—

(1) determined that coordinating Federal financial literacy efforts and formulating a national strategy is important; and

(2) in light of that determination, passed the Financial Literacy and Education Improvement Act (20 U.S.C. 9701 et seq.), establishing the Financial Literacy and Education Commission: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates April 2019 as “Financial Literacy Month” to raise public awareness about—

(A) the importance of personal financial education in the United States; and

(B) the serious consequences that may result from a lack of understanding about personal finances; and

(2) calls on the Federal Government, States, localities, schools, nonprofit organizations, businesses, and the people of the United States to observe Financial Literacy Month with appropriate programs and activities.

SENATE RESOLUTION 169—REQUESTING A STATEMENT UNDER SECTION 502B(C) OF THE FOREIGN ASSISTANCE ACT OF 1961 WITH RESPECT TO VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS BY THE GOVERNMENT OF SAUDI ARABIA

Mr. MERKLEY (for himself, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. WYDEN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, and Mr. KAINE) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 169

Whereas, on December 13, 2018, the Senate unanimously agreed to Senate Joint Resolution 69, 115th Congress, stating that the Senate “believes Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman is responsible for the murder of Jamal Khashoggi”, a United States resident and renowned journalist;

Whereas the President has not met his obligation to determine whether any foreign person, including the highest ranking officials in the Government of Saudi Arabia, is responsible for the gross violation of Mr. Khashoggi’s internationally recognized human rights;

Whereas the Government of Saudi Arabia has yet to publicly identify the 11 individuals indicted in connection with the killing of Mr. Khashoggi, 5 of whom will reportedly face the death penalty if convicted;

Whereas, on March 12, 2018, the Government of Saudi Arabia formally charged 10 women’s rights activists on charges of supporting “hostile elements”, after being detained since May 2018 with no charges brought;

Whereas reputable human rights non-governmental organizations allege that authorities of the Government of Saudi Arabia have tortured at least 4 of the 10 women’s rights activists including the leader of the successful movement to grant women the rights to drive in Saudi Arabia, Aziza al-Yousef;

Whereas Samar Badawi, who was awarded the International Women of Courage Award by the Secretary of State in 2012 for her efforts to reform the discriminatory male guardianship system in Saudi Arabia, is also among the group of 10 women’s rights activists facing charges;

Whereas the Government of Saudi Arabia has detained not fewer than 120 peaceful advocates, including blogger Raif Badawi and human rights lawyer Waleed Abu al-Khair,

part of a disturbing pattern of human rights violations by that Government detailed in 59 pages of the 2018 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices of the Department of State;

Whereas the 2018 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices highlight human rights violations by the Government of Saudi Arabia, including—

- (1) executions for nonviolent offenses;
- (2) forced renditions;
- (3) forced disappearances;
- (4) torture of prisoners and detainees by government agents;
- (5) arbitrary arrest and detention;
- (6) arrest and detention of political prisoners;
- (7) restrictions on the freedoms of peaceful assembly, association, and movement;
- (8) severe restrictions of religious freedom;
- (9) citizens’ lack of ability and legal means to choose their government through free and fair elections;
- (10) trafficking in persons;
- (11) violence and official discrimination against women; and
- (12) criminalization of consensual same-sex sexual activity;

Whereas the 2018 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices also reference an August 2018 study, commissioned by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, which—

(1) found that the military coalition led by Saudi Arabia was responsible for the majority of the civilian casualties in Yemen that the United Nations was able to verify from March 2015 to June 2018; and

(2) concluded that the coalition’s repeated failures to avoid civilian casualties and exercise the proportionate use of military force violate international humanitarian law and may amount to war crimes;

Whereas that study also—

(1) found that the military coalition restricted the flow of food, medical supplies, and fuel through Yemen’s critical ports of Hudaydah and Mokha, and forced the closure of Sana’a International Airport; and

(2) stated, “Given the severe humanitarian impact that the de facto blockades have had on the civilian population and in the absence of any verifiable military impact, they constitute a violation of the proportionality rule of international humanitarian law.”;

Whereas section 620I(a) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2378–1(a)), states that no assistance shall be furnished under that Act or the Arms Export Control Act (22 U.S.C. 2751 et seq.) to any country “when it is made known to the President that the government of such country prohibits or otherwise restricts, directly or indirectly, the transport or delivery of United States humanitarian assistance”;

Whereas subsection (a)(2) of section 502B of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2304) states that “no security assistance may be provided to any country the government of which engages in a consistent pattern of gross violations of internationally recognized human rights”;

Whereas subsection (d)(1) of that section defines the term “gross violations of internationally recognized human rights” to include “torture or cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment, prolonged detention without charges and trial, causing the disappearance of persons by the abduction and clandestine detention of those persons, and other flagrant denial of the right to life, liberty, or the security of person”: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That—

(1) it is the sense of the Senate that—

(A) the President should fully comply with the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act (subtitle F of title XII of Public Law 114–328; 22 U.S.C. 2656 note) by

issuing a determination, in response to the request submitted to the President on October 10, 2018, under section 1263(d) of that Act, with respect to the involvement of high-ranking officials of the Government of Saudi Arabia, including Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, in the killing of Jamal Khashoggi; and

(B) the United States should call upon the Government of Saudi Arabia—

(i) to release all peaceful human rights activists, journalists, and religious minorities held in detention by that Government; and

(ii) to take actions that reverse that Government’s gross violation of internationally recognized human rights; and

(2) pursuant to section 502B(c)(1) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2304(c)(1)), the Senate requests the Secretary of State to submit to Congress, in unclassified form, but with a classified annex if necessary, a statement with respect to Saudi Arabia setting forth—

(A) the matters described in subparagraphs (A), (B), and (C) of such section; and

(B) pursuant to subparagraph (D) of such section—

(i) information on the involvement of the highest-ranking officials in the Government of Saudi Arabia, including Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, in the murder of Jamal Khashoggi;

(ii) information on the measures the Government of Saudi Arabia is taking to alleviate the humanitarian crisis in Yemen by increasing access for Yemenis to food, fuel, medicine, and medical evacuation, including through the appropriate use of Yemen’s Red Sea ports, including the port of Hudaydah, the airport in Sana’a, and external border crossings with Saudi Arabia;

(iii) information on actions the Government of Saudi Arabia is taking to reduce the risk of harm to civilians and civilian infrastructure resulting from military operations of that Government in Yemen, including by—

(I) complying with applicable agreements and laws regulating defense articles purchased or transferred from the United States; and

(II) taking appropriate steps to avoid disproportionate harm to civilians and civilian infrastructure; and

(iv) information on each incident for which the Joint Incidents Assessment Team in Yemen has reached a conclusion.

SENATE RESOLUTION 170—RECOGNIZING THE FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CHIBOK GIRLS KIDNAPPING BY THE BOKO HARAM TERRORIST ORGANIZATION AND CALLING ON THE GOVERNMENT OF NIGERIA TO REDOUBLE EFFORTS TO BRING AN END TO THE CONFLICT IN NORTHEAST AND CENTRAL NIGERIA AND TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE TO THE VICTIMS

Ms. BALDWIN (for herself, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. COLLINS, and Mrs. SHAHEEN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 170

Whereas the Boko Haram is a Nigeria-based militant group with links to Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb and the Islamic State;

Whereas Boko Haram’s campaign of mass and systemic brutality has led to the deaths of tens of thousands of individuals in northeast and central Nigeria and, according to

the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, has caused the displacement of 2,400,000 people in Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad, and Niger;

Whereas the Department of State designated Boko Haram as a Foreign Terrorist Organization in 2013, and supports efforts to defeat Boko Haram with security and development tools;

Whereas Boko Haram rejects modern education and science, is engaged in an armed revolt against the Government of Nigeria, and has carried out vicious campaigns of violence against schools, public institutions, law enforcement, and civilians;

Whereas, since 2012, Boko Haram has conducted brutal mass kidnappings of women, girls, and boys, and has abducted thousands of women and girls from schools and markets, during raids on villages and houses, and on public transportation;

Whereas, on April 14, 2014, Boko Haram militants attacked a boarding school in Chibok in Borno State, where girls from surrounding areas had gathered to take final exams;

Whereas the Boko Haram terrorists arrived in Chibok late at night, fired their guns indiscriminately, burned down houses, raided the dormitories, and kidnapped 276 girls who were between 12 and 17 years of age;

Whereas 57 girls escaped by running into the forest or jumping off the kidnappers' trucks as they were driving away;

Whereas the 219 kidnapped girls were held captive, abused, enslaved, repeatedly raped, starved, and, in some cases, forcibly converted to Islam and married to their captors;

Whereas child, early, and forced marriages are serious human rights violations;

Whereas the international community, including the United Nations Secretary-General and the United Nations Security Council, condemned the abduction and called for the immediate release of the girls;

Whereas Boko Haram ruthlessly killed some of the kidnapped girls for trying to escape, while other girls died during childbirth while in captivity;

Whereas thousands of women, girls, and boys kidnapped by Boko Haram have endured similar horrific experiences;

Whereas the parents of the kidnapped girls and concerned citizens banded together and embarked upon a global awareness campaign to urge the rescue of the girls, using the Twitter hashtag #BringBackOurGirls, through which more than 3,300,000 people around the world expressed their outrage at the abductions and continue maintaining a vigil for the girls' return to their families;

Whereas the United States Government sent advisors to Nigeria and supplied surveillance and reconnaissance to help rescue the girls;

Whereas 21 of the kidnapped girls were released in October 2016, and an additional 82 girls were released in May 2017;

Whereas nearly 5 years since their abduction, more than 100 girls remain in captivity and are subjected to deplorable abuses as recounted by the girls who have been released;

Whereas many of the released girls are being kept in a government facility in Abuja away from their families;

Whereas despite claims by the Government of Nigeria that Boko Haram had been defeated, the terrorist organization continues to mount attacks against civilians, schools, and security forces;

Whereas Boko Haram has increasingly used children, including girls, in suicide attacks; with 158 children used in 2017, a significant increase from the 19 used for such purpose in 2016;

Whereas Boko Haram continues to abduct women and girls in the northern region of Nigeria, routinely forcing girls to choose be-

tween forced marriages to its fighters (for the purpose of sexual slavery) or becoming suicide bombers;

Whereas on February 19, 2018, Boko Haram militants stormed the town of Dapchi and abducted 110 girls from the Government Girls Science and Technical School and 2 other children;

Whereas 106 of the children from the Dapchi kidnapping have been released and 5 of the children are presumed to have died in captivity;

Whereas Leah Sharibu remains a hostage because she refuses to convert to Islam;

Whereas a surge in violence at the end of 2018 has resulted in the displacement of an additional 80,000 people, further burdening already overwhelmed communities and humanitarian services;

Whereas according to the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Nigerian Red Cross Society, an estimated 17,000 individuals from Nigeria are missing, including 7,100 children;

Whereas for several years the United States Government has provided assistance for women and girls targeted by Boko Haram and individuals displaced by Boko Haram violence, and has assisted in combating Boko Haram;

Whereas in section 1(c) of Public Law 114-266 (130 Stat. 1383), Congress stated that "lack of economic opportunity and access to education, justice, and other social services contributes to the ability of Boko Haram to radicalize and recruit individuals";

Whereas educating girls transforms societies for the better by giving girls the knowledge and tools to make positive decisions about their futures, live healthier lives, provide nurturing environments for their families, and play active roles in their communities and economies;

Whereas the United States Government has appropriated \$11,000,000 in fiscal years 2017 and 2018 for programs to combat child marriage;

Whereas in section 2 of the Women, Peace, and Security Act of 2017 (Public Law 115-68; 131 Stat. 1202), Congress found that "[w]omen in conflict-affected regions have achieved significant success in . . . moderating violent extremism . . . and stabilizing societies by enhancing the effectiveness of security services, peacekeeping efforts, institutions, and decisionmaking processes"; and

Whereas section 4 of the Women, Peace, and Security Act of 2017 (22 U.S.C. 2152j) states, "It shall be the policy of the United States to promote the meaningful participation of women in all aspects of overseas conflict prevention, management, and resolution, and post-conflict relief and recovery efforts": Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the tragic fifth anniversary of the Chibok girls kidnapping and calls for the immediate release of all Boko Haram captives, especially the remaining Chibok girls and Leah Sharibu;

(2) applauds the extraordinary bravery of survivors of Boko Haram, who continue to come forward to share their stories and experiences at great personal risk;

(3) urges the Government of Nigeria, in cooperation with regional partners and the international community, to redouble efforts to defeat Boko Haram;

(4) calls on the Government of Nigeria—

(A) to prioritize the recovery of women and girls who have been abducted and enslaved by Boko Haram;

(B) to work to determine the whereabouts of the thousands of missing people in Nigeria and provide a full accounting of the number of missing girls;

(C) to undertake concrete efforts to reduce the stigmatization and marginalization of

those abducted by Boko Haram and provide counseling and support;

(D) to allow women and girls to be reunited with their families whenever appropriate;

(E) to appropriately channel \$1,000,000,000 from the Excess Crude Account, as approved by the Nigerian State Governors in December 2017, to humanitarian assistance, development, education, and deradicalization programs; and

(F) to accept international assistance in a timely manner when offered;

(5) encourages continued efforts by the United States Government to defeat Boko Haram through development and security partnerships with Nigeria and other regional partners;

(6) calls on the Department of State and the Department of Defense to rapidly implement the 5-year regional strategy required under Public Law 114-266 to address the grievous threat posed by Boko Haram and other violent extremist organizations;

(7) requests the Department of State and the United States Agency for International Development to meet their obligation under section 7059(e)(2) of the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2017 (division J of Public Law 115-31) to create a strategy to address the needs of women and girls adversely impacted by extremism and conflict;

(8) requests that the Department of State track and report the number of missing persons kidnapped by Boko Haram and include such information in its annual Trafficking in Persons Report; and

(9) commends the swift enactment of the Women, Peace, and Security Act of 2017 (Public Law 115-68), and encourages the President to immediately release the Women, Peace, and Security Strategy required under section 5 of such Act (22 U.S.C. 2152j-1).

SENATE RESOLUTION 171—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING RESTORING UNITED STATES BILATERAL ASSISTANCE TO THE WEST BANK AND GAZA

Mr. MERKLEY (for himself, Mr. COONS, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, and Mrs. FEINSTEIN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 171

Whereas the dire health and economic conditions facing the Palestinian people has created a humanitarian crisis in the West Bank and Gaza. The United States has long been a leader in helping address the plight of innocent civilians;

Whereas these fragile conditions could contribute to circumstances that would undermine Israel's security and stability in the region;

Whereas the Palestinian Authority's interpretation of the Anti-Terrorism Clarification Act (Public Law 115-253), which sought to help United States victims of terrorism abroad, led the Palestinian Authority to reject all forms of United States assistance, meaning that funding for organizations implementing humanitarian aid programs that provide critical services, such as health care and sanitation to civilians, cannot be carried out; and

Whereas the Department of State has failed to obligate any of the funds Congress appropriated in fiscal year 2017 and fiscal year 2018, \$302,750,000 and \$257,500,000, respectively, for bilateral assistance to the West Bank and Gaza: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) the Executive branch should expend before the end of fiscal year 2019 all bilateral assistance to the West Bank and Gaza that Congress appropriated for such assistance in fiscal year 2018, including —

(A) \$196,500,000 for the Economic Support Fund;

(B) \$60,000,000 for International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement; and

(C) \$1,000,000 for Nonproliferation, Anti-Terrorism, Demining and Related Programs;

(2) programs and activities funded by the Economic Support Fund as described above are focused primarily on providing food, essential health services, and other humanitarian goods and services, and these expenditures must be consistent with the restrictions and exceptions provided in the Taylor Force Act (title X of division S of Public Law 115-141); and

(3) legislation should be enacted to clarify that programs and activities funded through the Economic Support Fund and that are consistent with the Taylor Force Act (title X of division S of Public Law 115-141) may not be used as a basis to assert jurisdiction over the Palestinian Authority pursuant to the Anti-Terrorism Clarification Act.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 14—AUTHORIZING THE USE OF EMANCIPATION HALL IN THE CAPITOL VISITOR CENTER FOR AN EVENT TO CELEBRATE THE BIRTHDAY OF KING KAMEHAMEHA I

Mr. SCHATZ (for himself and Ms. HIRONO) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. CON. RES. 14

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring),

SECTION 1. USE OF EMANCIPATION HALL FOR EVENT TO CELEBRATE BIRTHDAY OF KING KAMEHAMEHA I.

(a) AUTHORIZATION.—Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center is authorized to be used on June 9, 2019, for an event to celebrate the birthday of King Kamehameha I.

(b) PREPARATIONS.—Physical preparations for the conduct of the event described in subsection (a) shall be carried out in accordance with such conditions as may be prescribed by the Architect of the Capitol.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 248. Mr. SCHUMER (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. SCHATZ, Ms. HIRONO, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. SMITH, Ms. WARREN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. MERKLEY, and Mr. DURBIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 268, making supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes, which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 248. Mr. SCHUMER (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. SCHATZ, Ms. HIRONO, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. SMITH, Ms. WARREN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. MERKLEY, and Mr. DURBIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed

by him to the bill H.R. 268, making supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table, as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

That the following sums are hereby appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, and out of applicable corporate or other revenues, receipts, and funds, for the several departments, agencies, corporations, and other organizational units of Government for fiscal year 2019, and for other purposes, namely:

TITLE I

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

AGRICULTURAL PROGRAMS

PROCESSING, RESEARCH AND MARKETING

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

For an additional amount for the “Office of the Secretary”, \$3,005,442,000, which shall remain available until December 31, 2020, for necessary expenses related to losses of crops (including milk, on-farm stored commodities, and harvested adulterated wine grapes), trees, bushes, and vines, as a consequence of Hurricanes Michael and Florence, other hurricanes, floods, tornadoes, typhoons, volcanic activity, snowstorms, and wildfires occurring in calendar years 2018 and 2019 under such terms and conditions as determined by the Secretary: *Provided*, That the Secretary may provide assistance for such losses in the form of block grants to eligible states and territories and such assistance may include compensation to producers, as determined by the Secretary, for past or future crop insurance premiums, forest restoration, and poultry and livestock losses: *Provided further*, That of the amounts provided under this heading, tree assistance payments may be made under section 1501(e) of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (7 U.S.C. 9081(e)) to eligible orchardists or nursery tree growers (as defined in such section) of pecan trees with a tree mortality rate that exceeds 7.5 percent (adjusted for normal mortality) and is less than 15 percent (adjusted for normal mortality), to be available until expended, for losses incurred during the period beginning January 1, 2018, and ending December 31, 2018: *Provided further*, That in the case of producers impacted by volcanic activity that resulted in the loss of crop land, or access to crop land, the Secretary shall consider all measures available, as appropriate, to bring replacement land into production: *Provided further*, That the total amount of payments received under this heading and applicable policies of crop insurance under the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1501 et seq.) or the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) under section 196 of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (7 U.S.C. 7333) shall not exceed 90 percent of the loss as determined by the Secretary: *Provided further*, That the total amount of payments received under this heading for producers who did not obtain a policy or plan of insurance for an insurable commodity for the applicable crop year under the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1501 et seq.) for the crop incurring the losses or did not file the required paperwork and pay the service fee by the applicable State filing deadline for a noninsurable commodity for the applicable crop year under NAP for the crop incurring the losses shall not exceed 70 percent of the loss as determined by the Secretary: *Provided further*, That producers receiving payments under this heading, as determined by the Secretary, shall be required to purchase crop insurance where crop insurance is available

for the next two available crop years, excluding tree insurance policies, and producers receiving payments under this heading shall be required to purchase coverage under NAP where crop insurance is not available in the next two available crop years, as determined by the Secretary: *Provided further*, That, not later than 120 days after the end of fiscal year 2019, the Secretary shall submit a report to the Congress specifying the type, amount, and method of such assistance by state and territory: *Provided further*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

FARM SERVICE AGENCY

EMERGENCY FOREST RESTORATION PROGRAM

For an additional amount for the “Emergency Forest Restoration Program”, for necessary expenses related to the consequences of Hurricanes Michael and Florence and wildfires occurring in calendar year 2018, and other natural disasters, \$480,000,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE

WATERSHED AND FLOOD PREVENTION OPERATIONS

For an additional amount for “Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations”, for necessary expenses for the Emergency Watershed Protection Program related to the consequences of Hurricanes Michael and Florence and wildfires occurring in calendar year 2018, and other natural disasters, \$125,000,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT

RURAL COMMUNITY FACILITIES PROGRAM ACCOUNT

For an additional amount for the cost of grants for rural community facilities programs as authorized by section 306 and described in section 381E(d)(1) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act, for necessary expenses related to the consequences of Hurricanes Michael and Florence and wildfires occurring in calendar year 2018, and other natural disasters, \$150,000,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That sections 381E-H and 381N of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act are not applicable to the funds made available under this heading: *Provided further*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

GENERAL PROVISIONS—THIS TITLE

SEC. 101. In addition to other amounts made available by section 309 of division A of the Additional Supplemental Appropriations for Disaster Relief Requirements Act, 2017 (Public Law 115-72; 131 Stat. 1229), there is hereby appropriated \$600,000,000 for the Secretary of Agriculture to provide a grant to the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico for disaster nutrition assistance in response to Presidentially declared major disasters and emergencies: *Provided*, That the funds made available to the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico under this section shall remain available for obligation by the Commonwealth

until September 30, 2020, and shall be in addition to funds otherwise made available: *Provided further*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

SEC. 102. In addition to amounts otherwise made available, out of the funds made available under section 18 of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008, \$25,200,000 shall be available for the Secretary to provide a grant to the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands for disaster nutrition assistance in response to the Presidentially declared major disasters and emergencies: *Provided*, That funds made available to the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands under this section shall remain available for obligation by the Commonwealth until September 30, 2020: *Provided further*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

SEC. 103. For purposes of administering title I of subdivision 1 of division B of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 (Public Law 115-123), losses to agricultural producers resulting from hurricanes shall also include losses of peach and blueberry crops in calendar year 2017 due to extreme cold: *Provided*, That the amounts provided by this section are designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985: *Provided further*, That amounts repurposed under this heading that were previously designated by the Congress as an emergency requirement pursuant to the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 are designated by the Congress as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

SEC. 104. (a)(1) Except as provided in paragraph (2), a person or legal entity is not eligible to receive a payment under the Market Facilitation Program established pursuant to the Commodity Credit Corporation Charter Act (15 U.S.C. 714 et seq.) if the average adjusted gross income of such person or legal entity is greater than \$900,000.

(2) Paragraph (1) shall not apply to a person or legal entity if at least 75 percent of the adjusted gross income of such person or legal entity is derived from farming, ranching, or forestry related activities.

(b) A person or legal entity may not receive a payment under the Market Facilitation Program described in subsection (a)(1), directly or indirectly, of more than \$125,000.

(c) In this section, the term “average adjusted gross income” has the meaning given the term defined in section 760.1502 of title 7 Code of Federal Regulations (as in effect July 18, 2018).

(d) The amount provided by this section is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

SEC. 105. There is hereby appropriated \$5,000,000, to remain available until September 30, 2020, for the Secretary of Agriculture to conduct an independent study, including a survey of participants, to compare the impact of the additional benefits provided by section 309 of Public Law 115-72 to the food insecurity, health status, and well-being of low-income residents in Puerto Rico without such additional benefits: *Provided*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

SEC. 106. In addition to amounts otherwise made available, out of the funds made available under section 18 of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008, \$5,000,000 shall be available for the Secretary to provide a grant to American Samoa for disaster nutrition assistance in response to the Presidentially declared major disasters and emergencies: *Provided*, That funds made available to the territory under this section shall remain available for obligation by the territory until September 30, 2020: *Provided further*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

SEC. 107. For an additional amount for the “Emergency Conservation Program”, for necessary expenses related to the consequences of Hurricanes Michael and Florence and of wildfires occurring in calendar year 2018, and other natural disasters, \$500,000,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

TITLE II

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

(INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

Pursuant to section 703 of the Public Works and Economic Development Act (42 U.S.C. 3233), for an additional amount for “Economic Development Assistance Programs” for necessary expenses related to flood mitigation, disaster relief, long-term recovery, and restoration of infrastructure in areas that received a major disaster designation as a result of Hurricanes Florence, Michael, and Lane, Typhoons Yutu and Mangkhut, and of wildfires, volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, and other natural disasters occurring in calendar year 2018, and tornadoes and floods occurring in calendar year 2019 under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.), \$600,000,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985: *Provided further*, That within the amount appropriated, up to 2 percent of funds may be transferred to the “Salaries and Expenses” account for administration and oversight activities: *Provided further*, That within the amount appropriated, \$1,000,000 shall be transferred to the “Office of Inspector General” account for carrying out investigations and audits related to the funding provided under this heading.

NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

OPERATIONS, RESEARCH, AND FACILITIES

For an additional amount for “Operations, Research, and Facilities” for necessary expenses related to the consequences of Hurricanes Florence and Michael, Typhoon Yutu, and of wildfires, \$120,570,000, to remain available until September 30, 2020, as follows:

- (1) \$3,000,000 for repair and replacement of observing assets, real property, and equipment;
- (2) \$11,000,000 for marine debris assessment and removal;
- (3) \$31,570,000 for mapping, charting, and geodesy services;
- (4) \$25,000,000 to improve: (a) hurricane intensity forecasting, including through de-

ployment of unmanned ocean observing platforms and enhanced data assimilation; (b) flood prediction, forecasting, and mitigation capabilities; and (c) wildfire prediction, detection, and forecasting; and

(5) \$50,000,000 for Title IX Fund grants as authorized under section 906(c) of division O of Public Law 114-113:

Provided, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985: *Provided further*, That the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration shall submit a spending plan to the Committees on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Senate for funding provided under subsection (4) of this heading within 45 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

PROCUREMENT, ACQUISITION AND CONSTRUCTION

For an additional amount for “Procurement, Acquisition and Construction”, \$25,000,000, to remain available until September 30, 2021, for improvements to operational and research weather supercomputing infrastructure and satellite ground services used for hurricane intensity and track prediction; flood prediction, forecasting, and mitigation; and wildfire prediction, detection, and forecasting: *Provided*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985: *Provided further*, That the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration shall submit a spending plan to the Committees on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Senate within 45 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

FISHERY DISASTER ASSISTANCE

For an additional amount for “Fishery Disaster Assistance” for necessary expenses associated with the mitigation of fishery disasters, \$150,000,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That funds shall be used for mitigating the effects of commercial fishery failures and fishery resource disasters declared by the Secretary of Commerce, including those declared by the Secretary to be a direct result of Hurricanes Florence and Michael and Typhoons Yutu and Mangkhut: *Provided further*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

UNITED STATES MARSHALS SERVICE

SALARIES AND EXPENSES

For an additional amount for “Salaries and Expenses” for necessary expenses related to the consequences of Hurricanes Florence and Michael and Typhoon Yutu, \$1,336,000: *Provided*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

FEDERAL PRISON SYSTEM

BUILDINGS AND FACILITIES

For an additional amount for “Buildings and Facilities” for necessary expenses related to the consequences of Hurricanes Florence and Michael and Typhoon Yutu, \$28,400,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

RELATED AGENCIES
LEGAL SERVICES CORPORATION
PAYMENT TO THE LEGAL SERVICES
CORPORATION

For an additional amount for “Payment to the Legal Services Corporation” to carry out the purposes of the Legal Services Corporation Act by providing for necessary expenses related to the consequences of Hurricanes Florence, Michael, and Lane, Typhoons Yutu and Mangkhut, calendar year 2018 wildfires, volcanic eruptions, and earthquakes, and calendar year 2019 tornadoes and floods, \$15,000,000: *Provided*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985: *Provided further*, That none of the funds appropriated in this Act to the Legal Services Corporation shall be expended for any purpose prohibited or limited by, or contrary to any of the provisions of, sections 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, and 506 of Public Law 105–119, and all funds appropriated in this Act to the Legal Services Corporation shall be subject to the same terms and conditions set forth in such sections, except that all references in sections 502 and 503 to 1997 and 1998 shall be deemed to refer instead to 2018 and 2019, respectively, and except that sections 501 and 503 of Public Law 104–134 (referenced by Public Law 105–119) shall not apply to the amount made available under this heading: *Provided further*, That, for the purposes of this Act, the Legal Services Corporation shall be considered an agency of the United States Government.

TITLE III

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, MARINE CORPS

For an additional amount for “Operation and Maintenance, Marine Corps”, \$200,000,000, for necessary expenses related to the consequences of Hurricanes Michael and Florence: *Provided*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985: *Provided further*, That notwithstanding section 284 of title 10, United States Code, or any other provision of law, funds made available under this heading may only be used for the purposes specifically described under this heading.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, AIR FORCE

For an additional amount for “Operation and Maintenance, Air Force”, \$400,000,000, for necessary expenses related to the consequences of Hurricanes Michael and Florence: *Provided*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985: *Provided further*, That notwithstanding section 284 of title 10, United States Code, or any other provision of law, funds made available under this heading may only be used for the purposes specifically described under this heading.

TITLE IV

CORPS OF ENGINEERS—CIVIL
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
INVESTIGATIONS

For an additional amount for “Investigations” for necessary expenses related to the completion, or initiation and completion, of flood and storm damage reduction, including shore protection, studies which are currently authorized or which are authorized after the date of enactment of this Act, to reduce risk from future floods and hurricanes, at full

Federal expense, \$35,000,000, to remain available until expended, in States and insular areas that were impacted by Hurricanes Florence and Michael, Typhoon Mangkhut, Super Typhoon Yutu, and Tropical Storm Gita: *Provided*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985: *Provided further*, That the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works shall provide a monthly report directly to the Committees on Appropriations of the House and the Senate detailing the allocation and obligation of these funds, including new studies selected to be initiated using funds provided under this heading, beginning not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

CONSTRUCTION

For an additional amount for “Construction” for necessary expenses, \$740,000,000, to remain available until expended, to construct flood and storm damage reduction, including shore protection, projects which are currently authorized or which are authorized after the date of enactment of this Act, and flood and storm damage reduction, including shore protection, projects which have signed Chief’s Reports as of the date of enactment of this Act or which are studied using funds provided under the heading “Investigations” if the Secretary determines such projects to be technically feasible, economically justified, and environmentally acceptable, in States and insular areas that were impacted by Hurricanes Florence and Michael, Typhoon Mangkhut, Super Typhoon Yutu, and Tropical Storm Gita: *Provided*, That projects receiving funds provided under the first proviso in “Corps of Engineers—Civil—Department of the Army—Construction” in Public Law 115–123 shall not be eligible for funding provided under this heading: *Provided further*, That for projects receiving funding under this heading, the provisions of section 902 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1986 shall not apply to these funds: *Provided further*, That the completion of ongoing construction projects receiving funds provided under this heading shall be at full Federal expense with respect to such funds: *Provided further*, That using funds provided under this heading, the non-Federal cash contribution for projects other than ongoing construction projects shall be financed in accordance with the provisions of section 103(k) of Public Law 99–662 over a period of 30 years from the date of completion of the project or separable element: *Provided further*, That of this amount, \$45,000,000 shall be used to initiate, at full Federal expense, construction of authorized Corps of Engineers ecosystem restoration projects that have incidental flood risk management benefits in areas impacted by Hurricanes Irma and Maria: *Provided further*, That up to \$25,000,000 of the funds made available under this heading shall be used for continuing authorities projects to reduce the risk of flooding and storm damage: *Provided further*, That any projects using funds appropriated under this heading shall be initiated only after non-Federal interests have entered into binding agreements with the Secretary requiring, where applicable, the non-Federal interests to pay 100 percent of the operation, maintenance, repair, replacement, and rehabilitation costs of the project and to hold and save the United States free from damages due to the construction or operation and maintenance of the project, except for damages due to the fault or negligence of the United States or its contractors: *Provided further*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and

Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985: *Provided further*, That the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works shall provide a monthly report directly to the Committees on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Senate detailing the allocation and obligation of these funds, beginning not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

MISSISSIPPI RIVER AND TRIBUTARIES

For an additional amount for “Mississippi River and Tributaries” for necessary expenses to address emergency situations at Corps of Engineers projects and rehabilitate and repair damages to Corps of Engineers projects, caused by natural disasters, including disasters in 2019, \$575,000,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985: *Provided further*, That the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works shall provide a monthly report directly to the Committees on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Senate detailing the allocation and obligation of these funds, beginning not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

For an additional amount for “Operation and Maintenance” for necessary expenses to dredge Federal navigation projects in response to, and repair damages to Corps of Engineers Federal projects caused by, natural disasters, including disasters in 2019, \$908,000,000, to remain available until expended, of which such sums as are necessary to cover the Federal share of eligible operation and maintenance costs for coastal harbors and channels, and for inland harbors shall be derived from the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund: *Provided*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985: *Provided further*, That the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works shall provide a monthly report directly to the Committees on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Senate detailing the allocation and obligation of these funds, beginning not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

FLOOD CONTROL AND COASTAL EMERGENCIES

For an additional amount for “Flood Control and Coastal Emergencies”, as authorized by section 5 of the Act of August 18, 1941 (33 U.S.C. 701n), for necessary expenses to prepare for flood, hurricane and other natural disasters and support emergency operations, repairs, and other activities in response to such disasters, including disasters in 2019, as authorized by law, \$510,000,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985: *Provided further*, That the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works shall provide a monthly report to the Committees on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Senate detailing the allocation and obligation of these funds, beginning not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

CENTRAL UTAH PROJECT

CENTRAL UTAH PROJECT COMPLETION ACCOUNT

For an additional amount for “Central Utah Project Completion Account”, \$350,000, to be deposited into the Utah Reclamation

Mitigation and Conservation Account for use by the Utah Reclamation Mitigation and Conservation Commission, to remain available until expended, for expenses necessary in carrying out fire remediation activities related to wildfires in 2018: *Provided*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

BUREAU OF RECLAMATION
WATER AND RELATED RESOURCES

For an additional amount for “Water and Related Resources”, \$17,000,000, to remain available until expended, for fire remediation and suppression emergency assistance related to wildfires in 2017 and 2018: *Provided*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY
ENERGY PROGRAMS
ELECTRICITY DELIVERY

For an additional amount for “Electricity Delivery”, \$15,500,000, to remain available until expended, for necessary expenses related to the consequences of Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria, and Super Typhoon Yutu, including technical assistance related to electric grids: *Provided*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985: *Provided further*, That the Assistant Secretary of Electricity Delivery shall provide a monthly report to the Committees on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Senate detailing the allocation and obligation of these funds, beginning not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

TITLE V
DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY
SECURITY, ENFORCEMENT, AND INVESTIGATIONS
COAST GUARD
OPERATIONS AND SUPPORT

For an additional amount for “Operations and Support” for necessary expenses related to the consequences of Hurricanes Michael, Florence, and Lane, Tropical Storm Gordon, and Typhoon Mangkhut, \$48,977,000; of which \$46,977,000 shall remain available until September 30, 2020, and of which \$2,000,000 shall remain available until September 30, 2023, for environmental compliance and restoration: *Provided*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

PROCUREMENT, CONSTRUCTION, AND IMPROVEMENTS

For an additional amount for “Procurement, Construction, and Improvements” for necessary expenses related to the consequences of Hurricanes Michael, Florence, and Lane, Tropical Storm Gordon, and Typhoon Mangkhut, \$476,755,000, to remain available until September 30, 2023: *Provided*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

GENERAL PROVISIONS—THIS TITLE

SEC. 501. (a) IN GENERAL.—The Federal share of assistance provided for DR-4336-PR, DR-4339-PR, DR-4340-USVI and DR-4335-USVI under sections 403, 406 and 407 of the

Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170b and 5173) shall be 100 percent of the eligible costs under such sections.

(b) APPLICABILITY.—The Federal share provided by subsection (a) shall apply to disaster assistance applied for before, on, or after the date of enactment of this Act.

SEC. 502. The Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency shall provide assistance, pursuant to section 428 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.), for critical services as defined in section 406 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act for the duration of the recovery for incidents DR-4404, DR-4396, and DR-4398 to—

(1) replace or restore the function of a facility or system to industry standards without regard to the pre-disaster condition of the facility or system; and

(2) replace or restore components of the facility or system not damaged by the disaster where necessary to fully effectuate the replacement or restoration of disaster-damaged components to restore the function of the facility or system to industry standards.

SEC. 503. Section 20601 of Public Law 115-123 (132 Stat. 85) is amended by striking “may” and inserting “shall”: *Provided*, That the amounts provided by this section are designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985: *Provided further*, That amounts repurposed under this heading that were previously designated by the Congress as an emergency requirement pursuant to the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 are designated by the Congress as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

TITLE VI

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
UNITED STATES FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
CONSTRUCTION

For an additional amount for “Construction” for necessary expenses related to the consequences of Hurricanes Florence, Lane, and Michael, and flooding associated with major declared disaster DR-4365, and calendar year 2018 earthquakes, \$82,400,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That of this amount \$50,000,000 shall be used to restore and rebuild national wildlife refuges and increase the resiliency and capacity of coastal habitat and infrastructure to withstand storms and reduce the amount of damage caused by such storms: *Provided further*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION FUND

For an additional amount for the “Historic Preservation Fund” for necessary expenses related to the consequences of Hurricanes Florence and Michael, and Typhoon Yutu, \$50,000,000, to remain available until September 30, 2022, including costs to States and territories necessary to complete compliance activities required by section 306108 of title 54, United States Code (formerly section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act) and costs needed to administer the program: *Provided*, That grants shall only be available for areas that have received a major disaster declaration pursuant to the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.): *Provided further*, That individual grants shall not be sub-

ject to a non-Federal matching requirement: *Provided further*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

CONSTRUCTION

For an additional amount for “Construction” for necessary expenses related to the consequences of Hurricanes Florence and Michael, Typhoons Yutu and Mangkhut, and calendar year 2018 wildfires, earthquakes, and volcanic eruptions, \$78,000,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

UNITED STATES GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

SURVEYS, INVESTIGATIONS, AND RESEARCH

For an additional amount for “Surveys, Investigations, and Research” for necessary expenses related to the consequences of Hurricanes Florence and Michael, and calendar year 2018 wildfires, earthquake damage associated with emergency declaration EM-3410, and in those areas impacted by a major disaster declared pursuant to the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.) with respect to calendar year 2018 wildfires or volcanic eruptions, \$98,500,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That of this amount, \$72,310,000 is for costs related to the repair and replacement of equipment and facilities damaged by disasters in 2018: *Provided further*, That, not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Survey shall submit a report to the Committees on Appropriations that describes the potential options to replace the facility damaged by the 2018 volcano disaster along with cost estimates and a description of how the Survey will provide direct access for monitoring volcanic activity and the potential threat to at-risk communities: *Provided further*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

DEPARTMENTAL OFFICES

INSULAR AFFAIRS

ASSISTANCE TO TERRITORIES

For an additional amount for “Technical Assistance” for financial management expenses related to the consequences of Typhoon Yutu, \$2,000,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

SALARIES AND EXPENSES

For an additional amount for “Salaries and Expenses” for necessary expenses related to the consequences of major disasters declared pursuant to the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.) in 2018, \$1,000,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

For an additional amount for “Science and Technology” for necessary expenses related to improving preparedness of the water sector, \$600,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an

emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

LEAKING UNDERGROUND STORAGE TANK TRUST FUND PROGRAM

For an additional amount for “Leaking Underground Storage Tank Fund” for necessary expenses related to the consequences of Hurricanes Florence and Michael, calendar year 2018 earthquakes, and Typhoon Yutu, \$1,500,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

STATE AND TRIBAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS

For additional amounts for “State and Tribal Assistance Grants” for necessary expenses related to the consequences of Hurricanes Florence and Michael, and calendar year 2018 earthquakes for the hazardous waste financial assistance grants program, \$1,500,000, to remain available until expended; for necessary expenses related to the consequences of Typhoon Yutu for the hazardous waste financial assistance grants program and for other solid waste management activities, \$56,000,000, to remain available until expended, provided that none of these funds shall be subject to section 3011(b) of the Solid Waste Disposal Act; and for grants under section 106 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, \$5,000,000, to remain available until expended, to address impacts of Hurricane Florence, Hurricane Michael, Typhoon Yutu, and calendar year 2018 wildfires, notwithstanding subsections (b), (e), and (f), of such section: *Provided*, That such amounts are designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

For an additional amount for “State and Tribal Assistance Grants”, \$349,400,000 to remain available until expended, of which \$53,300,000 shall be for capitalization grants for the Clean Water State Revolving Funds under title VI of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, and of which \$296,100,000 shall be for capitalization grants under section 1452 of the Safe Drinking Water Act: *Provided*, That notwithstanding section 604(a) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act and section 1452(a)(1)(D) of the Safe Drinking Water Act, funds appropriated herein shall be provided to States or Territories in EPA Regions 4, 9, and 10 in amounts determined by the Administrator for wastewater treatment works and drinking water facilities impacted by Hurricanes Florence and Michael, Typhoon Yutu, and calendar year 2018 wildfires and earthquakes: *Provided further*, That notwithstanding the requirements of section 603(i) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act and section 1452(d) of the Safe Drinking Water Act, for the funds appropriated herein, each State shall use not less than 20 percent but not more than 30 percent of the amount of its capitalization grants to provide additional subsidization to eligible recipients in the form of forgiveness of principal, negative interest loans or grants or any combination of these: *Provided further*, That the Administrator shall retain \$10,400,000 of the funds appropriated herein for grants for drinking water facilities and waste water treatment plants impacted by Typhoon Yutu: *Provided further*, That the funds appropriated herein shall be used for eligible projects whose purpose is to reduce flood or fire damage risk and vulnerability or to enhance resiliency to rapid hydrologic change or natural disaster at treatment works as defined by section 212 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act or any eligible facilities under section 1452 of the Safe

Drinking Water Act, and for other eligible tasks at such treatment works or facilities necessary to further such purposes: *Provided further*, That the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency may retain up to \$1,000,000 of the funds appropriated herein for management and oversight: *Provided further*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

In addition, for an additional amount for “State and Tribal Assistance Grants”, \$500,000,000, to remain available until expended, of which \$261,000,000 shall be for capitalization grants for the Clean Water State Revolving Funds under title VI of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, and of which \$239,000,000 shall be for capitalization grants under section 1452 of the Safe Drinking Water Act: *Provided*, That notwithstanding section 604(a) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act and section 1452(a)(1)(D) of the Safe Drinking Water Act, funds appropriated herein shall be provided to States or Territories in EPA Regions 2, 4 and 6 in amounts determined by the Administrator for wastewater and drinking water treatment works and facilities impacted by Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria: *Provided further*, That, for Region 2, such funds allocated from funds appropriated herein shall not be subject to the matching or cost share requirements of sections 602(b)(2), 602(b)(3) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act nor the matching requirements of section 1452(e) of the Safe Drinking Water Act: *Provided further*, That, for Region 2, notwithstanding the requirements of section 603(i) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act and section 1452(d) of the Safe Drinking Water Act, each State and Territory shall use the full amount of its capitalization grants allocated from funds appropriated herein to provide additional subsidization to eligible recipients in the form of forgiveness of principal, negative interest loans or grants or any combination of these: *Provided further*, That, for Regions 4 and 6, notwithstanding the requirements of section 603(i) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act and section 1452(d) of the Safe Drinking Water Act, for the funds allocated, each State shall use not less than 20 percent but not more than 30 percent amount of its capitalization grants allocated from funds appropriated herein to provide additional subsidization to eligible recipients in the form of forgiveness of principal, negative interest loans or grants or any combination of these: *Provided further*, That the Administrator shall retain \$74,600,000 of the funds appropriated herein for grants to any state or territory that has not established a water pollution control revolving fund pursuant to title VI of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act or section 1452 of the Safe Drinking Water Act for drinking water facilities and waste water treatment plants impacted by Hurricanes Irma and Maria: *Provided further*, That the funds appropriated herein shall only be used for eligible projects whose purpose is to reduce flood damage risk and vulnerability or to enhance resiliency to rapid hydrologic change or a natural disaster at treatment works as defined by section 212 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act or any eligible facilities under section 1452 of the Safe Drinking Water Act, and for other eligible tasks at such treatment works or facilities necessary to further such purposes: *Provided further*, That, for Region 2, notwithstanding section 603(d)(2) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act and section 1452(f)(2) of the Safe Drinking Water Act, funds allocated from funds appropriated herein may be used to make loans or to buy, refinance or re-

structure the debt obligations of eligible recipients only where such debt was incurred on or after September 20, 2017: *Provided further*, That the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency may retain up to \$1,000,000 of the funds appropriated herein for management and oversight: *Provided further*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

RELATED AGENCIES

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

FOREST SERVICE

FOREST AND RANGELAND RESEARCH

For an additional amount for “Forest and Rangeland Research” for necessary expenses related to the consequences of Hurricanes Florence and Michael, and the calendar year 2018 wildfires, \$1,000,000, to remain available until expended for the forest inventory and analysis program: *Provided*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

STATE AND PRIVATE FORESTRY

For an additional amount for “State and Private Forestry” for necessary expenses related to the consequences of Hurricanes Florence and Michael, and the calendar year 2018 wildfires, \$12,000,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM

For an additional amount for “National Forest System” for necessary expenses related to the consequences of Hurricanes Florence and Michael, and the calendar year 2018 wildfires, \$84,960,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That of this amount \$21,000,000 shall be used for hazardous fuels management activities: *Provided further*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT AND MAINTENANCE

For an additional amount for “Capital Improvement and Maintenance” for necessary expenses related to the consequences of Hurricanes Florence and Michael, and the calendar year 2018 wildfires, \$36,040,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

WILDLAND FIRE MANAGEMENT

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For an additional amount for “Wildland Fire Management”, \$720,271,000, to remain available through September 30, 2022, for urgent wildland fire suppression operations: *Provided*, That such funds shall be solely available to be transferred to and merged with other appropriations accounts from which funds were previously transferred for wildland fire suppression in fiscal year 2018 to fully repay those amounts: *Provided further*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF ENVIRONMENTAL
HEALTH SCIENCES

For an additional amount for “National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences” for necessary expenses in carrying out activities set forth in section 311(a) of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (42 U.S.C. 9660(a)) and section 126(g) of the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act of 1986 related to the consequences of major disasters declared pursuant to the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.) in 2018, \$1,000,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

GENERAL PROVISION—THIS TITLE

SEC. 601. Not later than 45 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the agencies receiving funds appropriated by this title shall provide a detailed operating plan of anticipated uses of funds made available in this title by State and Territory, and by program, project, and activity, to the Committees on Appropriations: *Provided*, That no such funds shall be obligated before the operating plans are provided to the Committees: *Provided further*, That such plans shall be updated, including obligations to date, and submitted to the Committees on Appropriations every 60 days until all such funds are expended.

TITLE VII

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ADMINISTRATION
TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT SERVICES
(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For an additional amount for “Training and Employment Services”, \$50,000,000, for the dislocated workers assistance national reserve for necessary expenses directly related to the consequences of Hurricanes Florence and Michael, Typhoon Mangkhut, Super Typhoon Yutu, wildfires occurring in calendar year 2018, and tornadoes and floods occurring in calendar year 2019, to remain available through September 30, 2020: *Provided*, That the Secretary of Labor may transfer up to \$1,000,000 of such funds to any other Department of Labor account for reconstruction and recovery needs, including worker protection activities: *Provided further*, That these sums may be used to replace grant funds previously obligated to the impacted areas: *Provided further*, That of the amount provided, up to \$500,000, to remain available until expended, shall be transferred to “Office of Inspector General” for oversight of activities responding to such consequences: *Provided further*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND MENTAL HEALTH
SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

HEALTH SURVEILLANCE AND PROGRAM SUPPORT

For an additional amount for “Health Surveillance and Program Support”, \$30,000,000, to remain available until September 30, 2019, for grants, contracts and cooperative agreements for behavioral health treatment, crisis counseling, and other related helplines, and for other similar programs to provide sup-

port to individuals impacted by Hurricanes Florence and Michael, Typhoon Mangkhut, Super Typhoon Yutu, wildfires occurring in 2018, and tornadoes and floods occurring in calendar year 2019 in those areas for which a major disaster or emergency has been declared under section 401 or 501 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170 and 5191): *Provided*, That obligations incurred for the purposes provided herein prior to the date of enactment of this Act may be charged to funds appropriated under this heading: *Provided further*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
SOCIAL SERVICES BLOCK GRANT

For an additional amount for “Social Services Block Grant”, \$250,000,000, which shall remain available through September 30, 2020, for necessary expenses directly related to the consequences of Hurricanes Florence and Michael, Typhoon Mangkhut, Super Typhoon Yutu, wildfires occurring in 2018, and tornadoes and floods occurring in calendar year 2019 in those areas for which a major disaster or emergency has been declared under section 401 or 501 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170 and 5191): *Provided*, That notwithstanding section 2002 of the Social Security Act, the distribution of such amount shall be limited to States directly affected by these events: *Provided further*, That the time limits in section 2002(c) of the Social Security Act shall not apply to funds appropriated in this paragraph that are used for renovation, repair or construction: *Provided further*, That funds appropriated in this paragraph are in addition to the entitlement grants authorized by section 2002(a)(1) of the Social Security Act and shall not be available for such entitlement grants: *Provided further*, That in addition to other uses permitted by title XX of the Social Security Act, funds appropriated in this paragraph may be used for health services (including mental health services), and for costs of renovating, repairing, and construction of health care facilities (including mental health facilities), child care centers, and other social services facilities: *Provided further*, That of the amount provided, up to \$1,000,000, to remain available until expended, shall be transferred to “Office of the Secretary—Office of Inspector General” for oversight of activities responding to such hurricanes, typhoons, wildfires, tornadoes, and floods: *Provided further*, That funds appropriated in this paragraph shall not be available for costs that are reimbursed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, under a contract for insurance, or by self-insurance: *Provided further*, That obligations incurred for the purposes provided herein prior to the date of enactment of this Act may be charged to funds appropriated under this heading: *Provided further*, That up to \$3,000,000 may be used to supplement amounts available for the necessary expenses of administering subtitle A of title XX of the Social Security Act: *Provided further*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICES PROGRAMS

For an additional amount for “Children and Families Services Programs”, \$60,000,000, to remain available until September 30, 2021, for Head Start programs, including making payments under the Head Start Act, for nec-

essary expenses directly related to the consequences of Hurricanes Florence and Michael, Typhoon Mangkhut, Super Typhoon Yutu, wildfires occurring in 2018, and tornadoes and floods occurring in calendar year 2019 in those areas for which a major disaster or emergency has been declared under section 401 or 501 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170 and 5191): *Provided*, That none of the funds appropriated in this paragraph shall be included in the calculation of the “base grant” in subsequent fiscal years, as such term is defined in sections 640(a)(7)(A), 641A(h)(1)(B), or 645(d)(3) of the Head Start Act: *Provided further*, That funds appropriated in this paragraph are not subject to the allocation requirements of section 640(a) of the Head Start Act: *Provided further*, That funds appropriated in this paragraph shall not be available for costs that are reimbursed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, under a contract for insurance, or by self-insurance: *Provided further*, That up to \$2,000,000 shall be available for Federal administrative expenses: *Provided further*, That obligations incurred for the purposes provided herein prior to the date of enactment of this Act may be charged to funds appropriated under this heading: *Provided further*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

HURRICANE EDUCATION RECOVERY

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For an additional amount for “Hurricane Education Recovery” for necessary expenses related to the consequences of Hurricanes Florence and Michael, Typhoon Mangkhut, Super Typhoon Yutu, the wildfires, earthquakes, and volcanic eruptions occurring in calendar year 2018, and tornadoes and floods occurring in calendar year 2019 in those areas for which a major disaster or emergency has been declared under section 401 or 501 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170 and 5191) (referred to under this heading as a “covered disaster or emergency”), \$165,000,000, to remain available through September 30, 2019: *Provided*, That such assistance may be provided through any of the programs authorized under this heading in title VIII of subdivision 1 of division B of Public Law 115-123 (as amended by Public Law 115-141), as determined by the Secretary of Education, and subject to the terms and conditions that applied to those programs, except that references to dates and school years in Public Law 115-123 shall be deemed to be the corresponding dates and school years for the covered disaster or emergency: *Provided further*, That the Secretary of Education may determine the amounts to be used for each such program and shall notify the Committees on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Senate of these amounts not later than 7 days prior to obligation: *Provided further*, That \$2,000,000 of the funds made available under this heading, to remain available until expended, shall be transferred to the Office of the Inspector General of the Department of Education for oversight of activities supported with funds appropriated under this heading, and up to \$1,000,000 of the funds made available under this heading shall be for program administration: *Provided further*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

GENERAL PROVISIONS—THIS TITLE

SEC. 701. (a) Section 1108(g)(5) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1308(g)(5)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), by striking “and (E)” and inserting “(E), and (F)”;

(2) in subparagraph (C), in the matter preceding clause (i), by striking “and (E)” and inserting “and (F)”;

(3) by redesignating subparagraph (E) as subparagraph (F);

(4) by inserting after subparagraph (D), the following:

“(E) Subject to subparagraph (F), for the period beginning January 1, 2019, and ending September 30, 2019, the amount of the increase otherwise provided under subparagraph (A) for the Northern Mariana Islands shall be further increased by \$36,000,000.”; and

(5) in subparagraph (F) (as redesignated by paragraph (3) of this section)—

(A) by striking “title XIX, during” and inserting “title XIX—

“(i) during”;

(B) by striking “and (D)” and inserting “, (D), and (E)”;

(C) by striking “and the Virgin Islands” each place it appears and inserting “, the Virgin Islands, and the Northern Mariana Islands”;

(D) by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”;

(E) by adding at the end the following:

“(ii) for the period beginning January 1, 2019, and ending September 30, 2019, with respect to payments to Guam and American Samoa from the additional funds provided under subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall increase the Federal medical assistance percentage or other rate that would otherwise apply to such payments to 100 percent.”.

(b) The amounts provided by the amendments made by subsection (a) are designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

SEC. 702. Not later than 30 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretaries of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education shall provide a detailed spend plan of anticipated uses of funds made available in this title, including estimated personnel and administrative costs, to the Committees on Appropriations: *Provided*, That such plans shall be updated and submitted to the Committees on Appropriations every 60 days until all funds are expended or expire.

SEC. 703. The second proviso under the heading “Hurricane Education Recovery” under the heading “Department of Education” under title VIII of subdivision 1 of division B of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 (Public Law 115-123; 132 Stat. 95) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2)—

(A) in subparagraph (I), by striking “and” after the semicolon; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

“(K) assistance provided to an eligible entity under this heading, including assistance provided to an eligible entity before the date of enactment of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2019, may be used by the eligible entity for a purpose described in section 406 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster and Relief Emergency Act (42 U.S.C. 5172), notwithstanding section 102(e)(3) of title IV of division B of Public Law 109-148 (119 Stat. 2794), if the eligible entity will receive funds for that purpose under such section 406; and

“(L) any duplicative Federal assistance provided under this heading to an eligible entity may be retained by the entity and used for other activities to restart school operations in accordance with this paragraph.”;

(2) in paragraph (9), by striking “and” after the semicolon;

(3) by redesignating paragraph (10) as paragraph (11); and

(4) by inserting after paragraph (9) the following:

“(10) amounts available under paragraph (4) that exceed the amount required to meet the need for such funds as determined by the Secretary as of December 31, 2018, shall be available to carry out paragraph (3); and”;

Provided, That amounts repurposed pursuant to this section that were previously designated by the Congress as an emergency requirement pursuant to the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act are designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

TITLE VIII

LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE

SALARIES AND EXPENSES

For an additional amount for “Salaries and Expenses”, \$10,000,000, to remain available until expended, for audits and investigations related to Hurricanes Florence, Lane, and Michael, Typhoons Yutu and Mangkhut, the calendar year 2018 wildfires, earthquakes, and volcano eruptions, and other disasters declared pursuant to the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.): *Provided*, That, not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Government Accountability Office shall submit to the Committees on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Senate a spend plan specifying funding estimates for audits and investigations of any such declared disasters occurring in 2018 and identifying funding estimates or carryover balances, if any, that may be available for audits and investigations of any other such declared disasters: *Provided further*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

TITLE IX

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, NAVY AND MARINE CORPS

For an additional amount for “Military Construction, Navy and Marine Corps”, \$115,000,000, to remain available until September 30, 2023, for planning and design related to the consequences of Hurricanes Florence and Michael on Navy and Marine Corps installations: *Provided*, That none of the funds shall be available for obligation until the Committees on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Senate receive a master plan for the installations and a form 1391 for each specific project: *Provided further*, That, not later than 60 days after enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Navy, or his designee, shall submit to the Committees on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Senate a detailed expenditure plan for funds provided under this heading: *Provided further*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985: *Provided further*, That notwithstanding section 2808 of title 10, United States Code, or any other provision of law, funds made available under this heading may only be used for the purposes specifically described under this heading.

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, AIR FORCE

For an additional amount for “Military Construction, Air Force”, \$700,000,000, to re-

main available until September 30, 2023, for planning and design, and construction expenses related to the consequences of Hurricane Michael: *Provided*, That none of the funds shall be available for obligation until the Committees on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Senate receive a basing plan and future mission requirements for installations significantly damaged by Hurricane Michael: *Provided further*, That, not later than 60 days after enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Air Force, or his designee, shall submit to the Committees on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Senate a detailed expenditure plan for funds provided under this heading: *Provided further*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985: *Provided further*, That notwithstanding section 2808 of title 10, United States Code, or any other provision of law, funds made available under this heading may only be used for the purposes specifically described under this heading.

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

For an additional amount for “Military Construction, Army National Guard”, \$42,400,000, to remain available until September 30, 2023, for necessary expenses related to the consequences of Hurricanes Florence and Michael: *Provided*, That none of the funds shall be available for obligation until the Committees on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Senate receive form 1391 for each specific request: *Provided further*, That, not later than 60 days after enactment of this Act, the Director of the Army National Guard, or his designee, shall submit to the Committees on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Senate a detailed expenditure plan for funds provided under this heading: *Provided further*, That such funds may be obligated or expended for planning and design and military construction projects not otherwise authorized by law: *Provided further*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985: *Provided further*, That notwithstanding section 2808 of title 10, United States Code, or any other provision of law, funds made available under this heading may only be used for the purposes specifically described under this heading.

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION

MEDICAL FACILITIES

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For an additional amount for “Medical Facilities”, \$3,000,000, to remain available until September 30, 2023, for necessary expenses related to the consequences of Hurricanes Florence and Michael and Typhoons Mangkhut and Yutu: *Provided*, That the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, upon determination that such action is necessary to address needs as a result of the consequences of Hurricanes Florence and Michael and Typhoons Mangkhut and Yutu, may transfer such funds to any discretionary account of the Department of Veterans Affairs: *Provided further*, That before a transfer may take place, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit notice thereof to the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Senate: *Provided further*, That none of these funds shall be available for obligation until the Secretary of Veterans Affairs submits to the Committees on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and

the Senate a detailed expenditure plan for funds provided under this heading: *Provided further*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

TITLE X

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION EMERGENCY RELIEF PROGRAM

For an additional amount for the “Public Transportation Emergency Relief Program” as authorized under section 5324 of title 49, United States Code, \$10,542,000 to remain available until expended, for transit systems affected by major declared disasters occurring in calendar year 2018: *Provided*, That not more than three-quarters of 1 percent of the funds for public transportation emergency relief shall be available for administrative expenses and ongoing program management oversight as authorized under sections 5334 and 5338(f)(2) of such title and shall be in addition to any other appropriations for such purpose: *Provided further*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION

OPERATIONS

(AIRPORT AND AIRWAY TRUST FUND)

Of the amounts made available for “Federal Aviation Administration—Operations” in division B of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 (Public Law 115–123), up to \$18,000,000 shall also be available for necessary expenses related to the consequences of major declared disasters occurring in calendar year 2018: *Provided*, That amounts repurposed under this heading that were previously designated by the Congress as an emergency requirement pursuant to the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 are designated by the Congress as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION

EMERGENCY RELIEF PROGRAM

For an additional amount for the Emergency Relief Program as authorized under section 125 of title 23, United States Code, \$1,650,000,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FUND

(INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

For an additional amount for “Community Development Fund”, \$2,210,000,000, to remain available until expended, for necessary expenses for activities authorized under title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 5301 et seq.) related to disaster relief, long-term recovery, restoration of infrastructure and housing, economic revitalization, and mitigation in the most impacted and distressed areas resulting from a major disaster that occurred in 2018 or 2019 (except as otherwise provided under this heading) pursuant to the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.): *Provided*, That funds shall be awarded directly to the State, unit of general local government, or Indian

tribe (as such term is defined in section 102 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974) at the discretion of the Secretary: *Provided further*, That of the amounts made available under this heading \$150,000,000 shall be allocated to meet unmet needs for restoration of infrastructure for grantees that received allocations for disasters that occurred in 2017 (excluding grantees that received allocations related to disasters specified in section 501(a) of title V of this Act) under this heading of division B of Public Law 115–56 and title XI of subdivision 1 of division B of Public Law 115–123: *Provided further*, That of the amounts provided in the previous proviso, the Secretary’s determination of unmet needs for restoration of infrastructure shall not take into account mitigation-specific allocations: *Provided further*, That any funds made available under this heading and under the same heading in Public Law 115–254 that remain available, after the funds under such headings have been allocated for necessary expenses for activities authorized under such headings, shall be allocated to grantees receiving awards for disasters that occurred in 2018 or 2019, for mitigation activities in the most impacted and distressed areas resulting from a major disaster that occurred in 2018 or 2019: *Provided further*, That allocations under the previous proviso shall be made in the same proportion that the amount of funds each grantee received or will receive under this heading for unmet needs related to disasters that occurred in 2018 or 2019 and the same heading in division I of Public Law 115–254 bears to the amount of all funds provided to all grantees that received allocations for disasters that occurred in 2018 or 2019: *Provided further*, That of the amounts made available under the text preceding the first proviso under this heading and under the same heading in Public Law 115–254, the Secretary shall allocate to all such grantees an aggregate amount not less than 33 percent of the sum of such amounts of funds within 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act based on the best available data, and shall allocate no less than 100 percent of such funds by no later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act: *Provided further*, That the Secretary shall not prohibit the use of funds made available under this heading and the same heading in Public Law 115–254 for non-Federal share as authorized by section 105(a)(9) of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 5305(a)(9)): *Provided further*, That of the amounts made available under this heading, grantees may establish grant programs to assist small businesses for working capital purposes to aid in recovery: *Provided further*, That as a condition of making any grant, the Secretary shall certify in advance that such grantee has in place proficient financial controls and procurement processes and has established adequate procedures to prevent any duplication of benefits as defined by section 312 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5155), to ensure timely expenditure of funds, to maintain comprehensive websites regarding all disaster recovery activities assisted with these funds, and to detect and prevent waste, fraud, and abuse of funds: *Provided further*, That with respect to any such duplication of benefits, the Secretary shall act in accordance with section 1210 of Public Law 115–254 (132 Stat. 3442) and section 312 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5155): *Provided further*, That the Secretary shall require grantees to maintain on a public website information containing common reporting criteria established by the Department that permits individuals and entities awaiting assistance and the general public to

see how all grant funds are used, including copies of all relevant procurement documents, grantee administrative contracts and details of ongoing procurement processes, as determined by the Secretary: *Provided further*, That prior to the obligation of funds a grantee shall submit a plan to the Secretary for approval detailing the proposed use of all funds, including criteria for eligibility and how the use of these funds will address long-term recovery and restoration of infrastructure and housing, economic revitalization, and mitigation in the most impacted and distressed areas: *Provided further*, That such funds may not be used for activities reimbursed by, or for which funds have been made available by, the Federal Emergency Management Agency or the Army Corps of Engineers, in excess of the authorized amount of the project or its components: *Provided further*, That funds allocated under this heading shall not be considered relevant to the non-disaster formula allocations made pursuant to section 106 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 5306): *Provided further*, That a State, unit of general local government, or Indian tribe may use up to 5 percent of its allocation for administrative costs: *Provided further*, That the first proviso under this heading in the Supplemental Appropriations for Disaster Relief Requirements Act, 2018 (division I of Public Law 115–254) is amended by striking “State or unit of general local government” and inserting “State, unit of general local government, or Indian tribe (as such term is defined in section 102 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 5302))”: *Provided further*, That the sixth proviso under this heading in the Supplemental Appropriations for Disaster Relief Requirements Act, 2018 (division I of Public Law 115–254) is amended by striking “State or subdivision thereof” and inserting “State, unit of general local government, or Indian tribe (as such term is defined in section 102 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 5302))”: *Provided further*, That in administering the funds under this heading, the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development may waive, or specify alternative requirements for, any provision of any statute or regulation that the Secretary administers in connection with the obligation by the Secretary or the use by the recipient of these funds (except for requirements related to fair housing, nondiscrimination, labor standards, and the environment), if the Secretary finds that good cause exists for the waiver or alternative requirement and such waiver or alternative requirement would not be inconsistent with the overall purpose of title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974: *Provided further*, That, notwithstanding the preceding proviso, recipients of funds provided under this heading that use such funds to supplement Federal assistance provided under section 402, 403, 404, 406, 407, 408 (c)(4), or 502 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.) may adopt, without review or public comment, any environmental review, approval, or permit performed by a Federal agency, and such adoption shall satisfy the responsibilities of the recipient with respect to such environmental review, approval or permit: *Provided further*, That, notwithstanding section 104(g)(2) of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 5304(g)(2)), the Secretary may, upon receipt of a request for release of funds and certification, immediately approve the release of funds for an activity or project assisted under this heading if the recipient has adopted an environmental review, approval or permit under the preceding proviso or the activity or project is categorically excluded from review under

the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.): *Provided further*, That the Secretary shall publish via notice in the Federal Register any waiver, or alternative requirement, to any statute or regulation that the Secretary administers pursuant to title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 no later than 5 days before the effective date of such waiver or alternative requirement: *Provided further*, That of the amounts made available under this heading, up to \$5,000,000 shall be made available for capacity building and technical assistance, including assistance on contracting and procurement processes, to support States, units of general local government, or Indian tribes (and their subrecipients) that receive allocations pursuant to this heading, received disaster recovery allocations under the same heading in Public Law 115-254, or may receive similar allocations for disaster recovery in future appropriations Acts: *Provided further*, That of the amounts made available under this heading and under the same heading in Public Law 115-254, up to \$2,500,000 shall be transferred, in aggregate, to “Department of Housing and Urban Development—Program Office Salaries and Expenses—Community Planning and Development” for necessary costs, including information technology costs, of administering and overseeing the obligation and expenditure of amounts under this heading: *Provided further*, That the amount specified in the preceding proviso shall be combined with funds appropriated under the same heading and for the same purpose in Public Law 115-254 and the aggregate of such amounts shall be available for any of the same such purposes specified under this heading or the same heading in Public Law 115-254 without limitation: *Provided further*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985: *Provided further*, That amounts repurposed under this heading that were previously designated by the Congress as an emergency requirement pursuant to the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act are designated by the Congress as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

GENERAL PROVISION—THIS TITLE

SEC. 1001. (a) Amounts previously made available for activities authorized under title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 5301 et seq.) related to disaster relief, long-term recovery, restoration of infrastructure and housing, economic revitalization, and mitigation in the most impacted and distressed areas resulting from a major disaster, including funds provided under section 145 of division C of Public Law 114-223, section 192 of division C of Public Law 114-223 (as added by section 101(3) of division A of Public Law 114-254), section 421 of division K of Public Law 115-31, and any mitigation funding provided under the heading “Department of Housing and Urban Development—Community Planning and Development—Community Development Fund” of Public Law 115-123, that were allocated in response to Hurricane Matthew, may be used interchangeably and without limitation for the same activities in the most impacted and distressed areas related to Hurricane Florence. In addition, any funds provided under the heading “Department of Housing and Urban Development—Community Planning and Development—Community Development Fund” in this Act or in division I of Public Law 115-254 that are allocated in response to Hurricane Florence may be used interchangeably and without

limitation for the same activities in the most impacted and distressed areas related to Hurricane Matthew. Until HUD publishes the Federal Register Notice implementing this provision, grantees may submit for HUD approval revised plans for the use of funds related to Hurricane Matthew that expand the eligible beneficiaries of existing programs contained in such previously approved plans to include those impacted by Hurricane Florence. Approval of any such revised plans shall include the execution of revised grant terms and conditions as necessary. Once the implementing Notice is published, any additional action plan revisions shall follow the requirements contained therein.

(b) Amounts made available for administrative costs for activities authorized under title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 5301 et seq.) related to disaster relief, long-term recovery, restoration of infrastructure and housing, economic revitalization, and mitigation in the most impacted and distressed areas under this Act or any future Act, and amounts previously provided under section 420 of division L of Public Law 114-113, section 145 of division C of Public Law 114-223, section 192 of division C of Public Law 114-223 (as added by section 101(3) of division A of Public Law 114-254), section 421 of division K of Public Law 115-31, and under the heading “Department of Housing and Urban Development—Community Planning and Development—Community Development Fund” of division B of Public Law 115-56, Public Law 115-123, and Public Law 115-254, shall be available for eligible administrative costs of the grantee related to any disaster relief funding identified in this subsection without regard to the particular disaster appropriation from which such funds originated.

(c) The additional uses pursuant to this section for amounts that were previously designated by the Congress, respectively, as an emergency requirement or as being for disaster relief pursuant to the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act are designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 or as being for disaster relief pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(D) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

TITLE XI

GENERAL PROVISIONS—THIS ACT

SEC. 1101. Each amount appropriated or made available by this Act is in addition to amounts otherwise appropriated for the fiscal year involved.

SEC. 1102. No part of any appropriation contained in this Act shall remain available for obligation beyond the current fiscal year unless expressly so provided herein.

SEC. 1103. Unless otherwise provided for by this Act, the additional amounts appropriated by this Act to appropriations accounts shall be available under the authorities and conditions applicable to such appropriations accounts for fiscal year 2019.

SEC. 1104. Each amount designated in this Act by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 shall be available (or rescinded or transferred, if applicable) only if the President subsequently so designates all such amounts and transmits such designations to the Congress.

SEC. 1105. Any amount appropriated by this Act designated by the Congress as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 and subsequently so designated by the President, and transferred pursuant to transfer authori-

ties provided by this Act shall retain such designation.

SEC. 1106. Of all amounts made available for mitigation activities under the heading “Department of Housing and Urban Development—Community Development Fund” in Public Law 115-123, the Secretary shall publish in the Federal Register the allocations to all eligible grantees, and the necessary administrative requirements applicable to such allocations within 90 days after enactment of this Act:

(1) For any plans or amendments addressing the use of any funds provided under Public Law 115-123 and received by the Secretary prior to December 22, 2018, the Secretary shall review pending amendments within 15 days of enactment of this Act and pending plans within 30 days of enactment of this Act;

(2) After the date of this Act, the Secretary may not apply the statutory waiver or alternative requirement authority provided by Public Law 115-123 to extend or otherwise alter existing statutory and regulatory provisions governing the timeline for review of required grantee plans:

Provided, That the amounts provided by this section are designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985: *Provided further*, That amounts repurposed under this heading that were previously designated by the Congress as an emergency requirement pursuant to the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 are designated by the Congress as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

This Act may be cited as the “Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2019”.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I have 4 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 Thursday, April 11, 2019, at 9:30 a.m., to conduct a hearing on the proposal to establish a United States space force.

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, April 11, 2019, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

The Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, April 11, 2019, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing on the following nominations: Kate Marie Byrnes, of Florida, to be Ambassador to the Republic of North Macedonia, Edward F. Crawford, of Ohio, to be Ambassador to Ireland, and David Michael Satterfield, of Missouri, to be

Ambassador to the Republic of Turkey, all of the Department of State.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON COMMUNICATION, TECHNOLOGY, INNOVATION, AND THE INTERNET

The Subcommittee on Communication, Technology, Innovation, and The Internet of the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, April 11, 2019, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing on illegal robocalls.

NOTICE: REGISTRATION OF MASS MAILINGS

The filing date for the 2019 first quarter Mass Mailing report is Thursday, April 25, 2019. An electronic option is available on Webster that will allow forms to be submitted via a fillable pdf document. If your office did no mass mailings during this period, please submit a form that states "none."

Mass mailing registrations or negative reports can be submitted electronically at http://webster.senate.gov/secretary/mass_mailing_form.htm or delivered to the Senate Office of Public Records, 232 Hart Building, Washington, D.C. 20510-7116.

The Senate Office of Public Records is open from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. (9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. when the Senate is not in session). For further information, please contact the Senate Office of Public Records at (202) 224-0322.

APPOINTMENTS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair, on behalf of the Vice President, pursuant to Public Law 94-304, as amended by Public Law 99-7, appoints the following Senators as members of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (Helsinki) during the 116th Congress: The Honorable ROGER WICKER of Mississippi (Co-Chair), The Honorable JOHN BOOZMAN of Arkansas, The Honorable CORY GARDNER of Colorado, The Honorable MARCO RUBIO of Florida, and The Honorable THOM TILLIS of North Carolina.

The Chair, on behalf of the President of the Senate, pursuant to Public Law 106-286, appoints the following Members to serve on the Congressional-Executive Commission on the People's Republic of China: The Honorable MARCO RUBIO of Florida (Co-Chair), The Honorable TOM COTTON of Arkansas, The Honorable STEVE DAINES of Montana, The Honorable JAMES LANKFORD of Oklahoma, and The Honorable TODD YOUNG of Indiana.

The Chair, on behalf of the Majority Leader, pursuant to the provisions of S. Res. 64, adopted March 5, 2013, appoints the following Senators as members of the Senate National Security Working Group for the 116th Congress: MARCO RUBIO of Florida (Administrative Co-Chair), DEB FISCHER of Nebraska (Co-Chair), CORY GARDNER of Colorado (Co-Chair), BEN SASSE of Nebraska (Co-Chair), ROY BLUNT of Mis-

souri, LINDSEY GRAHAM of South Carolina, JAMES INHOFE of Oklahoma, JAMES RISCH of Idaho, and MITT ROMNEY of Utah.

APPOINTMENTS AUTHORITY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding the upcoming adjournment of the Senate, the President of the Senate, the President pro tempore, and the majority and minority leaders be authorized to make appointments to commissions, committees, boards, conferences, or interparliamentary conferences authorized by law, by concurrent action of the two houses, or by order of the Senate and that they be printed in the RECORD.

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

RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED TODAY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the en bloc consideration of the following Senate resolutions, which were submitted earlier today: S. Res. 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, and 168.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolutions en bloc.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I know of no further debate on the resolutions.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate?

Hearing none, the question is on agreeing to the resolutions en bloc.

The resolutions (S. Res. 163, S. Res. 164, S. Res. 165, S. Res. 166, S. Res. 167, S. Res. 168) were agreed to en bloc.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the preambles be agreed to and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, all en bloc.

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

The preambles were agreed to en bloc.

(The resolutions, with their preambles, are printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

RECOGNIZING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF EASTERSEALS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Judiciary Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 85 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 85) recognizing the 100th anniversary of the founding of Easterseals, a leading advocate and service provider for children and adults with disabilities, including veterans and older adults, and their caregivers and families.

There being no objection, the Committee was discharged and the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I further ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 85) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of February 28, 2019, under "Submitted Resolutions.")

NATIONAL 9-1-1 EDUCATION MONTH

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Judiciary Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 131 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 131) designating April 2019 as "National 9-1-1 Education Month."

There being no objection, the committee was discharged, and the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I further ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 131) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of March 28, 2019, under "Submitted Resolutions.")

SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF NATIONAL SAFE DIGGING MONTH

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 136 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 136) supporting the goals and ideals of National Safe Digging Month.

There being no objection, the committee was discharged, and the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be

agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 136) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of April 2, 2019, under "Submitted Resolutions.")

AUTHORIZING THE USE OF EMANCIPATION HALL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Con. Res. 14.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the concurrent resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 14) authorizing the use of Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center for an event to celebrate the birthday of King Kamehameha I.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the concurrent resolution.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the concurrent resolution be agreed to and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 14) was agreed to.

(The concurrent resolution is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

AUTHORIZING THE USE OF EMANCIPATION HALL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of H. Con. Res. 31, which was received from the House.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the concurrent resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 31) authorizing the use of Emancipation Hall for a ceremony as part of the commemoration of the days of remembrance of victims of the Holocaust.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the concurrent resolution.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the concurrent resolution be agreed to and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 31) was agreed to.

SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF COUNTERING INTER- NATIONAL PARENTAL CHILD AB- DUCTION MONTH

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 56, S. Res. 23.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 23) supporting the goals and ideals of Countering International Parental Child Abduction Month and expressing the sense of the Senate that Congress should raise awareness of the harm caused by international parental child abduction.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution, which had been reported from the Committee on Foreign Relations, without amendment, and with an amendment to strike the preamble and insert the part printed in italic, as follows:

S. RES. 23

【Whereas thousands of children in the United States have been abducted from the United States by parents, separating those children from their parents who remain in the United States;

【Whereas it is illegal under section 1204 of title 18, United States Code, to remove, or attempt to remove, a child from the United States or retain a child (who has been in the United States) outside of the United States with the intent to obstruct the lawful exercise of parental rights;

【Whereas more than 9,127 children experienced international parental child abduction between 2008 and 2015;

【Whereas, during 2017, one or more cases of international parental child abduction involving children who are citizens of the United States were identified in 105 countries around the world;

【Whereas the United States is a party to the Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction, done at the Hague, October 25, 1980 (TIAS 11670) (referred to in this preamble as the "Hague Convention on Abduction"), which—

【(1) supports the prompt return of wrongly removed or retained children; and

【(2) calls for all participating parties to respect parental custody rights;

【Whereas the majority of children who were abducted from the United States have yet to be reunited with their custodial parents;

【Whereas, during 2017, Argentina, the Bahamas, Brazil, China, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, India, Japan, Jordan, Morocco, Peru, and the United Arab Emirates were identified under the Sean and David Goldman International Child Abduction Prevention and Return Act of 2014 (22 U.S.C. 9101 et seq.) as engaging in a pattern of noncompliance;

【Whereas the Supreme Court of the United States has recognized that family abduction—

【(1) is a form of child abuse with potentially "devastating consequences for a child", which may include negative impacts on the physical and mental well-being of the child; and

【(2) can cause a child to "experience a loss of community and stability, leading to loneliness, anger, and fear of abandonment";

【Whereas, according to the 2010 Report on Compliance with the Hague Convention on

the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction by the Department of State, research shows that an abducted child is at risk of significant short- and long-term problems, including "anxiety, eating problems, nightmares, mood swings, sleep disturbances, [and] aggressive behavior";

【Whereas international parental child abduction has devastating emotional consequences for the child and for the parent from whom the child is separated;

【Whereas the United States has a history of promoting child welfare through institutions including—

【(1) in the Department of Health and Human Services, the Children's Bureau of the Administration for Children and Families; and

【(2) in the Department of State, the Office of Children's Issues of the Bureau of Consular Affairs;

【Whereas Congress has signaled a commitment to ending international parental child abduction by enacting the International Child Abduction Remedies Act (22 U.S.C. 9001 et seq.), the International Parental Kidnapping Crime Act of 1993 (Public Law 103-173), which enacted section 1204 of title 18, United States Code, and the Sean and David Goldman International Child Abduction Prevention and Return Act of 2014 (22 U.S.C. 9101 et seq.);

【Whereas the Senate adopted Senate Resolution 543, 112th Congress, on December 4, 2012, which—

【(1) condemns international parental child abduction;

【(2) urges countries identified by the Department of State as noncompliant with the Hague Convention on Abduction to fulfill the commitment those countries made to implement such treaty; and

【(3) expresses the sense of the Senate that the United States should—

【(A) pursue the return, by all appropriate means, of each child abducted by a parent to another country;

【(B) if a child is abducted by a parent and not returned to the United States, facilitate access to the abducted child for the parent remaining in the United States; and

【(C) "where appropriate, seek the extradition of the parent that abducted the child";

【Whereas the Senate adopted Senate Resolution 431, 115th Congress, on April 19, 2018, which—

【(1) raises awareness and promotes education about international parental child abduction;

【(2) recognizes the impacts on children who are victims of international parental abductions; and

【(3) expresses the sense of the Senate that the United States should—

【(A) continue to raise awareness and opposition on international parental child abduction;

【(B) facilitate access to the abducted child for the parent remaining in the United States; and

【(C) urge countries to comply with the request to bring children home to the United States;

【Whereas all 50 States and the District of Columbia have enacted laws criminalizing parental kidnapping;

【Whereas, in 2017, the Prevention Branch of the Office of Children's Issues of the Department of State—

【(1) fielded more than 3,500 inquiries from the general public relating to preventing a child from being removed from the United States; and

【(2) enrolled more than 4,404 children in the Children's Passport Issuance Alert Program, which—

【(A) is one of the most important tools of the Department of State for preventing

international parental child abductions; and

[(B) allows the Office of Children's Issues to contact the enrolling parent or legal guardian to verify whether the parental consent requirement has been met when a passport application has been submitted for an enrolled child;

[(Whereas, the Department of State cannot track the ultimate destination of a child through the use of the passport of the child issued by the Department of State if the child is transported to a third country after departing from the United States;

[(Whereas a child who is a citizen of the United States may have another nationality and may travel using a passport issued by another country, which—

[(1) increases the difficulty in determining the whereabouts of the child; and

[(2) makes efforts to prevent abductions more critical; and

[(Whereas, in 2017, the Department of Homeland Security, in coordination with the Prevention Branch of the Office of Children's Issues of the Department of State, enrolled 210 children in a program aimed at preventing international parental child abduction;

[(Now, therefore, be it]

Whereas thousands of children in the United States have been abducted from the United States by parents, separating those children from their parents who remain in the United States;

Whereas it is illegal under section 1204 of title 18, United States Code, to remove, or attempt to remove, a child from the United States or retain a child (who has been in the United States) outside of the United States with the intent to obstruct the lawful exercise of parental rights;

Whereas more than 9,000 children experienced international parental child abduction between 2008 and 2015;

Whereas, during 2017, one or more cases of international parental child abduction involving children who are citizens of the United States were identified in 105 countries around the world;

Whereas the United States is a party to the Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction, done at the Hague, October 25, 1980 (TIAS 11670) (referred to in this preamble as the "Hague Convention on Abduction"), which—

(1) supports the prompt return of wrongly removed or retained children; and

(2) calls for all participating parties to respect parental custody rights;

Whereas the majority of children who were abducted from the United States have yet to be reunited with their custodial parents;

Whereas, during 2017, Argentina, the Bahamas, Brazil, China, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, India, Japan, Jordan, Morocco, Peru, and the United Arab Emirates were identified under the Sean and David Goldman International Child Abduction Prevention and Return Act of 2014 (22 U.S.C. 9101 et seq.) as engaging in a pattern of noncompliance;

Whereas the Supreme Court of the United States has recognized that family abduction—

(1) is a form of child abuse with potentially "devastating consequences for a child", which may include negative impacts on the physical and mental well-being of the child; and

(2) can cause a child to "experience a loss of community and stability, leading to loneliness, anger, and fear of abandonment";

Whereas, according to the 2010 Report on Compliance with the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction by the Department of State, research shows that an abducted child is at risk of significant short- and long-term problems, including "anxiety, eating problems, nightmares, mood swings, sleep disturbances, [and] aggressive behavior";

Whereas international parental child abduction has devastating emotional consequences for

the child and for the parent from whom the child is separated;

Whereas the United States has a history of promoting child welfare through institutions including—

(1) in the Department of Health and Human Services, the Children's Bureau of the Administration for Children and Families; and

(2) in the Department of State, the Office of Children's Issues of the Bureau of Consular Affairs;

Whereas Congress has signaled a commitment to ending international parental child abduction by enacting the International Child Abduction Remedies Act (22 U.S.C. 9001 et seq.), the International Parental Kidnapping Crime Act of 1993 (Public Law 103-173), which enacted section 1204 of title 18, United States Code, and the Sean and David Goldman International Child Abduction Prevention and Return Act of 2014 (22 U.S.C. 9101 et seq.);

Whereas the Senate adopted Senate Resolution 543, 112th Congress, on December 4, 2012, condemning the international abduction of children;

Whereas the Senate adopted Senate Resolution 431, 115th Congress, on April 19, 2018, to raise awareness of, and opposition to, international parental child abduction;

Whereas all 50 States and the District of Columbia have enacted laws criminalizing parental kidnapping;

Whereas, in 2017, the Prevention Branch of the Office of Children's Issues of the Department of State—

(1) fielded more than 3,500 inquiries from the general public relating to preventing a child from being removed from the United States; and

(2) enrolled more than 4,400 children in the Children's Passport Issuance Alert Program, which—

(A) is one of the most important tools of the Department of State for preventing international parental child abductions; and

(B) allows the Office of Children's Issues to verify whether the parental consent requirement has been met when a passport application has been submitted for an enrolled child;

Whereas, the Department of State cannot track the ultimate destination of a child through the use of the passport of the child issued by the Department of State if the child is transported to a third country after departing from the United States;

Whereas a child who is a citizen of the United States may have another nationality and may travel using a passport issued by another country, which—

(1) increases the difficulty in determining the whereabouts of the child; and

(2) makes efforts to prevent abductions more critical; and

Whereas, in 2017, the Department of Homeland Security, in coordination with the Prevention Branch of the Office of Children's Issues of the Department of State, enrolled 210 children in a program aimed at preventing international parental child abduction;

Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes and observes "Countering International Parental Child Abduction Month" during the period beginning on April 1, 2019, and ending on April 30, 2019, to raise awareness of, and opposition to, international parental child abduction; and

(2) urges the United States to continue playing a leadership role in raising awareness about the devastating impacts of international parental child abduction by educating the public about the negative emotional, psychological, and physical consequences to children and parents victimized by international parental child abduction.

Mr. McCONNELL. I know of no further debate on the resolution.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate?

If not, the question is on adoption of the resolution.

The resolution (S. Res. 23) was agreed to.

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported amendment to the preamble be agreed to; that the preamble, as amended, be agreed to; and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The committee-reported amendment to the preamble was agreed to.

The preamble, as amended, was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, as amended, reads as follows:

S. RES. 23

Whereas thousands of children in the United States have been abducted from the United States by parents, separating those children from their parents who remain in the United States;

Whereas it is illegal under section 1204 of title 18, United States Code, to remove, or attempt to remove, a child from the United States or retain a child (who has been in the United States) outside of the United States with the intent to obstruct the lawful exercise of parental rights;

Whereas more than 9,000 children experienced international parental child abduction between 2008 and 2015;

Whereas, during 2017, one or more cases of international parental child abduction involving children who are citizens of the United States were identified in 105 countries around the world;

Whereas the United States is a party to the Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction, done at the Hague, October 25, 1980 (TIAS 11670) (referred to in this preamble as the "Hague Convention on Abduction"), which—

(1) supports the prompt return of wrongly removed or retained children; and

(2) calls for all participating parties to respect parental custody rights;

Whereas the majority of children who were abducted from the United States have yet to be reunited with their custodial parents;

Whereas, during 2017, Argentina, the Bahamas, Brazil, China, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, India, Japan, Jordan, Morocco, Peru, and the United Arab Emirates were identified under the Sean and David Goldman International Child Abduction Prevention and Return Act of 2014 (22 U.S.C. 9101 et seq.) as engaging in a pattern of noncompliance;

Whereas the Supreme Court of the United States has recognized that family abduction—

(1) is a form of child abuse with potentially "devastating consequences for a child", which may include negative impacts on the physical and mental well-being of the child; and

(2) can cause a child to "experience a loss of community and stability, leading to loneliness, anger, and fear of abandonment";

Whereas, according to the 2010 Report on Compliance with the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction by the Department of State, research shows that an abducted child is at risk of significant short- and long-term problems, including "anxiety, eating problems, nightmares, mood swings, sleep disturbances, [and] aggressive behavior";

Whereas international parental child abduction has devastating emotional consequences for the child and for the parent from whom the child is separated;

Whereas the United States has a history of promoting child welfare through institutions including—

(1) in the Department of Health and Human Services, the Children's Bureau of the Administration for Children and Families; and

(2) in the Department of State, the Office of Children's Issues of the Bureau of Consular Affairs;

Whereas Congress has signaled a commitment to ending international parental child abduction by enacting the International Child Abduction Remedies Act (22 U.S.C. 9001 et seq.), the International Parental Kidnapping Crime Act of 1993 (Public Law 103-173), which enacted section 1204 of title 18, United States Code, and the Sean and David Goldman International Child Abduction Prevention and Return Act of 2014 (22 U.S.C. 9101 et seq.);

Whereas the Senate adopted Senate Resolution 543, 112th Congress, on December 4, 2012, condemning the international abduction of children;

Whereas the Senate adopted Senate Resolution 431, 115th Congress, on April 19, 2018, to raise awareness of, and opposition to, international parental child abduction;

Whereas all 50 States and the District of Columbia have enacted laws criminalizing parental kidnapping;

Whereas, in 2017, the Prevention Branch of the Office of Children's Issues of the Department of State—

(1) fielded more than 3,500 inquiries from the general public relating to preventing a child from being removed from the United States; and

(2) enrolled more than 4,400 children in the Children's Passport Issuance Alert Program, which—

(A) is one of the most important tools of the Department of State for preventing international parental child abductions; and

(B) allows the Office of Children's Issues to contact the enrolling parent or legal guardian to verify whether the parental consent requirement has been met when a passport application has been submitted for an enrolled child;

Whereas, the Department of State cannot track the ultimate destination of a child through the use of the passport of the child issued by the Department of State if the child is transported to a third country after departing from the United States;

Whereas a child who is a citizen of the United States may have another nationality and may travel using a passport issued by another country, which—

(1) increases the difficulty in determining the whereabouts of the child; and

(2) makes efforts to prevent abductions more critical; and

Whereas, in 2017, the Department of Homeland Security, in coordination with the Prevention Branch of the Office of Children's Issues of the Department of State, enrolled 210 children in a program aimed at preventing international parental child abduction: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes and observes "Countering International Parental Child Abduction Month" during the period beginning on April 1, 2019, and ending on April 30, 2019, to raise awareness of, and opposition to, international parental child abduction; and

(2) urges the United States to continue playing a leadership role in raising awareness about the devastating impacts of international parental child abduction by educating the public about the negative emo-

tional, psychological, and physical consequences to children and parents victimized by international parental child abduction.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME—H.R. 1644 AND H.R. 1957

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I understand there are two bills at the desk, and I ask for their first reading en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the titles of the bills for the first time en bloc.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 1644) to restore the open internet order of the Federal Communications Commission.

A bill (H.R. 1957) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modernize and improve the Internal Revenue Service, and for other purposes.

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 receive their second reading on the next legislative day.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—H.R. 1222

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that upon receipt of H.R. 1222, if the text is the same as S. 94, H.R. 1222 be considered read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; further, that with respect to S. 94, passage be vitiated and the bill be indefinitely postponed.

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

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session.

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

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of the following nominations: Calendar Nos. 182, 184, and 186.

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

The clerk will report the nominations.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nominations of Daniel N.

Rosenblum, of Maryland, a Career Member of the Senior Executive Service, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Uzbekistan; Kip Tom, of Indiana, for the rank of Ambassador during his tenure of service as U.S. Representative to the United Nations Agencies for Food and Agriculture; and Robert K. Scott, of Maryland, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Malawi.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the nominations.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate vote on the nominations with no intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action; that no further motions be in order; and that any statement relating to the nominations be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Rosenblum, Tom, and Scott nominations en bloc?

The nominations were confirmed en bloc.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session.

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

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn, to then convene for pro forma sessions only, with no business being conducted, on the following dates and times, and that following each pro forma session, the Senate adjourn until the next pro forma session: Monday, April 15 at 3 p.m.; Thursday, April 18, at 11:45 a.m.; Monday, April 22, at 9 a.m.; Thursday, April 25 at 4:30 p.m.

I further ask that when the Senate adjourns on Thursday, April 25, it next convene at 3 p.m., Monday, April 29, and 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, morning business be closed, and the Senate proceed to executive session and resume consideration of the William Cooper nomination; finally, notwithstanding the provisions of rule XXII, the cloture motions filed during today's session ripen at 5:30 on Monday, April 29.

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

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL MONDAY, APRIL 15, 2019, AT 3 P.M.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 5:04 p.m., adjourned until Monday, April 15, 2019, at 3 p.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

THOMAS PETER FEDDO, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY FOR INVESTMENT SECURITY. (NEW POSITION)

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

NAZAK NIKAKHTAR, OF MARYLAND, TO BE UNDER SECRETARY OF COMMERCE FOR INDUSTRY AND SECURITY, VICE MIRA RADIELOVIC RICARDEL, RESIGNED.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

STEPHEN M. DICKSON, OF GEORGIA, TO BE ADMINISTRATOR OF THE FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION FOR THE TERM OF FIVE YEARS, VICE MICHAEL PETER HUERTA, TERM EXPIRED.

UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

MICHELLE A. BEKKERING, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE AN ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR OF THE UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, VICE ERIC G. POSTEL.

FEDERAL LABOR RELATIONS AUTHORITY

CATHERINE BIRD, OF TEXAS, TO BE GENERAL COUNSEL OF THE FEDERAL LABOR RELATIONS AUTHORITY FOR A TERM OF FIVE YEARS, VICE JULIA AKINS CLARK, TERM EXPIRING.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

JONATHAN R. COHEN, OF CALIFORNIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT.
MORSE H. TAN, OF ILLINOIS, TO BE AMBASSADOR AT LARGE FOR GLOBAL CRIMINAL JUSTICE.

FEDERAL MEDIATION AND CONCILIATION SERVICES

RICHARD GIACOLONE, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE FEDERAL MEDIATION AND CONCILIATION DIRECTOR, VICE ALLISON BECK, RESIGNED.

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. PETER B. ANDRYSIAK, JR.
BRIG. GEN. JONATHAN P. BRAGA
BRIG. GEN. JOHN W. BRENNAN, JR.
BRIG. GEN. MIGUEL A. CORREA
BRIG. GEN. CLEMENT S. COWARD, JR.
BRIG. GEN. PATRICK J. DONAHOE
BRIG. GEN. CHRISTOPHER T. DONAHUE
BRIG. GEN. SCOTT L. EFFLANDT
BRIG. GEN. MICHAEL R. FENZEL
BRIG. GEN. DAVID J. FRANCIS
BRIG. GEN. BRADLEY T. GERICKE
BRIG. GEN. DAVID M. HAMILTON
BRIG. GEN. NEIL S. HERSEY
BRIG. GEN. LONNIE G. HIBBARD
BRIG. GEN. DIANA M. HOLLAND
BRIG. GEN. OMAR J. JONES IV
BRIG. GEN. STEPHEN J. MARANIAN
BRIG. GEN. MATTHEW W. MCFARLANE
BRIG. GEN. CHRISTOPHER O. MOHAN
BRIG. GEN. LAURA A. POTTER
BRIG. GEN. THOMAS A. PUGH
BRIG. GEN. ROBERT A. RASCH, JR.
BRIG. GEN. JOHN B. RICHARDSON IV
BRIG. GEN. KENNETH T. ROYAR
BRIG. GEN. STEPHEN G. SMITH
BRIG. GEN. THOMAS H. TODD III
BRIG. GEN. KEVIN VEREEN
BRIG. GEN. ROBERT F. WHITTLE, JR.
BRIG. GEN. DAVID WILSON

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE REGULAR AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 531:

ERIKA O. BERNARDO
THOMAS A. HEAFNER
CAROLE M. Y. VILLAMARIA

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE REGULAR AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 531:

To be major

COREY T. BEALS
MICHAEL R. HALL
ERIC C. HEMPEN
DANIEL R. MONSIVAIS
CHRISTOPHER R. WILLIAMS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE REGULAR AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 531:

To be major

DANIEL W. SCHLIEDER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant colonel

DEBORAH J. ANGELES
ALIDAN A. BANGURA
AMBER J. BARKER
DAVID F. BRADLEY, JR.
STEPHANIE D. CARRILLO
LORI D. CARVER
TANYA I. DIAZ
CLEMENTINE DUKE
JERRY M. EARL, JR.
ERNI L. EULENSTEIN
CUBBY L. GARDNER
BROOKS B. GOETTLE
WENDY H. HEIBEL
DAWN M. HIGGINS
YVONNE R. HILL
CARL O. IMPASTATO
SHANTI P. JONES
TROY T. KINION
RACHEL J. A. LEDESMA
MARCIE A. LEWIS
CHRISTY L. LIVERY
NICOLE F. MOLETT
KEVIN D. MONAGHAN
DANIEL D. MOORE, JR.
LISA R. MURCHISON
COLIN D. PERRY
JOANN M. POOLE
ANMARIE PUTTBRESE
ERIC K. RAUSCH
KEITH A. SCHULTZ
NICOLE L. SCHULTZ
BRIAN L. SCOTT
ANDRIA D. SHARP
STEVEN J. SHEA
JENNIFER L. SOPER
SHAMANA J. STEVENS
MELISSA K. VESSAR
ANDREA K. WHITNEY
CARLA ANN WIESE
KAREN L. WILLIAMS
PATRICIA E. WILLIAMS
ZOE T. WOOLSTON
KERI L. YOUNG

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE REGULAR ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 531:

To be major

CHRISTOPHER L. METZGER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE REGULAR ARMY AS A CHAPLAIN UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 531 AND 7064:

To be major

JONATHAN W. ANDERSON

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE REGULAR NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 531:

To be lieutenant commander

TERENCE B. MCADOO

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE REGULAR NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 531:

To be lieutenant commander

DONALD A. SINITIERE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR TEMPORARY APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 605:

To be lieutenant commander

ROBERT H. BATTLE
JEREMY R. BOHANAN
CORREY J. BORRELLI
LEONARD G. BOWMAN
JOHN C. COLLINS II
TY J. DANIELS
TOM W. DESHAZO
ANTHONY S. FINIGAN

SHAWN H. GARNER
DANIEL J. GESCH
JAMES D. HALSELL
DUNCAN N. HAMILTON
MATTHEW C. HAYS
ROSS E. HIBATT, JR.
ALLAN D. JONES
JEREMY R. KASIK
KYLE R. KAUFFMAN
THOMAS R. KINSEY
EDWIN K. KLINKHAMMER
JACOB N. KUTZER
MICHAEL S. LASSITER
RICHARD C. LAUBER III
JOSEPH P. LEAHY
THOMAS J. LI
PATRICK T. LOVE
PAUL M. MCDONALD
JOSEPH A. MEADOWS
PATRICK A. NANSON
CASEY H. OSWALD
EOWYN E. PEDICINI
KENNETH W. PENNINGTON
CHRISTOPHER P. PISCIOTTA
JOSEPH F. PUISHYS III
JEFFREY D. REILLY
MATTHEW J. SCHWEERS
DAVID C. SEIBEL
ANNA M. T. SHAFER
AARON M. SMITH
CHRISTOPHER G. SMITH
JERD H. SMITH
ZACHARY T. SMITH
DERON S. SPENCER
NATHAN M. SUNDELL
DAVID J. VANDYKE
KEITH E. WILBER

IN THE MARINE CORPS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS RESERVE UNDER TITLE 10, U. S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

LESLIE S. ALBERS
ERICH B. BERGIEL
BRANDON M. BOLLING
DAVID M. CAREY
ARTUR M. CZAPKA
VINCENT C. DAWSON
SHANNON L. GORRELL
KEVIN P. GRAVES
DENNIS W. HACKER
KIMBERLY A. HAYWORTH
DOUGLAS P. HIBSHMAN
ALLAN G. JASTER
JOHN W. KLOPACZ
JAMES F. KORTH
KARA L. LECKER
CHARLES K. MARTIN
MARK J. MCDONALD
DAVID S. MCELLIOTT
BRIAN T. MCGONAGLE
KERRY K. MENGELKOCH
JEFFREY M. O'DONNELL
MILTON K. PARSONS, JR.
BRIAN C. PATE
GUILLERMO ROSALES, JR.
TRAVIS G. RUSSELL
MICHAEL E. SHERIDAN
BRUCE J. STOFFOLANO
MATTHEW C. SWINDLE
SEAN E. ZUKOWSKY

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate April 11, 2019:

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

DREW H. WRIGLEY, OF NORTH DAKOTA, TO BE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY FOR THE DISTRICT OF NORTH DAKOTA FOR THE TERM OF FOUR YEARS.

WING CHAU, OF RHODE ISLAND, TO BE UNITED STATES MARSHAL FOR THE DISTRICT OF RHODE ISLAND FOR THE TERM OF FOUR YEARS.

RAMONA L. DOHMAN, OF MINNESOTA, TO BE UNITED STATES MARSHAL FOR THE DISTRICT OF MINNESOTA FOR THE TERM OF FOUR YEARS.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DANIEL N. ROSENBLUM, OF MARYLAND, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR EXECUTIVE SERVICE, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF UZBEKISTAN.

KIP TOM, OF INDIANA, FOR THE RANK OF AMBASSADOR DURING HIS TENURE OF SERVICE AS U.S. REPRESENTATIVE TO THE UNITED NATIONS AGENCIES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE.

ROBERT K. SCOTT, OF MARYLAND, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF MALAWI.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

DAVID BERNHARDT, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

WITHDRAWAL

NICK EDWARD PROFFITT, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE UNITED STATES MARSHAL FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF VIRGINIA FOR THE TERM OF FOUR YEARS.

Executive Message transmitted by the President to the Senate on April 11, 2019 withdrawing from further Senate

consideration the following nomination:

ROBERT WILLIAMS, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR SOUTH ASIAN AFFAIRS, VICE NISHA DESAI BISWAL, WHICH WAS SENT TO THE SENATE ON JANUARY 3, 2019.