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## Senate

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

### PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Eternal Spirit, our shelter in the time of storm, when our hearts grow faint and weary, renew our strength and enable us to soar above our challenges.

Today, fill our lawmakers with the spirit of wisdom. May their different approaches to problem-solving for our Nation and world contribute to more effective solutions for freedom in the years to come. Lord, deliver our Senators from the spirit of pessimism, and bless them as they seek to honor You. In their thoughts, words, and deeds, may they passionately strive to glorify You, ever seeking Your divine approval.

We pray in Your Holy Name. Amen.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

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

### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CRAMER). 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 Kenneth Kiyul Lee, of California, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Ninth Circuit.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

#### PENTAGON OVERSIGHT

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to shed light on yet another really dark cloud that is hanging over our Department of Defense. In fact, for decades, a dark cloud of fiscal mismanagement has loomed large over the Pentagon. During my very first term here in the Senate, I began my quest to bring fiscal accountability to the Pentagon. Four decades later, I am still keeping tabs on the money trail. That money trail is sometimes difficult to follow. Back then, it was a bit like David taking on Goliath.

We all know that the United States of America has the strongest and mightiest military in the world. I am thankful for that because a strong military is not meant to fight a war; it is meant to maintain the peace. We haven't had a world war III since we have had a strong military.

Our brave men and women who serve in the U.S. Armed Forces protect our shores at home and abroad to keep us safe and to protect the blessings of liberty for our children and grandchildren. That is exactly why it is so very important to keep check on the Pentagon's ledgers, to help make sure that every tax dollar assigned to the Nation's defense is actually spent effectively and not squandered on waste, fraud, and abuse.

With the help of brave whistleblowers who stuck their necks out to "commit

truth," I stuck my neck out during the Reagan administration. That is when I learned about the Pentagon's little shop of price horrors.

Of course, ripping off the taxpayers started during the Revolutionary War, when contractors sold rotten meat to the Continental Army, and it continued during the Civil War, when profiteers sold ammunition filled with sawdust and shoddy shoes and horses to the Union Army. It looks like it continues to this day.

Back in 1985, Americans will recall, the Defense Department was shelling out vast amounts of taxpayer dollars for spare parts. Remember back then the \$450 hammers and the \$640 toilet seats? That sounds like a real bargain compared to the more recent wasteful spending at the Pentagon, such as the \$1,280 coffee mug and the \$14,000 toilet seat lid. Obviously, the cost of waste is getting a whole lot more expensive for our taxpayers.

Back in the 1980s, I fought to win a spending freeze on unchecked spending sprees. Misspending and overspending were riddling the defense budget at the expense of the American taxpayer.

Military readiness drives the spending decisions that Members of Congress make when we cast our votes on the defense budget. Our constituents expect their elected representatives to make sure that the moms and dads, sons and daughters, brothers and sisters who are serving our country in uniform are well equipped with the best resources money can buy. But they also expect their elected representatives to make sure their hard-earned dollars that are withheld from every paycheck—their tax dollars—are not being ripped off by greedy corporations, like TransDigm Group, Inc., which I will speak about in a moment.

That is why I conduct robust oversight of defense spending. As a taxpayer watchdog—and all of us are supposed to be watchdogs, and all of us would claim to be watchdogs—it is our

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



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responsibility and my responsibility to make sure every defense dollar is spent as effectively and as efficiently as possible. Every dollar lost to waste, fraud, and abuse harms military readiness, and it also lines the pockets of somebody else at taxpayers' expense.

Trimming the fat in a bloated bureaucracy won't happen in the shadows. There is no magic wand to wave either. If there is one thing I have learned in my years of oversight, transparency matters. Transparency brings accountability.

Every time I come to the floor to talk about the fiscal mess at the Pentagon, I get a bit of *deja vu*. Earlier, I said my fraud-fighting efforts in the 1980s could be compared to David v. Goliath. Now let's fast-forward to this year, 2019. I am still here working as hard as ever to do away with wrongdoing and extract fiscal accountability at the Pentagon. Today, some might say that job is like the one performed by the famous character in Greek mythology who was destined to roll that heavy stone up the hill and to do it from then until eternity.

Congressional oversight can be extremely tedious, and it can be time-consuming, but, as I like to remind each of the other 534 Members of Congress, it is essential to our country that we exercise this system of checks and balances. Without it, the dark fiscal cloud looming over the Pentagon would swell bigger and bigger and bigger.

Oversight work may feel like an uphill climb, but oversight is not futile in the end. That is why I keep my shoulder to the wheel—to hold people at the Pentagon accountable, to protect taxpayers, and most importantly, when it comes to a defense dollar, to make sure we have our military readiness.

Right now, I am here today to share some new details about the broken record of fiscal mismanagement at the Department of Defense.

No matter how high I turn up the volume, the overdogs at the Pentagon remain tone deaf to fiscal integrity. Consider the recent report by the Department of Defense Office of Inspector General. It is called "Review of Parts Purchased From TransDigm Group Inc."

First, I want to compliment Senator WARREN and two Representatives, RO KHANNA and TIM RYAN, for getting the ball rolling with their request asking the inspector general to look into the contract—this contractor's pricing structure. We need all hands on deck in Congress to conduct oversight, so I thank these other Members of Congress just named.

After digging into the details, I can only conclude that the Pentagon is still, after all these years, stuck on autopilot. No one on board in the Pentagon's mother ship seems to bother to steer its "fiscal ship" into shape. Fiscal integrity somehow got lost in the spare parts horror story I am about to tell. In fact, I was more than dismayed

with the response from the internal watchdogs at the DOD IG office. Their team wrote the report, and yet the inspector general leadership team seemed to show no urgency whatsoever to fix the problem they described.

This tells me I also need to keep a tight leash on the internal watchdogs leading the Department of Defense inspector general's office. Their February report exposes a galactic price gouging, colossal ripple, and out-of-this-world waste. It reads like a sequel to the same financial shenanigans that have turned the Pentagon into a taxpayer money pit. Change out the name of the contractor, inflate the charges, submit the invoice and *voilà*—the American taxpayer is on the hook for another fixed-price, sole source contract.

For this report, the inspector general examined one contractor, TransDigm Group. In total, the inspector general analyzed 113 contracts between January 2015 and January 2017. They reviewed 47 spare parts the Department of Defense purchased from this contractor. In just those 2 years, the inspector general found TransDigm overcharged the Pentagon by \$16-1/10th million out of a total of \$29-7/10th million in contracts.

The reasonable profit threshold is considered by the Department of Defense to be 15 percent or below. The IG found that TransDigm earned excess profits on 46 of the 47 parts sold to the Defense Department.

On 17 of those parts, TransDigm earned more than a 1,000-percent profit. Remarkably, the highest profit percentage was 4,436 percent.

It is obvious to our taxpayers that that is a fleecing of the American taxpayer. Pulling the wool over the eyes of Congress and the taxpayers will only stop with transparency—which transparency will bring accountability.

So that is why I am here today. Just think for a minute about the big picture. This report is just one snapshot of a much larger problem. It is kind of a spit in the ocean when you consider the enormous \$716 billion defense budget. Just imagine the boatloads of bloat elsewhere in the bureaucracy. The Department of Defense is obligated under Federal law and under regulations to uphold basic measures of fiscal integrity.

So where do we go from here? The inspector general made just a few paltry recommendations. For starters, it directed contracting officers to request voluntary refunds for excess profits. Guess the chances of getting voluntary refunds. Let me suggest that I would not advise taxpayers to hold their breath on a voluntary refund. The inspector's general recommendations, then, have no teeth. Their recommendations are insufficient. What is worse, the inspector general leadership team claims no single Department of Defense official is responsible for this price gouging that goes on.

So let me repeat: The inspector general leadership team, the internal

watchdog for fiscal integrity and compliance at the Department of Defense, is effectively saying something like this: No one person at the Department of Defense can be held accountable for waste, fraud, and abuse of taxpayers' money. Obviously, to the taxpayers listening or anybody else, this illustrates a cavalier attitude toward taxpayer money that former Secretary of Defense James Mattis sought to extinguish. By the way, I wrote him a note, complimenting him on some statements he made about taking care of some of these problems.

The decades-long odyssey of misspending at the Pentagon keeps going around and around and around. That is why—the way I see it—the Department of Defense has a fundamental responsibility to uphold fiscal integrity. After reviewing the IG report and meeting with its auditing team and the Department of Defense pricing czar, I have reached three conclusions. No. 1, fiscal control at the Department of Defense is AWOL. The Pentagon will never clean up its books if it cannot properly track the money trail and connect the dots.

Consider why the Department of Defense contracting officers were unable to even certify if a profit was "fair and reasonable." Do you know why? It was because they could not obtain critical cost data at the company TransDigm. In the most egregious case—that case I mentioned where there was a 4,436-percent profit margin for just one spare part—the contracting officer—you will not believe this—certified that the price was fair and reasonable. There is something very, very wrong about that procedure. A whopping 4,000-percent profit margin for a spare part doesn't square with our midwestern common-sense standard.

No. 2, the leadership team at the IG office has exhibited an alarming hands-off approach toward stopping waste, fraud, and abuse. The lack of urgency and the failure to hold anyone accountable is very revealing. It sends a signal throughout the chain of command: Just keep on signing contracts; keep ordering spare parts; keep up business as usual. Lastly, it shows that no one will be held accountable for price gouging.

No. 3, the pattern of price gouging at TransDigm and its subsidiaries has gone unimpeded for decades. It has amassed exclusive rights to sell these spare parts to the Pentagon. In fact, the Defense Department accounted for 34 percent of its sales in 2017. TransDigm exploited its business model and took advantage of its sole source position to leverage higher prices.

Now, as a former chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee—and still a member of that committee—I have examined anticompetitive business practices over a long period of time, including those in agriculture and the pharmaceutical sectors of our economy. It is very concerning to me when

contracting arrangements, like those between TransDigm and its 100 subsidiaries, are effectively a monopoly. It is like an octopus with 100 arms putting the squeeze on the Pentagon. Effectively, the Pentagon is at the mercy of TransDigm—which owns the intellectual property—to buy the spare parts it needs to build the Nation's critical weapon systems. That leaves the American taxpayer on the hook for exorbitant price gouging.

The inspector general report found that TransDigm's choke hold has added up to tens of millions of dollars overcharging to the taxpayer. This is a good time to refresh people's memories about my legislative and oversight work with anticompetitive business practices. It is pretty simple. Monopolies invite government regulation. If that is the road TransDigm wants to continue following, I am here to deliver a message. The jig is up on this cozy relationship. The buck stops here.

I have written a letter to Acting Secretary Shanahan about these flawed contracts and failures to identify price gouging. I have asked him to make measurable recommendations on how to restore accountability and end this price gouging. One thing is crystal clear. Transparency and competition are MIA—missing in action—when the Pentagon buys spare parts from TransDigm and its subsidiaries. Now, thank God the other body, the House of Representatives, its Committee on Oversight and Reform, called an oversight hearing this week to examine TransDigm and its price-gouging shenanigans.

Congress has a constitutional duty of oversight to keep check on taxpayers' money and hold government accountable. As I said earlier, we need all hands on deck to root out wasteful spending.

Once again, we are back to square one. The Pentagon has flunked a fundamental benchmark of fiscal responsibility and stewardship. It is one of Washington's worst kept secrets. Year after year, Congress shovels more money into the Pentagon coffers to ensure we maintain the best military in the world, and I express my support for the military. I express my support that a strong department of national defense is also a strong keeper of the peace because we might not be challenged, and we are going to be able to help keep peace around the world, but year after year, the Pentagon squanders hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars. Some people at the Pentagon seem to think that paying \$16 million in excess profits somehow seems to be small potatoes.

In my letter to the Acting Defense Secretary, I made it clear that I am not one of those people. I have asked him to answer a direct question. That question is this: What specific steps is he going to take to stop the profiteers from pilfering taxpayer money?

Contracts like I have described today between TransDigm and the Pentagon

are shortchanging the troops, fleecing the taxpayers, and tarnishing its reputation.

As Justice Brandeis said, "sunshine is said to be the best of disinfectants." So I am here today to pull back the curtains on the TransDigm audit. The American people need the sun to shine in on price gouging at the Pentagon so we can root out the wasteful spending here and elsewhere.

Transparency is the best ammunition that we have to chase away the dark fiscal crowd looming along the shores of the Potomac.

#### RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

#### NATIONAL POLICE WEEK

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I thank my colleague from Iowa for always staying on top of things like this.

Mr. President, first, I would like to talk about Police Week. Today we observe Peace Officers Memorial Day, the heart of National Police Week. We all remember the men and women in law enforcement who have made the ultimate sacrifice, and we pause to say thank you to all of our police officers who work day and night to keep our communities safe.

I want to share a special thanks to all of our law enforcement members visiting from New York, who, in my view, are the gold standard in police work.

I grew up in a neighborhood where police officers lived. I played with their children at their houses. You would always know sort of instinctively, even as a kid, when that phone rang and the spouse—almost always, in those days, the wife of a police officer—heard the phone ring, what went through her head a little bit is this: I hope that is not the call I dreaded. This is the job of police officers and their families—that is, to risk their safety for our safety—and they do a great job.

As we recognize their contributions, we should acknowledge what we could do in Congress to make their jobs safer and easier. We can make our streets safer by passing comprehensive background check legislation. We can help law enforcement combat foreign opioid trafficking by passing the bipartisan Fentanyl Sanctions Act and the POWER Act, which provides handheld scanning devices. When a police officer is on a drug bust, they can tell if fentanyl is part of a crime scene there, and they can take precautions to protect themselves, because we know how deadly fentanyl is, even if it gets on your skin or in your nostrils. We can also do more to care for the families of fallen officers.

That is why I have been so proud to fight alongside my colleague Senator GILLIBRAND and so many others to make sure that the September 11th Victim Compensation Fund has the necessary funding.

Last Friday, the New York Police Department, or the NYPD, added the names of nearly 50 police officers to

the 9/11 memorial wall, all of whom died in 9/11-related illnesses. It is our duty to take care of these families, and the first step is making sure that the Victims Compensation Fund has enough funds to compensate them.

I say to our law enforcement officers two words: Thank you. Thank you for your service. It is an honor to represent you in the Senate, and we are all grateful for the sacrifices you make every day.

#### NOMINATIONS

Mr. President, now on judges, during the same week that we mark the 65th anniversary of the historic "Brown v. Board of Education" decision, Leader MCCONNELL has scheduled votes on nominees whose views directly contradict the spirit of equality and justice that Brown represents.

It is appalling. These new people we are putting on the bench turn the clock so backward after we have made so much progress, many of it through the courts.

Consider the nomination of Michael Truncale of Texas. He has peddled conspiracies of "widespread voter fraud" and once called President Obama an "un-American imposter" who "bows to Arab Sheikhs and other world leaders." This is a man who we are putting on the bench, a man who is supposed to be judicious, thoughtful, and sees both sides. What we are putting on the bench is hard-right ideologues who will do damage to this country for a generation. Mr. Truncale was approved by the Republican Senate yesterday for a seat on the district court in Texas, and he is going to sit on that bench for life—a man who says things like this and who thinks like this.

I have always tried to put on the bench people who are moderate. So many of us have. Bill Clinton did. Barack Obama did. Here we have a parade of narrow ideologues, and that is not who should be on the bench because they will make law rather than interpret the law.

Here is another one, Kenneth Lee of California. His past writings reveal shocking positions on race and diversity, affirmative action, educational opportunity, and women's reproductive freedom. He once wrote that multiculturalism is a "malodorous sickness" and that sexism—sexism, which we have all seen and heard about and a little more than half of our population experiences—is "irrelevant pouting." That is a man who should be on the bench? If confirmed today, Mr. LEE may preside over cases dealing with gender discrimination.

Consider Wendy Vitter, nominated to the Eastern District of Louisiana. She once promoted the idea that contraceptives caused cancer and claimed that Planned Parenthood kills 150,000 women annually. She also refused to acknowledge that Brown v. Board was correctly decided. On this very anniversary, that is who is on the floor to be voted on in lockstep by all the folks here on the Republican side. She refused to acknowledge that Brown v.

Board was correctly decided, saying instead that the decision was correct with the benefit of hindsight—whatever that means. In the same district, where 6-year-old Ruby Bridges became the first African-American child to attend an all-White elementary school in the South, the Senate will consider confirming someone who claims that hindsight was needed to understand why the decision that allowed Ruby to go to the same school as a White child wasn't correct. That is who we are putting on the bench.

These are not just conservatives. We understand that the President and Republicans will put in conservatives, but hard-right, narrow ideologues who show no understanding or sympathy for people who don't look like them or pray like them or marry like them—what is wrong here?

It is not hard. If you need the benefit of hindsight to understand that *Brown v. Board of Education*, which brought an end to school segregation and led to the end of American apartheid, was correctly decided, you shouldn't be a Federal judge. I urge my colleagues, in the spirit of the Brown anniversary and what it means, to oppose Ms. Vitter's nomination this afternoon.

#### PUERTO RICO

Mr. President, now on Puerto Rico, briefly, as negotiations on a final package of disaster aid continue, I want to stress to everyone that we must remain focused on reaching an agreement as swiftly as possible. Disaster-stricken Americans in the West, the South, the Midwest, and 3 million citizens of Puerto Rico are waiting on Congress to deliver relief, in some cases for disasters that occurred over a year ago.

Why is this held up?

We know why. Republicans are not willing to give aid to Puerto Rico. There was a bill that would never pass the House and something they didn't think originally, when President Trump said: Don't do it. And they just bowed down. They thought they could roll over the House and the Democratic minority in the Senate, who wouldn't stand up for certain Americans.

Well, we did. Now, thankfully, we are making progress. Republicans are realizing that Puerto Ricans cannot be left out of the package, but now we must avoid poison pills at all costs. President Trump, if he sticks his thumb into this again and asks for something unreasonable, will delay disaster aid once again, just as he did before.

To my Republican colleagues, let's do this together. Let's do it in the right way. Let's do it in the way that can pass the House.

President Trump will sign the bill. We have to make sure this legislation gets across the finish line. Every time the President intervenes and Republican colleagues go along, it gets held up even further.

#### ABORTION

Mr. President, on the Alabama abortion bill, last night the Republican Alabama Senate passed, perhaps, the

most draconian abortion law in the country. It bans abortion in every stage of pregnancy, imposes criminal penalties—criminal penalties—on any doctor who performs one, and includes no exception in the case of rape or incest, even if the victim is a child. If a child is raped, they have to have the baby.

The Alabama bill is as extreme as it gets. It is a clear attack on women's freedom. It contravenes a woman's constitutional right to make private medical decisions. It would deeply harm women, turn doctors into criminals, and deny the right of rape victims, even if they are children, to make personal medical decisions.

The Alabama abortion bill is plainly inhumane. It should never have passed. The Governor should not sign it. If she does, it ought to be swiftly struck down by the courts.

#### IRAN

Mr. President, on Iran, over of the past few days, it has come to light in public reporting that the Trump administration's national security team has reviewed a plan to deploy as many as 120,000—yes, you heard that right, 120,000—U.S. troops in the Mideast should tensions with Iran escalate. I was stunned to read this report in the *New York Times* yesterday.

The administration just started a maximum pressure campaign of sanctions against Iran, but is it simultaneously reviewing plans for war? That would make no sense.

Meanwhile, the President oddly denied the report while also saying he would “absolutely” send ground troops to the Middle East. But if he did, it would be a “heck”—and I am paraphrasing—“of a lot more troops [than 120,000].”

Did we learn the lessons of the last decade? Do we know that we have to spend our time focusing on building up this country here, not build roads and bridges in the Middle East but do them here?

There is an alarming lack of clarity here. There is a lack of strategy, and there is a lack of consultation. The President ought to come up with a strategy and make it clear to Congress. An adventure like this—120,000 troops or a large number of troops—should have to be approved by Congress. It certainly should be discussed with Congress ahead of time. There need to be open hearings and closed briefings with the committees of jurisdiction immediately.

Any potential increase in our military presence in the Middle East should require consultation with Congress, and anything beyond that would require this body to act.

President Trump, what is your strategy? Where are you headed? Why aren't you talking to Congress about it?

#### PUBLIC HOUSING

Mr. President, finally, on public housing, it was reported last week that the Department of HUD has proposed a rule that would bar families with

mixed immigration status from receiving public housing assistance, even if everyone but one member of the family is a legal resident. So if it is a family of six—a mother who is an American citizen, four children who are American citizens, but a husband who is not and who is not here legally—they kick them all out. It risks displacing tens of thousands of legal residents and of American citizens, including 55,000 children. The administration has created crisis after crisis with the immigration community. Are they going to create another one and take 55,000 young American children, almost all of whom are citizens, and just kick them out on the streets when we know there is very little affordable housing? What a cruel and callous policy. It is another example of the Trump administration's desire to separate families and disrupt communities.

There is nothing to say about this proposed rule but that it is cruel, wrong-headed, and would lead to even more chaos than the administration has created already.

In an effort to appear even more punitive toward immigrants, the administration has conjured up a rule that could potentially force tens of thousands of children into homelessness or away from their families.

My message to President Trump and Secretary Carson is simple: Scrap this idea now.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri is recognized.

#### MAIDEN SPEECH

Mr. HAWLEY. Mr. President, it is an honor to rise today to speak in this Chamber on behalf of the people of Missouri. When I think of those who have served my State here before me, I am humbled. When I think of the true and strong Missourians who have sent me here, I am sobered, because to represent them will be a great responsibility indeed. I pledge to my fellow Missourians that I will work at this task with all the strength that God can give me, and I will serve without fear and without favor to any man.

We Missourians are known for our frankness, and today I will be frank because this is a moment of great need for my State and for our Nation. This Nation was born in a revolution by “We the People” and premised on a revolutionary faith that it is the people—the common man and woman who make democracy work—and it is the calling of every generation to renew that revolution for their day. In our time, our revolutionary faith is faltering, and in the heartland of this country, the great challenge of our age is unfolding.

I come from a town called Lexington, MO. It is a small place, but a proud one. It is a place where people wake early and work late to make a life for themselves and their children. It is a place where people value honesty and gumption and life's simple pleasures: a fine morning in a deer stand, reading

to the kids before bed, and Sunday dinner at Mom's. Although it is humble, it is a place that reflects the dignity and quiet greatness of the working men and women.

These are the people who explored a continent, who built the railroads, and who opened the West. These are the workers whose labor launched the Industrial Revolution and whose ingenuity made the American economy the marvel of the world. These are the families who have rallied to this country's flag at every hour of danger and who bear the burden of defending our Nation even now. These are the patriots who man the fire department and coach the Little League. These are the generous who give \$25 a month out of their gas money to assist people halfway around the globe whom they will never meet just because they believe in helping others. They don't ask for much, and they live by a simple creed: Give the best of yourself to your family, your community, and your fellow man. America is a place of promise, because in these hearts, honor lives.

These working men and women are confronting crises today, and, as they do, so does our democracy. After years of sacrifice, the great American middle is being pushed aside by a new arrogant aristocracy. The new aristocrats seek to remake society in their own image, to engineer an economy that works for the elite but few else, and to fashion a culture that is dominated by their own preferences. When they think of helping their fellow citizens, they think of making everyone else more like themselves.

And Washington has just gone along. This town has embraced the politics of elite values and elite ambition rather than building opportunities to thrive in the great and broad American middle. This has left middle America—the great American middle class—under siege, battling the loss of respect and work, the decline of home and family, and an epidemic of loneliness and despair. This is the crisis of our time.

I am afraid you wouldn't know it to listen to the talk of this town much of the time. As the crisis deepens, the political establishment looks the other way, rehearsing and rehashing the political debates of 30 or 40 years ago. There is no time for that any longer. The 21st century is upon us, and the great struggle of this century can no longer wait. The crisis that we face goes to the heart of our revolution.

The United States is unique in history as a republic governed not by a select elite but by the working man and woman, because we believe it is through the working man and woman that God chooses to change the world. That change comes not through spectacular feats of daring or glory but through everyday work and everyday sacrifice and everyday acts of courage and love. It has been the proud working people, our farmers and mechanics, and teachers and tradesmen who have defined the character of this country.

For too long now, neither our economy nor our culture has lent them much support. Instead, our policymakers have entrenched the new elites and undermined the way of life that once bound this country together. It is time to face the facts.

Over the last 40 years, our economy has worked best for those at the top—the wealthy and the well-educated. If you have a job in Silicon Valley or an expensive and prestigious degree, this economy has worked for you, and Washington has focused on how to get more people to join this elite. But if you want a life built around the place where you grew up, if your ambition is not to start a tech business but to join the family business, to serve in the PTA or in your local church, well, you are told that you are not a success, and you are told that you are on your own.

This is no accident. The people who make the rules now, who run our large corporations, and who set the tone for our popular culture all belong to the same class. This economy has been their economy. They made it for themselves.

But in places like the one where I grew up in middle Missouri, good-paying jobs that you can raise a family on are going away. The jobs go overseas or south of the border or to cities on the coasts. Once vibrant towns decline, taking with them the network of schools and neighborhoods and churches that make up middle-class life.

Rural America has been particularly hard hit. Rural Americans' life expectancy has not just leveled off. It has actually dropped, and for women without a high school degree, that drop has been staggering. In some rural places, residents struggle with outright deprivation. My home State contains some of the poorest counties in America, all in rural places that once boasted thriving small towns. As those communities struggle, want sets in.

The crisis reaches well beyond economics. The message that Washington has sent our whole society is loud and clear: Our elites are the people who matter and those who aspire to join them. Everyone else is unimportant or backward.

Millions of Americans are left with a sense that the people who run this country view them with nothing but contempt and value them as nothing but consumers. These trends tear at our country's social fabric, and they undermine our common ethic of citizenship because being a free person and being an American isn't just about what you can buy. It is about the pride that comes in supporting a family. It is about contributing something of worth to your community. It is about being able to look a neighbor in the eye and know that you are his equal. It is about respect, and too many Americans haven't been getting it.

They are certainly not getting it from our cultural elite. The media, Hollywood, and academia relentlessly press their values and their priorities

on the rest of us. They advocate liberation from the duties of family and tradition. They look down on the plain virtues of patriotism, self-giving, and faith. They idealize fame and preach self-realization through consuming more stuff, and as they do, they assault the foundations of the great American middle.

Perhaps we shouldn't be surprised, then, at the epidemic of loneliness and despair that is spreading across working communities. Fewer young people are getting married and starting families. Drug addiction is surging. The opioid menace has ravaged every sector, every age group, and every geography of working people.

It is not only pills. It is heroin, cocaine, fentanyl, meth, and, of course, marijuana that have flooded our streets and our homes. Everywhere, deaths of despair are mounting among farmers and among the young. Most shockingly, the young are the hope of our society, but in America today, they are taking their lives in numbers we have never seen in our history.

The well-off frequently note that our Nation has never been richer, but the tragedy of youth suicide betrays a profound poverty of hope. And is that really so surprising? Today's youth must make their way in a society increasingly defined not by the genuine and personal love of family and church but by the cold and judgmental world of social media.

A typical young person is bombarded by video games and violence and the relentless status-seeking imposed and modeled by our cultural elite. There is no more shocking illustration of our cultural poverty and no more damning indictment of our cultural leaders than these lost lives.

The sum of it all is that too many Americans are losing their standing as citizens. They are losing their voice in the life of this Nation, and with that, they are losing their liberty. To be free is to have a voice. It is to have a say, and it is to have the power of self-government.

The chattering class often tells us that all of this—the jobs, the despair, and the loss of standing—is a result of forces beyond anyone's control, as if that is an excuse to do nothing, but in fact, it is not true. Today's society benefits those who shaped it, and it has been shaped not by working men and women but by the new aristocratic elite. Big banks, big tech, and big multinational corporations, along with their allies in the academy and the media—these are the aristocrats of our age. They live in the United States, but they consider themselves citizens of the world. They operate businesses or run universities here, but their primary loyalty is to their own agenda for a more unified, progressive, and profitable global order.

These modern aristocrats often claim to be a meritocracy, and many of them truly believe they are. What they don't see or will not acknowledge is that the

society they have built works mainly for themselves. They have effectively run this country for decades, and their legacy is national division and national decline.

It is time to reclaim our revolutionary heritage and reassert the democracy of "We the People." To those who despair at the task ahead, I say the hour is not too late and the crisis is not too deep for the determined effort of a great people, and to those who feel forgotten and unheard, I say this is your time. Now we must stand together to renew the promise of our enduring revolution. We must put aside the tired orthodoxies of years past and forge a new politics of national renewal.

We must begin by acknowledging that GDP growth alone cannot be the measure of this Nation's greatness, and so it cannot be the only aim of this Nation's policy because our purpose is not to make a few people wealthy but to sustain a great democracy. We need not just a bigger economy but a better society. We need a society that offers rewarding work for every worker who wants it, wherever she is from, whatever degree he might have, whether their ambition is to start a business or to start a family. We need a society that will allow towns and neighborhoods to flourish across the great heartland of this country and not just in the megacities of the coasts. We need a society that puts American workers first, that prioritizes them over cheap goods from abroad and offers them the chance to better their station. All this we must fight for and more.

We need to repair the torn fabric of our common life. We need a politics that prioritizes strong marriages and encourages strong families, where children can know their parents and be nurtured by their love. We need strong schools and churches and co-ops because these are the things that make liberty possible, for liberty is more than selling or buying or the right to be left alone. Liberty is the ability to master our own fate and, as a free people, to set our own course. That is the promise of the American Revolution, and we will renew it for our day.

Washington has ignored the need for this renewal for too long. It has rested easy with the priorities of an earlier age. Now it must wake up and face the facts of this day. Now we must ask new questions, force new debates, articulate new priorities, and find new solutions to make the great American middle thrive again.

This is not the work of a day or a season. It is the work of a generation. We will make it the work of this generation and so do our part to see the success of liberty in our time.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

WELCOMING SENATOR HAWLEY OF MISSOURI

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I am glad to be joined by my good colleague Senator HAWLEY. He brings incredible depth to the issues we talked about. He grew up in Lexington, MO, I understand, in smalltown America. He was educated in some of the best schools in our country and had the great good fortune to be assigned as a John Roberts law clerk in the office of another John Roberts law clerk and the good judgment to convince her to marry him. He and Erin are a valuable asset to our State. They have two wonderful little boys. I have enjoyed the time we have had together and look forward to more time with JOSH and his family. He clearly thinks deeply about the issues that affect the country. He is focused on not only the present but the future. Those are all good things.

We have jointly had the opportunity to represent a State that is as diverse as any State in the country. I think a week, a month, a year in Missouri is probably the closest thing to that same period of time if you could somehow condense the entire United States into one place, where sometimes St. Louis is seen as the westernmost eastern city and Kansas City may be more like Denver than St. Louis. Northern Missouri is more like Iowa.

I would state to Senator GRASSLEY that when crossing the border there, you certainly can't tell when you cross from Missouri farmland into Iowa farmland and the small cities and small towns. The Bootheel, Delta South in character where JOSH and I live in Springfield has that northwest Arkansas-Oklahoma vitality that is different from anywhere else in our State. As we travel actively around our State, as we both do, I think we have a great sense of so much of what happens in the country. It is still the population center of America, if not the exact geographic center. Missouri is where the country comes together.

JOSH had an opportunity last year to talk to tens of thousands of Missourians about that and to communicate in other ways with millions of Missourians about that. I am glad he is here and glad to welcome him to the work we will be doing together. We won't agree every single day because if we did, I guess we could have just one Senator and give him two votes. But it gives us a chance to talk about the issues we face and what that means for our State but also what it means to the country.

I am delighted he has committed himself to public service. Missourians have now elected him to two statewide offices in less than 3 years, and they have expressed that confidence in him.

With great frequency, I run into students both JOSH and Erin had when they were both teaching at the Law School at the University of Missouri, and they always tell me Erin was the best teacher they ever had and often

tell me JOSHUA was the best teacher they ever had. They must not have had a class with Erin yet. But I am delighted that they are both part of the discussion that will lead America forward. I look forward to engaging in that discussion with them and partnering in the things we can find to do together and getting a chance to represent our strong, unique State that I think is ready to merge into a greater future, whether that is with all the healthcare and ag research we see happening, the GEOINT focus that is coming into our State because of the new NGA, the National Geospatial Intelligence Agency facility being built there.

This is a time of great opportunity. I am glad to have the chance to share part of that opportunity and look at that future with my colleague JOSH HAWLEY and certainly want to join others in welcoming him officially to the Senate today as he makes his maiden speech to the Senate.

I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I want to join with my colleague, the senior Senator from Missouri, and congratulate the junior Senator from Missouri on some wonderful remarks.

I came into the Congress with Senator BLUNT from the House of Representatives over 20 years ago, which I guess makes us the old guys around here, but it warms my heart and gives me great hope for the future to see the caliber and the quality of people who are entering public life in the form of people like Senator HAWLEY.

He is somebody who not only brings great intellect, great passion, and great conviction, but he is a principled leader who is here for the right reasons and profoundly wants to make a difference for the future of this country. In his remarks, he touched upon the genius of our Founders, and that is that average Americans—working men and women in this country—have an opportunity to make a difference with their voices and with their votes by entering the public arena and being a part of our democracy. That is really what this is all about. That is what our work should be about every day, is empowering them to do a better job in raising their families and serving their communities.

I certainly look forward to continuing our work with the new Senator from Missouri and with the rest of our colleagues here as we embark upon that task. I hope we can be successful in restoring that vision our Founders had for what this country should be and in each day waking up and thinking about the fact that it is not about us; it is about what we do to secure a better and brighter future consistent with that brilliant past we have been so blessed by because of those who have come before and have been willing to enter public life and make a difference.

So thank you and congratulations to Senator HAWLEY. It is a great honor to

serve with you, and we look forward to working with you in the days and weeks and months ahead to serve the very people you talked about in your remarks.

#### NATIONAL MILITARY APPRECIATION MONTH

Mr. President, May is National Military Appreciation Month, a chance for us to honor the service of those who have kept our Nation free for 243 years.

For me, when I reflect on our military men and women, there are always two things in the forefront of my mind: my dad, Harold Thune, and the men and women of Ellsworth Air Force Base in South Dakota and the South Dakota National Guard.

My father was a fighter pilot who flew Hellcats off the USS *Intrepid* in the Pacific theater during World War II. I came to know the “greatest generation” through my dad—their humility, their quiet service, their patriotism, and their deep dedication to the cause of freedom.

I have come to know the men and women of today’s military through Ellsworth and through South Dakota’s National Guard and the great work, the extraordinary work they do day in and day out, the professionalism, the skill, the talent, and the dedication they bring to the work of defending America and America’s freedoms.

Ellsworth has been on my mind in particular this week because right now the Air Force is conducting a large force exercise involving B-1 bombers, B-2s, B-52s, F-16s, C-17s, KC-135s, JSTARS and AWACS, and, for the first time, F-35s.

My acquaintance with Ellsworth began during my time as a Member of the House of Representatives, but I really got to know the base and what it meant to the Rapid City area shortly after I became a Senator.

Just a few months into my first term in the Senate, Ellsworth found itself targeted for closure by the Base Realignment and Closure Commission. That summer of 2005 was a long one as we mobilized to protect the base. I don’t think I missed a BRAC hearing in DC that summer. It didn’t matter whether Ellsworth was on the agenda; I wanted to be there in case the chance to advocate for Ellsworth arose.

Thanks to the efforts of a lot of dedicated people, we were victorious. We demonstrated to the Commission that Ellsworth was a vital national security asset and that moving the B-1 fleet from Ellsworth would actually cost money. We also made the case that the United States shouldn’t put all of its eggs in one basket, that it shouldn’t consolidate all of its assets in one location.

By August, we had succeeded in having Ellsworth removed from the closure list. Since then, the congressional delegation, Ellsworth, and community leaders have worked hard to build up the base so that we never again find ourselves in that same position. In 2007, we saw the Air Force Financial Services Center open at Ellsworth. In

2011, we saw the arrival of the 89th Attack Squadron and its command and control stations for MQ-9 Reapers. In 2015, a decade-long mission paid off with the expansion of the training airspace for the base. The Powder River Training Complex is now the largest training airspace in the continental United States. It is undoubtedly partly thanks to this airspace that Ellsworth was just chosen not only as the home for the B-21 training mission, the first bombers to the fleet, but operational squadrons as well.

Once on the chopping block, Ellsworth is going from strength to strength, and South Dakota is deeply proud to host this crucial base.

Ellsworth’s airmen have played an essential role in the armed conflicts of recent years. Ellsworth’s pilots have engaged targets in the Middle East using Predator and Reaper remotely piloted aircraft for vital reconnaissance, search and rescue, and strike missions.

The Thunderbirds of the 34th Bomb Squadron and the Tigers of the 37th Bomb Squadron have flown countless missions, conducting strikes, providing deterrence, and delivering critical close air support.

During Operation Odyssey Dawn, B-1s from Ellsworth launched from South Dakota, flew halfway around the world to Libya, dropped their bombs, and returned home—all in a single mission. This marked the first time in history that B-1s launched combat missions from the United States to strike targets overseas.

During my time advocating for Ellsworth, I have had the chance to learn a lot about aircraft and the incredible capabilities of the U.S. military, especially the capabilities of the U.S. Air Force. But the greatest part of representing Ellsworth has been the chance to meet with and get to know its airmen, from the wing commanders and other base leaders to the airmen who care for the planes.

Ultimately, no matter what technology we have, the strength of our fighting force comes down to our military men and women. It is because of the men and women we have that the United States has the strongest fighting force in the world.

Members of the military are a special breed. At an age when many are focused on graduation ceremonies or summer vacations, they take a different path—a path that challenges them mentally and physically, that pushes them to their limits and then asks them to go further, that asks them to forget their own needs and to focus only on what they can do for others, and that asks them to forgo comfort for sacrifice, up to and including the sacrifice of their lives. At 18, at 21, these warriors pledge to lay down their lives for the rest of us, and they make that pledge again every day of their service, every morning when they wake up and head to work, whether that is the repair base at Ellsworth or a battlefield half a world away.

I am profoundly grateful for the honor of representing some of the men and women of the U.S. military here in the Senate. We owe our soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines, and Coast Guard a debt we can never repay.

As Military Appreciation Month continues and Armed Forces Day approaches, we can take the time to remember—to remember that we go about our lives in peace and freedom every day because of members of the U.S. military who are standing watch for us. May God bless the members of the U.S. military, and may God continue to bless the United States of America.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

#### ABORTION

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I want to start today by saying I am really appalled by the extreme, cruel, shameful abortion ban that was passed yesterday in Alabama. That legislation is nothing short of an attack on women, and it is part of a larger effort we are seeing today around the country to take away the constitutional right of women to safe, legal abortion and allowing politicians to make decisions for women about their bodies, their health, and their lives instead of trusting doctors and women.

I want every woman reading the news this morning and wondering what this means for you, your family, and for your granddaughters to know I am with you, and I am going to keep fighting for you every step of the way.

#### NOMINATION OF WENDY VITTER

Mr. President, I want to turn to speak about my opposition to Wendy Vitter’s nomination, which is yet another step extreme politicians are taking to undermine women’s rights and access to healthcare.

I oppose Wendy Vitter’s nomination to the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana.

President Trump and Vice President PENCE have made it clear that they want to pack the Judiciary with far-right judges who will turn back the clock on reproductive rights, and this nominee is no exception.

Time and again, Mrs. Vitter has advocated against women’s reproductive rights using inflammatory language and falsehoods. She has demonstrated a keen sense of partisanship and a poor sense of judgment, starting with her initial response to the Senate Judiciary Committee’s questionnaire.

Mrs. Vitter left out information about her past statements in her response to the committee—the kinds of serious submissions Republicans have objected to with other nominees. I am



not talking about a small memory lapse. I am talking about nearly 200 additional pages that had to be added to her response once they were brought to light. I am not talking about insignificant statements, things that are hard to find or easy to forget. I am talking about campaign ads, panel discussions, political rallies. I am not talking about innocent uncontroversial comments. I am talking about the fearmongering of an activist who is entirely unfit for the Federal bench.

Mrs. Vitter initially failed to disclose her remarks at a political rally opposing the construction of a Planned Parenthood clinic, remarks where she claimed Planned Parenthood—which, by the way, provides low-cost healthcare like cancer screenings and STI screenings and contraceptive care to millions of people. She claimed Planned Parenthood is responsible for killing 150,000 women a year. That is careless, it is reckless, and it is wrong. It is incredibly poor judgment for somebody who is being considered for a lifetime judicial appointment.

She also failed to disclose the time she moderated a deeply dishonest panel called “Abortion Hurts Women’s Health.” Mrs. Vitter prompted panelists to peddle misinformation about women’s health, encouraging a discussion that falsely suggested abortion is linked to cancer and infertility. One panel spoke at length about a deeply inaccurate brochure she had authored called “How the Pill Kills.” As you can tell from that title, the brochure was loaded with glaring falsehoods, like the false claim that birth control causes breast cancer or that women on birth control are more likely to die a violent death. In response to that speaker’s long string of very dangerous lies about women’s healthcare, Mrs. Vitter encouraged the attendees to download the brochure, bring it to their doctors, and ask them to put it in their waiting rooms.

It is incredibly alarming that a nominee for the Federal bench would be so willing to voice her support for such dangerous propaganda, especially when that same nominee is unwilling to voice her support for one of the landmark civil rights cases in our country’s history, *Brown v. Board of Education*.

During her confirmation hearing, Mrs. Vitter was asked whether *Brown v. Board* was decided correctly. It wasn’t a trick question. Many past judicial nominees, including Chief Justice Roberts, have been able to answer it. Mrs. Vitter refused.

This week, we are going to celebrate the 65th anniversary of the *Brown v. Board* decision. Do Republicans really want to mark this occasion by confirming a judge who has voiced more support for outright lies about women’s health than for the historic decision that struck down State-sponsored segregation? This should be simple. Someone whose statements and record fail to support the *Brown v. Board* decision cannot be trusted with the respon-

sibility of deciding the historic cases of tomorrow. Someone who has worked to spread misinformation about contraceptives and undermine the constitutional right to safe, legal abortion that is enshrined in *Roe v. Wade* cannot be trusted to fight for the truth or uphold women’s reproductive rights. In other words, someone like Wendy Vitter cannot be trusted with a lifetime seat on a Federal bench.

I urge my colleagues to join me in rejecting this nomination. While President Trump and Vice President PENCE may keep sending us these far-right nominees and Senate Republicans may keep jamming them through under the radar, Democrats are not going to stand by or stand down. They may try to push our courts to the right. We are going to keep pushing back. We are going to keep holding a spotlight on these nominees and making clear just how extreme they are, and we are going to keep fighting for women and men and families in this country.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

#### MENTAL HEALTH

Ms. SMITH. Mr. President, when I first came to the Senate, I knew I wanted to make mental health one of my top priorities. As a Minnesotan, I am proud of the way our Senators have led the way on this important issue, from Paul Wellstone to Al Franken, to AMY KLOBUCHAR. I am honored to have the chance to further our proud legacy when it comes to improving our mental health system, but that is not the only reason I have chosen to make mental health a focus.

I am glad it has become a more prominent issue here in Washington, but I have noticed it usually comes to the forefront in the context of some unthinkable tragedy. When a high-profile celebrity takes his or her own life, we immediately want to reach out to other people who are suffering in silence. Of course, we do. That is not a bad thing.

We can’t repeat the number often enough. If you are having thoughts of suicide, please, please call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255. Even if you aren’t suffering from acute mental illness, put that number in your cell phone so you can, someday, help someone who is.

On the other hand, when a profoundly disturbed person commits a horrible act of violence, we immediately want to intervene before the next time it happens. Of course, we do.

When we bring up the need to improve our mental health system as the answer to the epidemic of mass shoot-

ings in America, though, we are making two huge mistakes. First, we are ignoring our responsibility to address a much more direct cause of these tragedies—guns. Second, we are unfairly and falsely stigmatizing mental illness.

Here is another thing we can’t say often enough: It is exceedingly rare that one’s mental illness leads one to commit acts of violence. In fact, one is much more likely to be a victim of violence than to be a perpetrator, and we must not make it harder for people to seek help by falsely tagging them, as we do, as being potentially dangerous.

Yes, these tragedies are reminders that we need to spend more time talking about mental health, but let’s have the right conversation. For most people who struggle with mental illness in America, the struggle is not about life or death; it is about the quality of the lives we lead. Mental health is a continuum, and many of our fellow citizens fall somewhere along this continuum. These millions of Americans deserve our attention, and these millions of Americans deserve our help.

The other reason I want to focus on mental health care while I am here in the Senate is that I am one of them. When it started for me, I thought I was just having a bad day or, really, a series of bad days. While growing up, I had always been a pretty cheerful kid, but at some point during my second year of college, I had started to find it harder and harder to cope with the daily challenges of life. Actually, it had been my roommate who had noticed that I had not been myself and hadn’t been myself for a long time. She had suggested that I talk to someone over at the Student Health Services. It had been a completely foreign idea to me, and I had responded in the way a lot of people would have—“I have this.” Eventually, I had realized that maybe I had been wrong about that.

It was really hard to make that phone call, walk over to the counselor’s office, and sit in the waiting room. I didn’t know what to expect, and to be honest, I was embarrassed. The counselor’s name was Charlotte. She was nice, had common sense, and wasn’t patronizing or judgmental. She just asked me some simple questions about how I was feeling, and I remember what a relief it was just to talk about it. Over the course of a few months, Charlotte gave me some ideas about how to cope a little bit better with the challenges I was facing, and I would always walk out of her office feeling a little bit more courageous and a little bit more hopeful.

Did I live happily ever after? Well, not quite. That is not how mental illness works. There isn’t a box for when you are healthy and a box for when you are not. Like I said, it is a continuum, and you try to get a little closer to the healthy end every day.

At one point in my thirties, though, I found myself sliding back in the wrong direction. There was nothing unusually traumatic going on in my life.



I had a career, and Archie and I were raising our two sons. We were busy, and we were tired, but that is the way it is when you are a young parent. Still, something was wrong.

All who have suffered from depression have their own metaphors to describe it, but most can identify with the sensation of the color just sort of draining out of your world. The things that used to give you joy don't give you joy anymore. The things that you used to love to do may just make you exhausted. Basically, you are just trying to slog through the day. Of course, when you feel this way, just making it through the day is tough. I found myself struggling to be a good mom, a good wife, a good friend, a good colleague. I just felt off all the time—clumsy and slow. I forgot things and got angry at the drop of a hat.

See, the thing is, depression messes with your memory. I will never forget when my young son asked me quietly and cautiously: "Mom, are you OK?" It was a spiral. The worse things got, the more frustrated I became, but I couldn't get it together. Down and down I went until I could no longer see hope on the horizon. I was never suicidal, but I struggled to function. I definitely wasn't living my best life. I really wasn't living at all.

That is the reality of mental illness for millions of Americans. I am one of the lucky ones. I was lucky that my college had excellent mental health resources and that my roommate cared enough about me to urge me to take advantage of those resources. I was lucky that when my depression came back with a vengeance, I had health insurance that covered treatment. There was a therapist named Susan with the skill and the expertise to help me.

Susan asked me a few questions:

How are you sleeping?

Terrible.

Are you forgetting things?

All the time.

She then suggested that I take a diagnostic test, which basically consisted of answering questions like those. Even then, I was resistant. People often say that depression lies, and the biggest lie depression tells is that what is wrong with you is you. So you resist getting help because you refuse to accept that there is anything happening except that you stupidly forgot it was receding day again.

I went ahead and I did the diagnostic test, and Susan came back and said: Yes, you are clinically depressed, so let's talk about what we can do about it.

One thing I would say to people who are resisting going in for that appointment is that even after I got that diagnosis, I was still in control. When Susan brought up the idea of medication, it was a suggestion and not an order. I will admit it—it was a suggestion I had a hard time with. I didn't want to become a different person. I didn't want some pill messing with my brain. What if it didn't work and I got

worse? On the other hand, what if it did work? Would I really be better, or would it just be an illusion of feeling better?

Susan convinced me to give it a try, and I was lucky again when the first medication we tried worked. I didn't feel better right away. There was no big milestone moment where I woke up and everything was great again. But I remember feeling like I was slowly coming out of a fog. The color started to seep back into my day a little bit more every day. I began to reengage with my family and my friends and my work, and I could see hope on the horizon again. After a couple of years on medication, I slowly ramped down, and I haven't had to get treatment since.

As I said, there is no happily ever after when it comes to mental illness, but happier is possible. If anyone needs proof, just talk to me.

So that is my story, but really it is the story of millions of Americans. I chose to share mine—first in an op-ed in the Rochester Post-Bulletin and now here on the floor of the Senate—because I want to urge anyone who struggles with depression or anxiety or substance abuse or post-traumatic stress disorder or any other mental health issue to reach out and seek help.

Destigmatizing and demystifying mental illness is just the beginning. Everyone can be a friend to those in need by urging them to take advantage of the resources that are available to them, but the 100 of us here in the Senate have a responsibility to make sure those resources are available to everyone. We can't afford to leave holes in the net we build to catch people when they fall, especially when one of the biggest holes is in our schools.

I have spent a lot of time over the last months having conversations with teachers and administrators in public schools across Minnesota. Time and again, when I ask them "What keeps you up at night?" they come back to the mental health of their students. They talk about the causes—everything from increased social pressure that comes from social media to the trauma of losing a parent to opioids—but they also tell me what the crisis really looks like at ground level.

A principal in St. Paul told me about the regular phenomenon of an ambulance pulling up at the school doors, rushing to the aid of a student who has suffered a break. It has happened more than a half a dozen times at his school alone this year. Meanwhile, the principal in Parkers Prairie—a town in Otter Tail County of just over 1,000, people—tells me that she sees students experiencing homelessness and other trauma, students dealing with PTSD, and students with eating disorders. Just this year, she has had three students end up in the hospital for self-harming. They have a heroic social worker who comes in but only every other day because they have to share her with another school in the district.

School psychologists across Minnesota tell me they are struggling to

keep up with the number of kids who need urgent intervention to make sure that, for example, their behavioral issues don't become so significant that they get them kicked out of school altogether.

As for kids whose issues are very real but not so acute—like the ninth grader whose anxiety makes her sick to her stomach every day—they wind up stuck on waiting lists for treatment. And that is even before psychologists can do any active outreach to the students who haven't reached out for help.

That is why last month I reintroduced my Mental Health Services for Students Act. This bill would create a grant program for school districts looking to expand the mental health services they are able to offer to students by partnering with community mental health system organizations.

If we are going to get our arms around this crisis, we need to train more teachers, administrators, and members of the school community, including parents, to recognize when kids are struggling and to connect them with help. If we here in the Senate are serious about addressing mental health in our schools, we should pass this bill without delay.

A comprehensive approach to mental health means improving the system all along the age continuum. Over in the HELP Committee, we will have an opportunity this year to reauthorize the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act, or CAPTA. And I have a bill, sponsored in the House by my friend Representative DEAN PHILLIPS, that would improve the delivery of mental health services within our child welfare system. For example, our bill would make sure that young, at-risk children get important developmental screenings when they need it.

We are learning that childhood trauma can be a major factor in future mental illness. The more we do to address the underlying trauma, whether it is poverty, the death or incarceration of a loved one or a parent, or sexual abuse, the better we address those issues, the better chance we will have of turning the tide on this epidemic.

The mental health crisis isn't only affecting our kids; it is affecting our parents too. According to a study by the Centers for Disease Control, one in five adults age 55 or older experiences a mental health issue, and a third of them never receive treatment. Men over the age of 75 have a higher suicide rate than any other age group. The social isolation that too often comes with aging or caring for a loved one isn't just unfortunate; it is a public health risk.

Just as we have learned to reach out to the veterans in our lives and in our communities to let them know we are there for them if they are struggling, we should do the same for our elders. As the HELP Committee takes up the reauthorization of the Older Americans Act this year, I will be working to do my part.

Our mental health system should be there for people at every age, from nursery to nursing home. It should be there for people everywhere along the mental health continuum, offering everything from preventive care, to ongoing therapy for chronic conditions, to crisis support for those in acute distress. It should also be there for people in every ZIP Code, and unfortunately, some of the biggest holes in our system can be found in rural areas.

As a Senator, I am proud to serve on the Agriculture Committee. I frequently meet with farm groups, and today mental health is one of the first topics to come up. Farming is an inherently stressful profession, especially these days, when the numbers for suicide prevention hotlines regularly appear in farm publications. But we need to include the entire rural community, from bankers and pastors to grocers and fertilizer sellers. We need to include them in this conversation, and we need to make sure that when people do reach out for help, there is help there for them.

Unfortunately, rural communities in general are often underserved by mental health professionals compared to cities and suburbs. Many still have inconsistent access to the internet, meaning that even online resources can be out of reach for someone who is struggling. That is why, in the last farm bill, we set up a rural health liaison in the Department of Agriculture—someone who understands the specific needs of rural communities and is charged with paying attention to a crisis that has too often lurked beneath the surface.

Last year, Senator MURKOWSKI and I worked together to pass a law that would provide mental health professionals in the National Health Service Corps with greater flexibility in where they practice and deliver care, increasing the resources available in underserved rural communities.

I hope my colleagues will join me in continuing to take action to address the mental health crisis, and I hope that sharing my own story will make it easier for more Americans to add their voices to this fight.

Still, there is no magic cure for depression. There is no magic bill to solve this problem. Mental health is a reality of life for millions of people in our country, and we can't legislate it away. If we work to help more Americans bring their struggles out of the shadows into the sunshine, if we reach out to people in need and connect them with people who can help, and if we understand the factors that make people vulnerable to these problems and focus our energies on making sure the net is there to catch them if they fall—if we do these things, then we can take steps in the right direction, one right after the other and one day at a time.

I still remember what it felt like in those weeks and months after I began to treat my depression—the sense of empowerment that came with finally

taking my mental health into my own hands, the renewed energy that came with finally feeling like today is better than yesterday and maybe tomorrow will be even better yet, and the joy that came with finally seeing hope on the horizon once again. So even in the midst of this public health crisis, I believe there is hope on the horizon for the millions of Americans who struggle with mental illness, but they are counting on us to make this hopeful vision a reality.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

#### REMEDY ACT

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, if you watched “60 Minutes” on Sunday, you would not have been surprised that there was a segment relating to prescription drug pricing. Everywhere we turn, somebody is raising the question about why we are paying so much for prescription drugs and why the cost of these drugs has gone through the roof.

We want to encourage research. We want to encourage innovation. We understand that these are profit-making companies, so we understand we will pay for that. But what we are seeing in terms of the pricing of drugs across America now is inconsistent with any of the history that we have had. It seems as if pharma believes that if they own a drug, they can charge whatever they can charge, and no one will question them.

It makes a difference. Blue Cross Blue Shield, the largest health insurer in my State of Illinois, analyzed the cost of care in our State and nearby and asked: What is driving the increase in health insurance premiums? The cost of prescription drugs, even more than the cost of inpatient hospital care.

Look at all of those big hospitals and all of the important work they are doing and expensive procedures they are involved in. All of that cost does not equal the rising cost of prescription drugs. That is why our health insurance premiums are going up, so it is understandable that more and more of us are talking about this and trying to find practical ways to approach it that might make things better.

Can you consider one policy that might have the support of Democrats and Republicans, the American Association of Retired Persons, the American Medical Association, the American Hospital Association, 88 percent of Americans, and the Trump administration? What in the world could that be? Here it is: a measure I introduced in 2017 to require pharmaceutical companies to disclose the prices with new prescription drug advertising.

Last year, Senator CHUCK GRASSLEY, Republican of Iowa, and I teamed up to pass a measure in the Senate to require pricetags on the television ads. We were stopped in conference by a single House Republican.

Think about those television ads. What do they tell us in those ads? For 60 seconds, as fast as they can talk, they tell us everything under the sun. If you are allergic to XARELTO, do not take XARELTO. Certain negative things may happen if you take this drug or the other drug. On they go for 60 seconds without stopping. Yet they never disclose the price of the drug.

After Senator GRASSLEY and I put our bill in last year, I got a call from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, Alex Azar. He decided he wanted to pick up on our effort and join us. Think about that for a minute—a Republican Senator, a Democratic Senator, and the Trump administration agreeing on something. It turns out, he thinks it is a good idea, and I do too.

If we had price disclosure on these ads on television, it might open the eyes of a lot of people as to what it costs. What is the most heavily advertised drug on television today? HUMIRA. Why was HUMIRA invented or discovered? To treat arthritis, particularly psoriatic arthritis. Guess what they discovered. It also had a side benefit they didn't anticipate. You know the little red patch on your elbow—psoriasis? If you take HUMIRA, all of a sudden, that little red patch goes away. So if you are watching the ads on television, some of them are about arthritis, but some of them show ladies sitting by swimming pools with flawless skin because they are taking HUMIRA. It is very interesting.

There is one thing they leave out. Do you know what HUMIRA costs? It costs \$5,500 a month. This red patch on my elbow may trouble me when it comes to the swimsuit competition, but I am not going to spend \$5,500 to deal with it. I think they ought to have to disclose the price of the drug. We take their prices; we do not make up the price. The price they declare as pharmaceutical manufacturers—we believe that is the one that should be advertised.

On Monday, Senator GRASSLEY and I introduced the bill to codify this rule that the Trump administration is pushing for price disclosure and to ensure its long-term implementation. We are happy to have on board with us Senator LAMAR ALEXANDER, Republican of Tennessee, and Senator KING, Independent Democrat from Maine. Disclosing prices in drug ads is a simple step to give patients a break at the pharmacy. We have to do a lot more. I think this is a good starting point, though.

American patients and taxpayers pay the highest prices in the world for most medications. Eli Lilly, out of Indianapolis, IN—they make a drug called Humalog. It is for diabetes. It is an insulin drug that can cost up to \$329 per dose here in the United States. Humalog, insulin, diabetes—the cost is \$329.

What does the same vial of the same drug made by the same company cost

in Canada? It costs \$38. It is \$329 here and \$38 there.

In 2017, Canadians could purchase AbbVie's HUMIRA, which I mentioned earlier, for \$20,000; for Americans, \$40,000. The worst part of this price disparity is that American taxpayers are the ones paying to develop these drugs in the first place. Our tax dollars at the National Institutes of Health provide the clues and the direction for these companies to take our federally funded research and turn it into a valuable drug, a valuable medical device, and then charge us more than any other place in the world.

All 210 drugs approved by the Food and Drug Administration between the years 2010 and 2016 received funding from the National Institutes of Health, supported by nearly \$40 billion by U.S. taxpayers each year. I am all for that, incidentally—funding the NIH and leading to this research. But make no mistake, these breakthrough drugs start at the National Institutes of Health at taxpayers' expense. So American taxpayers get hit twice. We pay for the initial research, which leads to the drug, and then we, of course, pay for the drugs at the highest levels.

The heart of the problem is that our system does not function as a free market. There are too many forces at work when it comes to prescription drugs that limit competition. Often Big Pharma charges as much as they can get away with because they manipulate the patent system to avoid competition.

The theory used to be that if you discovered the drug, you could sell it exclusively for, say, 20 years, and then everybody could take your formula, make generic drugs, and there would be open competition so that the price would go down. That is not how it works.

The core issue is that roughly 10 percent of brand name, patent-protected drugs account for 80 percent of spending in America. The overwhelming prescriptions are for generic drugs, which are affordable drugs, but it turns out that even though 90 percent of the prescriptions are for generic drugs, they account for only 20 percent of all the spending. It is that 10 percent of brand name drugs that account for 80 percent of all prescription drug spending because they are so expensive.

In what other industry does the price of the consumer product increase year after year after being introduced on the market? Maybe a collector of artwork or baseball cards but certainly not when it comes to something that is a life-and-death commodity like a drug.

The point is, I don't believe our Founding Fathers envisioned a scheme where Sanofi's Lantus, insulin that was approved in the year 2000, would receive 45 additional patents after it was approved by the FDA, providing a massive 37-year monopoly by Sanofi on this insulin product. During that time, the price of insulin has increased from

\$35 to more than \$270 because Sanofi has successfully bought lower cost generic competitors, and it is not just Lantus or insulin.

Celgene's cancer drug, REVLIMID, has been awarded 96 patents, many of which were awarded after the initial FDA approval. As a result, REVLIMID, effectively, has gone 40 years without competition.

The same goes for Pfizer's nerve pain drug, Lyrica. You have seen that one advertised on TV. I have. That entered the market in 2004. Lyrica has received 68 patents, including filing more than 2 dozen after initial FDA approval. They are gaming the system to avoid competition to keep their prices high.

In fact, the top 12 best-selling drugs in America each have an average of 71 patents. Why do they get a new patent? Because they have decided that instead of a 150-mg tablet, there will be a 75-mg tablet, and they get a new patent. Or they put a new coating on the outside of the pill or they have a new manufacturing technique. They get the patent. They have exclusivity in the market for another extended period of time.

The top 12 best-selling drugs in America each have an average of 71 patents, and 74 percent of all new drug patents are for drugs that are already on the market. They are gaming the system.

We can and we should reward innovative research so that companies can earn a profit for good work and big ideas. But an abusive manufacturer should not be allowed to game the government patent system while being shielded from competition.

This month I am going to give what I call my Pharma Fleece Award. I made a special sign here so that pharma would know what we are talking about. This month we are going to give this Pharma Fleece Award to Celgene, Pfizer, and Sanofi for stacking excessive secondary patents to block generic competition. The net result, of course, is that American consumers pay more for their products.

To address this, I introduced legislation last month with Senator CASSIDY, Republican from Louisiana and a medical doctor, called the REMEDY Act. Our bipartisan bill reduces incentives for Big Pharma to "evergreen," which is a technical term in this application. It is an effort to amass endless quantities of follow-on patents that shield blockbuster drugs from competition from generics. You see, under an act, a law known as the Hatch-Waxman Act, when a generic drug manufacturer seeks approval from the FDA, they are routinely blocked by a maze of patents held by the brand name company.

The generic company has the option to say whether they think the patents covering the brand name drug are not valid or relevant. If so, that can trigger a patent infringement lawsuit. When this happens, the FDA issues a 30-month freeze on the generic company's application to hash out the issue. The problem with this 30-month freeze is it

extends the monopoly period for the drug again, and it incentivizes the filing of secondary follow-on patents that may not add to the safety or efficacy of the drug.

This automatic 30-month freeze on competition encourages pharma to amass large numbers of secondary patents and block generic companies from putting on the market a drug that would be in competition with their brand name drug. No matter how weak the patent is, how peripheral it may be—like the coating on a pill that I mentioned earlier—it works. For 30 months, there is another delay before there is competition.

The REMEDY Act, which Senator CASSIDY and I introduced, would restrict this 30-month freeze of FDA approval so that it applies only to primary substance patents. This removes an incentive for brand name manufacturers to continue to game the system by filing excessive follow-on patents, and it makes it easier for low-cost generic competitors to come to market.

Big Pharma is gaming the system at the expense of American patients, at the expense of the American health system, and at our expense when it comes to health insurance premiums. What are we going to do about it? Well, it turns out, we happen to be working in a place which makes laws, the U.S. Senate. We are supposed to take a challenge like this and do something about it—not just lament the fact that prescription drug pricing is out of control, but actually do something.

Lucky me, I serve on the Senate Judiciary Committee, which has authority over many of these issues, particularly when it comes to patent law. There are things we can do as members of the committee to bring down prescription drug pricing.

Honestly, if you follow the U.S. Senate, we can do something other than a nomination, which is all we have done around here for a long, long time. I am sure the American voters are happy to see us work on nominations, but they would be much happier if we worked on the high cost of prescription drugs. We have done little or nothing on this subject, other than talk about it for the last few months.

Senator MCCONNELL, the Republican leader, has decided not to bring legislation to the floor of the Senate anymore. That is just from the days of yesteryear when we actually debated a bill, offered amendments, had votes. People showed up on the floor because we were doing something.

Look at it now.

American patients need help from the high drug prices, not more unqualified, divisive nominees but actual legislation to help American families. What a break it would be if the U.S. Senate became the U.S. Senate again.

I hope Senator MCCONNELL will allow us to put a bill on the floor of the Senate. It would be a great celebration here in the Senate. I think Republicans and Democrats would enjoy the opportunity to actually come to the floor,

have a debate, and pass a bill that may become a law that ends up helping Americans. For many of us, that is the reason we ran for office, and I hope we can return to that very soon.

#### NOMINATIONS

Once again, this week the Republican Leader has scheduled no legislation for votes on the Senate floor.

Instead, our Republican colleagues are spending another week rubber stamping President Trump's nominees.

This week, the Republican majority scheduled votes on three Trump judicial nominees. Each of these nominees has expressed views that are ideological and extreme.

First there was Michael Truncale, nominated to the District Court for the Northern District of Texas. Mr. Truncale gave a speech in 2011 where he outrageously called President Obama "an un-American imposter."

He described the Supreme Court's decision in *Shelby County* that gutted the Voting Rights Act as "a victory." He has called for defunding Planned Parenthood and said that he opposes the bipartisan DREAM Act.

He has called the Environmental Protection Agency a "job killer" and called for eliminating the Departments of Education and Energy.

Mr. Truncale also gave a radio interview in 2012 thanking the Tea Party movement "for what it has meant to our country and to our Republican party."

Despite all this, only one Republican Senator, Senator ROMNEY, voted against Mr. Truncale.

Then there's Ninth Circuit nominee Kenneth Lee of California, who has been advanced by Republicans over the objection of both home State Senators. That never happened before until this year, but this is now the fifth time we have seen a nominee advance with no blue slip.

Mr. Lee initially failed to provide dozens of his controversial writings to the Senate Judiciary Committee.

I remember when President Obama's Ninth Circuit nominee Goodwin Liu initially failed to fully disclose articles he had written to the Judiciary Committee. Republican members of the Committee said it was "potentially disqualifying" and said it showed either incompetence or an attempt to hide his writings.

Senate Republicans ended up filibustering Goodwin Liu's nomination. Yet every Republican member of the Judiciary Committee voted for Mr. Lee's nomination. The double standard is obvious.

When we were finally able to review Mr. Lee's writings, we saw he routinely expressed extreme views. Here are just a few examples:

He wrote: "Charges of sexism often amount to nothing but irrelevant pouting."

He said: "homosexuals generally are more promiscuous than heterosexuals, and thus their risk factor [for AIDS] increases exponentially."

He called affirmative action "liberals' most sacred shibboleth."

And he called multiculturalism a "malodorous sickness."

Then there is Wendy Vitter, nominated to the District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana.

Like Mr. Lee, Ms. Vitter also initially failed to disclose more than 100 speeches and documents to the Judiciary Committee.

The matters she failed to disclose included a panel she moderated in 2013 at a Louisiana Right to Life conference. At this panel, she told the audience to urge their doctors to put in their waiting rooms a brochure entitled "The Pill Kills." This is a brochure about how birth control pills supposedly kill women.

Ms. Vitter also claimed in a 2009 speech that we are "throwing out our Constitution" by counting the full population in the national census.

All three of these judicial nominees have expressed extreme ideological views that raise serious questions about their judgment. Yet Republicans are rubber stamping all three of them to lifetime appointments on the federal bench.

Then there is President Trump's nominee for Deputy Attorney General, Jeffrey Rosen. Mr. Rosen simply does not have the right qualifications for this important job.

The Deputy Attorney General runs the day-to-day operations of the Justice Department and oversees its law enforcement components.

At this critical moment, we need a Deputy Attorney General who is familiar with the Justice Department, who has experience in overseeing criminal investigations and prosecutions, and who is committed to the Department's role of enforcing the law independently without fear or favor.

Mr. Rosen has no experience working in the Justice Department or handling criminal cases. When I questioned him about core DOJ functions and agencies he will oversee if confirmed, he wasn't familiar with them and said he would have to get up to speed.

For example, when I met with him and asked him about the landmark First Step Act, he said he had "begun getting informed about it."

When I asked him about the Deputy Attorney General's role in overseeing the Federal Bureau of Prisons and addressing their critical staffing shortages, he said he wasn't familiar and couldn't comment.

When I asked him about voting rights and voter suppression, he said he hadn't had occasion to study the issue.

When I asked him about the DEA's role in setting opioid production quotas, which he will oversee, he didn't know about it.

When I asked him about DOJ's role in immigration matters, including his priorities for the immigration courts he will oversee, he said he looked forward to learning more about it.

Mr. Rosen was a longtime colleague of Attorney General Barr at a law firm,

and he has held positions in other government agencies like the Department of Transportation. But that does not make him qualified to be the Deputy Attorney General.

Because my Republican colleagues used the nuclear option to change the Senate rules, there is now less time for the Senate to debate controversial nominees like Mr. Truncale, Ms. Vitter, and Mr. Rosen.

But the American people see what is going on. They see the rush by President Trump and Senate Republicans to confirm nominees who are ideological or who lack the right qualifications for the job.

I oppose these nominees. And I regret that the Senate's advice and consent process has become an exercise in Republican rubber stamping. This institution can, and should, do better.

I see that my colleague from Texas is here on the floor, and I don't want to take any more time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LANKFORD). The Senator from Texas.

#### ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding rule XXII, at 5:30 p.m., all postcloture time on the Lee nomination be considered expired; further, that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action. I ask that following disposition of the Lee nomination, the Senate vote on the cloture motions for the Vitter, Bulatao, and Rosen nominations; finally, that if cloture is invoked on those nominations, the confirmation votes on the Vitter and Bulatao nominations occur at noon on Thursday and the Rosen confirmation vote occur at 1:45 p.m. on Thursday, May 16, and that if confirmed, the motions 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.

(The remarks of Mr. CORNYN pertaining to the introduction of S. 1480 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

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

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

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

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

#### MILITARY APPRECIATION MONTH

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I am going to be on the floor with some of my colleagues in the next hour.

I thank my colleague from Iowa, Senator ERNST—Lieutenant Colonel Ernst, by the way, of the Iowa National Guard—for organizing the series of discussions we are going to have in the next couple of minutes on the Senate floor that will focus on Military Appreciation Month. I think we are all going to talk about how wonderful our military is, and we will probably do a little bit of bragging about our different States and how we support and appreciate our military so much.

I like to come down on the floor and talk in superlatives about my State, the great State of Alaska. It is true that most Senators love to talk about their States in all of their superlatives, which is good. We are proud States. We each think we live in the best State in the country. We all believe that. I happen to think my State is the best State in the country.

In talking about our military and its support and Military Appreciation Month, we certainly have a large military presence in Alaska. We have about 32 military facilities and 5 major installations. Roughly, 10 percent of the population is either in the military or is a family member of someone who is in the military.

I like to say that Alaska actually constitutes three pillars of our Nation's military might. Whether the attacks be from Kim Jong Un or the Iranians, we are the cornerstone of missile defense, which are the missiles and the radar that protect the entire country from attacks. This all resides in Alaska. We are the hub air combat power for the Asia-Pacific and the Arctic, and we will have over 100 fifth-generation fighters—F-22s, F-35s—by the end of next year. We are also a vital platform for some of America's best trained troops to be deployed anywhere around the world because of our strategic location. Alaska also boasts the largest number of veterans per capita of any State in the country. These are the facts, and they are all good.

What is so unique about Alaska—and, I would say, as in most States—is how proud we are of our military and how much the communities of Alaska—big communities, small communities—support the men and women who serve in the military. It is almost a part of our DNA in Alaska. Let me just give you one example.

I was in a group of community leaders in Delta Junction, which is in Alaska's interior. It is actually near Fort Greely, where we have our missile defense fields. It is right on the outskirts of what is called the JPARC, which is the biggest air training range in the entire United States. The airspace is actually the size of Florida. There is great training, and we have Red Flag

exercises. Our men and women in the Air Force, in particular, do some wonderful training there.

We were in this community meeting, and some Air Force pilot was flying low and fast. He probably broke the sound barrier because there was a giant sonic boom. It shook the whole building. It shook the whole meeting room. Now, I would say, in most States, that would probably result in having people complain and call their Congressmen and Senators in their being mad about what the military would be doing—shaking the buildings with sonic booms because they would be breaking the speed of sound as they would be training. Yet the mayor of Delta just looked at me and said, “The sound of freedom.” There were no complaints, just support.

Let me give another example.

In so many of our smaller Native communities—Native villages—across Alaska, one sees what I refer to as special patriotism. Alaska Natives and the lower 48 American Indians serve in the military at higher rates than any ethnic group in the country. That is a special patriotism because—let's face it—these great American patriots weren't always supported by their government when they came home after fighting in World War II or in Vietnam.

As a matter of fact, there was a documentary that was produced about the community of Hoonah, AK, which is in Southeast Alaska. The film was called “Hunting and Wartime.” It was about the fact that almost every single male high school senior in the late 1960s in these small communities went off to fight in Vietnam—almost every one of them.

That is special patriotism. This support for the military isn't a recent phenomenon in Alaska. In 1942, during World War II, Alaskans oversubscribed their war bond quota by 300 percent, which surpassed that of every State in the Union.

So many Senators—Democratic and Republican—are going to come down to the floor and talk about our Military Appreciation Month, as they should. There is some talk in the country about the 1 percent and the less than 1 percent. Well, the 1 percent I really care about is the less than 1 percent of young men and women who still, today, raise their right hands to support and defend the Constitution and to defend our liberty, knowing it could even cost them their lives by their joining the U.S. military.

We all have wonderful veterans and wonderful men and women in the military whom we support in the U.S. Senate. I tell my constituents that the one thing we are focused on doing is making sure, when you send your son or daughter to join the military, that it is the top military in the world, the most ready military in the world, and the most capable military in the world.

One thing we are doing is reversing a dangerous trend. From 2010 to 2015, defense spending for the U.S. military

was cut by almost 25 percent during the second term of the Obama administration—25 percent—and readiness plummeted. We are changing that because no man or woman in this country who volunteers to support and defend the Constitution by joining the military should be joining a military that is not at the highest level of readiness and lethal in terms of its getting the job done. So I am going to pass this on to some of my colleagues here. As the Senator from a State where communities support our military so much, I just want to thank all the members, regardless of where you live, for the great work you do and to let you know that the Senate supports you with all its heart and soul.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, while my friend and colleague from Alaska is still on the floor, I want to thank him for his many years of service as a marine.

I am here to talk about North Carolina and Military Appreciation Month. We have a special relationship with members of the military and their families in North Carolina. We have a million veterans in the State. Literally hundreds of thousands of people serve in the military.

You may have heard of the Global Response Force. The Global Response Force is out of Fort Bragg. When there is a crisis anywhere in the world, whether it is a military conflict or a relief effort, it is the 82nd Airborne that goes out to the green ramp down in Fort Bragg, NC, and goes wherever they need to go, sometimes with 48 hours' notice.

Just down the street from there, we have the marines at Camp Lejeune. The marines who are based in Camp Lejeune and Cherry Point and New River constitute about 45 percent of all the marines serving in the Marine Corps.

We can go up to Seymour Johnson Air Force Base, and we have a proud number of men and women in the Air Force who are part of a base that will be the home to the new KC-46, a next-generation tanker.

To say we have a close bond with the military is an understatement. We love them, and we love their families.

I chair the Personnel Subcommittee of the Senate Armed Services Committee, so I have an opportunity to have a direct role in showing appreciation to not only the men and women who are serving in the military but also their spouses. It is a tough job. They are serving too.

As we think about Military Appreciation Month, let's make sure we are, first and foremost, thinking about not only those brave men and women who have sworn the oath to defend and protect our Nation but also their families, who are an integral part of their being capable and ready to do the job.

I also want to make sure we don't lose sight of the veteran population—a

million of them in my State alone. One-tenth of our population are veterans.

We should also talk about the National Guard and the reservists. If you take a look at a State like North Carolina, we have had a number of people in the National Guard who have been deployed multiple times to Iraq and Afghanistan—some of the most dangerous places you could be. They do it with courage, and they do it with honor. During Military Appreciation Month, I think we should pay special attention to this special group of people. I hope that every day of the year, each and every one of you shows them the appreciation and the respect they deserve.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. CRAMER. Mr. President, like my colleagues and like people from around the country, North Dakotans are very proud of our military heritage. In fact, North Dakotans sign up at a rate four times the national average. I think you will hear that theme throughout the Midwest especially.

I am grateful to Senator ERNST for her leadership today as we stand and do something we ought to do every day. It is something we ought to do in church when we are sitting next to them in the pews and when we are talking to our neighbors who are serving or their spouses or family members. We are saying: Thank you. Forgive us for not saying it more often. Frankly, part of why we don't say "thank you" more often is because we go about our business in complete comfort, unaware of the dangers around the world because you all do your jobs so very well. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Mr. President, North Dakota is home to two Air Force bases. I recently finished a tour of the military bases in North Dakota, and I want to speak briefly about the airmen at those two bases.

Grand Forks, ND, houses the 319th Air Base Wing, known as the Warriors of the North. Just last Saturday, Air Force Secretary Heather Wilson visited Grand Forks and redesignated this base as the 319th Reconnaissance Wing. This is one of only three of its kind. I am continually impressed with the mission of the Global Hawk. The Global Hawk mission that is headquartered out of Grand Forks is remarkable. I believe that Grand Forks is a place that is well-positioned for the future of warfighting.

To the west of Grand Forks a couple hundred miles is the community of Minot. Minot, ND, is home to the 5th Bomb Wing and the 91st Missile Wing at the Minot Air Force Base. This is interesting because, of course, the bomb wing operates the intercontinental ballistic missiles and the B-52 bombers at the same base. That is two of the three legs of the nuclear triad we hear so much about. You are not going to find

a stronger proponent of the nuclear triad than you will in me because it is the only base of its kind.

As the base's motto goes, "Only the best come North." Our greatest defense is in detouring our adversaries, and certainly the nuclear triad is important to that. Every day, the airmen in Minot wake up with literally the weight of the world, in many cases, on their shoulders. So for their service and their willingness to stand in the gap in the defense of the world, I am immensely grateful and always impressed.

Of course, I would be remiss to not also mention the airspace station in Cavalier. I think it is the Air Force's smallest base, but it is a very important installation. As we debate in this Chamber the need for a modernized space force, understanding the work this base does has further compelled me to stand in support of a modern, capable military unit able to defend the emerging domain that space has become. A special thank-you to those 40 or so airmen in Cavalier who do an incredible job far from home and in many cases far from a lot of other people around them.

On a more personal note, I want to say "thank you" to the military families and spouses of those stationed in North Dakota, as my colleagues have done. As we know, in a family, everybody serves. In a small community, everybody serves together. They come from all over the country, and they bless our local communities and our State with their work in North Dakota. They deserve a very special thanks for that service.

Our military community is not, of course, defined solely by our Air Force bases; it is also defined by our incredible Army and Air National Guard in North Dakota. In Fargo, for example, I am going to highlight this one unit—the 119th Wing of North Dakota's Air National Guard, known as the Happy Hooligans. They are frequent recipients of the Air Force's Outstanding Unit Award. In fact, earlier this year, they received their 20th Outstanding Unit Award. This is an award that is given to the units that distinguish themselves by exceptional service and outstanding achievement. No group better exemplifies that than the Happy Hooligans. In fact, no unit has received more Outstanding Unit Awards either in the active Air Force or in the Guard than the Happy Hooligans. Congratulations.

While we are talking about the Guard, I want to say a special thanks not only to the families—because, as I said, they all serve—but in the Guard, there are a lot of people who serve, including their employers. I don't think we say "thank you" to the employers often enough who accommodate—no, facilitate—no, encourage the incredible military personnel who do a great job for us on the homefront, as well as when called into action beyond our borders.

The mission of the National Guard is to provide ready units, individuals, and

equipment supporting our communities, our States, our Nation.

If I might elaborate a little bit on homeland issues, just a few short years ago, our State called on our National Guard to meet that mission. We were abandoned by the Federal Government, and the North Dakota National Guard was deployed to help keep the peace. It is appropriate today, on this Peace Officers Memorial Day, that we recognize this relationship. The National Guard was deployed to keep the peace as out-of-State activists with no interest, really, in North Dakota—they flooded our State to violently protest the legally permitted Dakota Access Pipeline. Absent Federal help, our Governor called on our National Guard as a last resort.

You would think that would have some serious ramifications. Well, the reality is, because of the quality of our guardsmen, they did what the previous administration would not—they stood up for the rule of law, and they stood in the way of radical protesters even while their own families were targets of the radical protests, the harassment of radical protesters from everywhere other than North Dakota. They put their lives at risk and did it without provocation, without escalation, and with a calming presence. They didn't run from their orders. They didn't balk at their commands. They answered the call to peacefully and professionally defend our State from the chaos that descended upon us.

Again, "thank you" is inadequate. It is all we can do today. I would just compel people to say "thank you" more often. As you see that neighbor, as you see that person sitting next to you, make it a point to say "thank you" out loud, in front of friends.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Thanks to the Senator from North Dakota.

The Senator from Iowa.

Ms. ERNST. Mr. President, during Military Appreciation Month, we honor the men and women who wear our Nation's uniform, those who have worn it in the past, and those who have sacrificed their lives for our freedom.

As a Senator and a combat veteran with over 23 years of service between the Army Reserves and the Iowa Army National Guard, I am grateful to have the opportunity to get to know so many patriotic and selfless Americans, and Iowans are well represented in those ranks. Nearly 9 percent of our State's adult population are veterans. The national average is just above 6½ percent. From World War II to the global war on terrorism, Iowans have served with honor and distinction.

Military Appreciation Month is also a time to recognize our military families who sacrifice so much and faithfully support our men and women in uniform. They keep things running during long deployments and help during the transition back to civilian life—they help that family member—and, of course, long, long after. So to



all of our military families in Iowa and, of course, across the Nation, thank you for choosing to serve.

This month is also a good opportunity for those of us in the Senate to highlight some of the work we are doing to support our servicemembers, our military families, and, of course, our veterans. Next week, the Senate Armed Services Committee will be starting our yearly national defense authorization bill process. In anticipation of that process, I will be joining my Democratic colleague from Arizona, Senator SINEMA, to introduce two new bills to address military sexual assault—one to improve prevention and the other to streamline prosecution.

I will also be introducing a bill with Senator WARREN that will explore ways to better track traumatic brain injuries sustained by our warfighters. Helping our servicemembers with injuries sustained in battle is a top priority of mine. We owe it to our wounded warriors to seek out game-changing treatments and to help them heal and recover.

As the chairman of the Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities, I will also use the NDAA process to ensure that the bill fosters technological advancements to better equip our warfighters for success.

Military Appreciation Month is an important reminder of the daily sacrifice made by our servicemembers, our military families, and our veterans. It is also a solemn time to remember those who made the ultimate sacrifice to keep America free, safe, and prosperous. We have many of our own Members who have served in the military, and I want to thank them all very much. So for those of us who have worn boots, we take a look at this legislation and find ways that we can better support those who serve.

In the Senate, members of our military, families, and veterans have our support and our gratitude, not only today but every day.

I know the folks back home in Iowa feel the same.

So from all of us to all of you who have worn the uniform and those who have supported those who have worn the uniform, thank you for your service, and God bless you.

God bless our great State of Iowa, God bless the great United States of America and those men and women who make it possible to be free.

I yield the floor.

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

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, first of all, let me associate myself with the remarks of the Senator from Iowa.

It is so important for all of us, particularly those of us who have had occasion to serve, to really pay attention to what is going on. This is Military Appreciation Month, and it is very significant, what is going on. Every month should be Military Appreciation.

As the chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee and as a veteran,

it is my great honor and responsibility to support our warfighters during and after their service.

Whenever they were needed, they were there, and so we have to do a better job in supporting them. We went through 8 years of not adequately supporting the military, and it is something that many of them are suffering from now.

Now, next week, as it was pointed out, we are going to do the Defense authorization bill. It is not very often you can stand here and say we are going to introduce a bill, and we know it is going to pass. The reason we know it is going to pass is because it has passed for the last 58 years. So this one is going to pass.

I can remember a few years that we actually had to go into September to get the Defense authorization bill passed. In the event it got to the end of December, and the same thing would be true this coming year, then we would have hazard pay that wouldn't be paid, and we would have flight pay that wouldn't be paid. There would not be adequate funding to take care of any of that.

So we can't let that happen, and we are not going to let it happen.

I am a little confused now because a month from today we will actually mark up that bill in the U.S. Senate. Yet the House isn't going to do it, it is my understanding, until the middle of June.

Then I also heard that they may, over in the House, actually do the appropriations bill first.

Well, if you do the appropriations bill before you do the bill we will be marking up, the NDAA, then there is no reason to even do the NDAA from the House perspective.

So we do know that good things are going to happen. We are going to implement the national defense strategy. We have talked about the national defense strategy several times on the floor and on how we have done, I think, a very good job in putting this together. Most importantly, we are supporting our All-Volunteer Force.

I may be the last person on the Senate Armed Service Committee who still believes in compulsory service.

I often wonder what would have happened in my life if I hadn't been drafted. I always remember coming back at Christmastime, Eisenhower was President, and I was enrolled at the University of Mexico, and I looked in the mailbox and there was a card. It was from the President, and I thought how nice of the President to remember me at Christmastime. It was my draft notice. So that changed my plans, and I often wonder where I would be today if I hadn't had that experience.

We are going to provide the Armed Forces with adequate funding, and I hope we will find a budget solution. We can't do it with a continuing resolution. We have asked all of our leaders in the hearings what would happen to us if we did a continuing resolution,

and it just wouldn't work. I think we all realize that.

It puts people who are budget hawks, like me, and military hawks in a very awkward situation because we have a situation where, as a result of the 8 years of Obama, we have a thing called parity so that for every dollar you put in the military, there has to be a dollar that goes to the nondefense programs. This is something that doesn't work. So the continuing resolution, we all know, is something that should not be an option.

The responsibility carries a great weight now. We ask our men and women in uniform to do more in the face of danger and more in a dangerous and unpredictable world than at any time.

I think the Trump administration is right. They try to categorize the two threats that are out there, one being the threat of the rogue nations that are out there, and we are talking about North Korea and some of these other nations. At the same time, we also have the major threat of the great power threat, and this is one we face, and we know that. Yes, we are used to dealing with the threats of the rogue nations, but after the 8 years of the Obama administration, we watched Russia and China forge ahead of us in many areas. Hypersonic weapons are a good example, and that is something that is taking place now.

So during that period of time, during the last 5 years of the Obama administration, the amount of money that we had to run our military with was reduced by almost 25 percent. Now, we have made up a lot of this in fiscal year 2018 and in fiscal year 2019, thanks to the Trump administration. We have increased that funding back up to \$700 billion, then again \$716 billion, and this time I think we are going to be at \$750 billion.

There is some dispute as to what the exact figure will be, but nonetheless we have started to rebuild. So we will be modernizing our forces, including our nuclear arsenal now, in order to maintain our military superiority—or to regain is a better word than maintain because we have actually lost some of our superiority—well into the future. Our Armed Forces have long been the best in the world, but we have problems now in trying to rebuild, and that is what this is all about.

So we will support our troops and their families who sacrifice a great deal to protect our Nation. This includes making meaningful reforms to privatize on-base housing. We went through this housing trauma just the other day. We found out a lot of people are not being treated properly. A lot of the spouses of our members and our members are living in housing that is totally unacceptable, but we came to that realization and we are correcting that now and that is going to be corrected even further in the Defense authorization bill that we will mark up a week from today.



So we want to thank every man and woman who ever put on a uniform and those who are doing this in defense of the country, congratulate them and pay particular attention to them and support them in every way we can.

The fabric of our Nation is stronger because of the guys in uniform and those who have been in uniform, and we will endure for the years to come because of their service. God bless all of the men and women in uniform.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I come to the floor as part of Military Appreciation Month. It is a time, clearly, to remember our brave service men and women, to reflect on their faithful service to this country and to recall the many sacrifices our troops and their families have made and continue to make in defense of this great Nation.

Many of us will be heading overseas for the 75th anniversary of D-day to commemorate the efforts of an incredible group of allies on the fateful day and the weeks and the months that followed.

As I stand here today, I think of those soldiers, and I think of my wife Bobbi's dad, Bob Brown—currently 92 years old, living in Thermopolis, WY, longtime postmaster. He still drives Meals on Wheels, as he says, "for the old folks."

He was called to Europe in World War II, and he is one of those few who was in World War II in the European theater as well as in Japan as part of that first occupation and then called back to Korea as part of the 2-300 who continued in the fight for our freedoms.

He continues today to serve our United States. His wife, Jerry, who went through all of this in Thermopolis, WY, knows the sacrifices he and so many have made.

My dad, World War II, Battle of the Bulge. I still carry his dog tags from the Battle of the Bulge with me. I have them with me today on the floor of the Senate, and I carry them with me when I go to see our troops overseas.

He is the guy who had to quit school in ninth grade because of the Depression. In World War II—and I have gone through some of his old papers—I found pictures of him and a number of members of the artillery who were part of the liberation of France.

From the time I was a little boy, he would say: John, you should thank God every day because you live in America. You don't know how fortunate you are.

We are so blessed to live in this great country, and it is to the men and women who continue to protect this land, who fought for our freedoms—my dad, his wife, Louise, the sacrifices they have made on behalf of all of us.

Today we honor all of our Armed Forces, the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, the Coast Guard, the Marines, the National Guard.

In particular, today I want to salute the members of the Wyoming Army

National Guard because they are now deploying to the Middle East. Some 300 Wyoming soldiers from six units will be sent to the Middle East between January and September—the largest Wyoming deployment in nearly a decade.

The deployments began in January with the G Company of the 2nd Battalion, 211th Aviation, a medical evacuation company—the most deployed unit in the Wyoming Guard.

The medevac unit that was sent to Afghanistan includes Wyoming soldiers from Bear River, from Casper, from Carpenter, from Guernsey, from Cheyenne, Laramie, and Wheatland.

This past week, Wyoming Governor Mark Gordon participated in a sendoff ceremony in Casper for 130 Wyoming National Guard troops headed to Texas ahead of a 9-month deployment to the Middle East.

The Wyoming troops from the 2nd Battalion of the 300 Field Artillery, the "Cowboy Cannoneers," the group my father-in-law, Bob Brown, was part of—they are from more than two dozen communities from Casper to Lovell, to Cheyenne, to Moorcroft. This Guard unit will serve under the U.S. Central Command covering Iraq, Afghanistan, Kuwait, and the United Arab Emirates.

Wyoming and the entire Nation owe an incredible debt of gratitude to these fearless fighters for our freedom.

God bless the U.S. Armed Forces, God bless our troops, our veterans, and God bless the United States of America.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Mr. President, I am proud to speak today in honor of Military Appreciation Month.

Our men and women in uniform are true heroes. They risk their lives every day to protect our freedoms and our way of life.

I had the opportunity to serve in the U.S. Navy during the Vietnam war, and my adopted father was one of the few who made all four combat jumps in the 82nd Airborne during World War II.

As Governor, I made it my mission to turn Florida into the most military- and veteran-friendly State in the Nation, and we succeeded. We championed important legislation and funding to support priorities that matter most to Florida's military families, and we took every opportunity to recognize veterans for their service.

Florida has 20 military bases and 3 unified commands—more than almost any other State. As Governor, I met regularly with Florida's base commanders to see how I could help support their missions and their troops. As a Senator, I continue to host base commander meetings to make sure our military has every resource they need.

America is blessed with the protection of the strongest military in the world. Our military provides not only for the safety of our country but also leads in supporting our allies and pro-

tecting freedom and democracy across the globe.

For decades, we have invested in building our military into the most lethal fighting force in the history of the world, but we live in a dangerous world, and we must avoid complacency.

Our military readiness was diminished by budget cuts and the sequester under President Obama, which reduced defense spending across the board. The dysfunction in Washington has many consequences, but a significantly weakened military is the most dangerous.

Our military superiority is never guaranteed. Russia and China continue to build up their militaries with a single goal in mind: to dominate the world stage.

To avoid a national security emergency, we must act now. That is why, as a member of the Armed Services Committee, I am fighting to match the President's request of \$750 million in defense spending, and I am fighting to secure a pay raise for our men and women in uniform—our heroes.

I have also sponsored the Pay Our Coast Guard Act to make sure military pay is never affected by a government shutdown.

We must also work together to pass disaster relief funding immediately, which will help rebuild Tyndall Air Force Base following the devastation of Hurricane Michael.

I will never lose sight of one of the most important roles I have as a U.S. Senator: to protect and serve the families of our Nation. None of us should lose sight of that.

I look forward to working closely with each of you to invest in America's greatest asset—the men and women of our Armed Forces.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I would like to echo the sentiments my colleagues have expressed in appreciation of the men and women who serve in our Armed Forces.

While it may seem like the Members of this Chamber, much like America itself, are strongly divided on issues of national policy, I can say, without a doubt, that we are all united in support of our troops and their efforts to protect and defend our Nation and its ideals. That is why I am appreciative of the opportunity to join with my colleagues today to thank the soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines, and coastguardsmen working tirelessly to protect the American people from the multitude of threats that face our Nation.

The men and women who wear our Nation's uniform selflessly serve. They are fully aware of the risks they face. Despite that, they bravely put themselves in harm's way to defend our country, ideals, and allies around the world.

They didn't choose this life to seek recognition, awards or honors. Like those who wore the uniform before

them, they chose the path of a higher calling. They chose it as a way to use their talents for the greater good. The men and women who serve in our military embody what it means to be a giver.

I know my fellow Arkansans share my gratitude and appreciation for all of our military personnel and their families who sacrifice at home while their loved ones are abroad.

Arkansas has a storied military heritage and a long and proud history of supporting our Nation's defense. Troops stationed in the State served our country honorably even before it was admitted to the Union. Today, Arkansans are stationed around the globe, and our personnel at the Little Rock Air Force Base, Camp Robinson, Ebbing Air National Guard Base, Pine Bluff Arsenal, and Fort Chaffee continue to make the Natural State proud.

We highlight their service during the month of May, which includes six military-related national observance days, as a way to express our gratitude. That gratitude endures in perpetuity.

We simply cannot thank our servicemembers enough for the tremendous sacrifice they made to ensure that we continue to live in the greatest, freest country that the world has ever known.

As the son of an Air Force master sergeant, I learned at a young age about the sacrifices our men and women in uniform make. I also learned very early on that military families face unique challenges. It truly is a family affair.

My father joined the National Guard while he was in high school, and while still in high school, his unit was shipped out to prepare for World War II. He remained in the Air Force long after the war was over, serving over 20 years in uniform. The example set by my father's military career—and the lessons we learned growing up in a military family—helped my siblings and me to prepare for a productive service-centered life. The experience taught us one of the most valuable lessons which I continue to carry with me today. Through their service to our country, the men and women of our military are part of something much bigger than themselves.

My father was not only my hero, but as a World War II veteran, he and his fellow servicemembers in my hometown of Fort Smith were embraced in the same manner by the community as a whole. The respect and admiration our community displayed for military members was not faked or forced. It was genuine.

It remains just as strong today in communities across our great Nation. While those displays may be more publicly visible during National Military Appreciation Month, the feelings of respect, admiration, and gratitude will carry on long after the end of this month. Our Nation is eternally grateful for the sacrifice of every servicemember working to keep America safe, strong, and free.

It is a real honor to be down here with my colleague from Arkansas, and we greatly appreciate your service. Congratulations on your book, which tells the story of Arlington and what a very special place it is—truly hallowed ground.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, we are here in the middle of National Military Appreciation Month. So I am pleased to join my colleagues in showing our Nation's gratitude for every single soldier, sailor, airman, marine, and coastguardsman who is serving or has served our Nation with honor.

This month is specially dedicated to our Armed Forces, but, of course, we have ample reason to celebrate and appreciate them year-round, because our troops serve year-round and around the clock and willingly accepting limitations on their own freedom and comforts so their fellow Americans can live in freedom and security.

Right now, thousands of American troops serve in dangerous conditions overseas far from home. Even now, at this moment, our troops are engaged in combat, surrounded by the enemy, fighting courageously.

We are all thankful and proud of their service and indebted for their sacrifice. But it is not only them. Two weeks ago I had the privilege of attending a medal ceremony in Arkansas where seven veterans of the Korean war were honored for their service and for actions they took in defense of our freedom nearly seven decades ago, so that these long-ago actions were not forgotten.

One week ago, I had the opportunity to thank our military spouses—the unsung heroes of our Armed Forces—for their work raising families despite the hardships of military life.

Those are just a couple of events from the last couple of weeks. Yet they are multiplied countless times every day across our country and around the world wherever our troops and their families are present. At airports, troops returning from overseas are greeted with hugs and cheers. The remains of our fallen heroes are greeted with odd silence.

At dinners and restaurants, a uniform or even a veteran's hat will sometimes still earn a veteran or soldier a free meal from a grateful neighbor and fellow citizen.

Here in Washington, honor flights for our veterans still get police escorts with flashing sirens, and children salute those veterans, sometimes asking innocently about their memories at battle.

Across the river at Arlington National Cemetery, sentinels of the Old Guard stand at attention and walk the mat around the clock and in all weather—just as they have for the past 82 years—to ensure that those unknown soldiers and every person whose headstone graces those beautiful rolling fields rest in eternal peace.

I am proud to live in a country that honors its military in such a fashion, but, more importantly, I am proud to live in a country whose military is worthy of such honor. So to every soldier, sailor, airman, marine, and coastguardsman, I extend my gratitude, my respect, and my thanks to you and your family for your honorable service, not just today, not just this month but every day.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, in the United States we are known as the land of the free. There is a reason for that. It is because we are the home of the brave. Our military men and women represent the very best of America. In fact, the good Word tells us that "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

When a young man or a young woman volunteers to serve, he or she is writing a blank check made payable to the United States of America for an amount up to and including their life. In Montana, we are very fortunate to have so many heroes hail from our great State, including many who now work on my staff and on behalf of the people of Montana. Great Montanans like Christy Hagler, Denny Lenoir, Robin Baker, and Jim Korth. We are all so very fortunate to have Dillon Vaden and Doug Pack on staff here in DC currently serving in the Marine Corps.

Thank you for your service to our country. Thank you for your service to the people of Montana.

In fact, just last fall, I had the honor of visiting the men and women of Kalispell's 495th CSSB while they were deployed in Afghanistan. They flew over to Kabul and to Bagram Air Base. I had a chance to spend time with these great Montanans.

Just a few months ago, I had the privilege of welcoming these same soldiers home after they had been deployed for 9 long months. These men and women had been far away from their families and from their friends across the holidays. Many of them were with us that night on the tarmac as they were risking their lives to protect our freedom. Seeing them reunited with their loved ones was a powerful experience for both Cindy, my wife, and me. It is one that I will never, ever forget. But the sad reality is that some of our Montana heroes do not make it back. SSG Travis Atkins is a Bozeman native. In fact, Travis and I both went to the same high school. He was recently awarded the highest military distinction in this country by President Trump, and that is the Medal of Honor.

You see, Sergeant Atkins willingly laid down his life when he tackled a suicide bomber to shield the blast from his fellow soldiers in order to save their lives—a true hero. The sacrifice he made for his country and his fellow soldiers will never be forgotten.

Over in Fort Harrison, MT, MSG Jesse Edinger of the Army National Guard has been welcoming home the fallen since 2006. He knows what sacrifice looks like. He is no stranger to combat, having served three deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan. He earned his national instructor certification and has taught over the years hundreds of soldiers within his region to be honor guard trained. He has also performed more than 1,100 military funerals for Montana veterans, which included the service for SSG Travis Atkins.

While we all appreciate our brave men or brave women who serve in the military every day, this month is Military Appreciation Month. This month is about giving these men and women the added appreciation they richly deserve.

I will continue to advocate for policies that strengthen our military and give our men and our women who serve the strategic advantages they need to win.

Thank you to all who serve and to all who have served. On behalf of a very grateful Nation, we honor you, and we appreciate you.

I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, the month of May is Military Appreciation Month. It is a time when we as a country can come together, pause, and recognize the sacrifices of those who have raised their right hands, worn the cloth of our country, and continue to serve the world's greatest military day in and day out.

They have exceptionally long days and difficult tasks. Sometimes they fight the fight of boredom while hanging out and guarding a spot. Sometimes they are in exceptionally stressful full-on combat mode. They are prepared for both.

Throughout the month of May, there are actually six different days of observation to honor our Nation's military and their families, who have sacrificed so much: Loyalty Day, Public Service Recognition Week, Victory in Europe Day, or V-E Day, Military Spouse Appreciation Day, Armed Forces Day, and, of course, at the end of the month of May, a pause for Memorial Day. All of these observances within 1 month, in May. It is a clear sign that our military is one of the most important cornerstones of our country and that their sacrifice is unmatched. So we should honor and celebrate it.

In addition to our servicemembers and veterans, I hope all Americans also recognize the service of their family members while their husband, wife, son, daughter, mom, and dad are wearing the uniform. They could be gone for months at a time on multiple deployments.

I had the opportunity to meet with many family members in Oklahoma. Their spouse, mom, dad, son, or daughter has been deployed multiple times

into several different theaters. While they are fully deployed, their family waits, and it is a long and difficult wait. It is tough for the family.

For those who serve in our National Guard, it is tough on employers. It is tough on their personal finances. It is a stressful environment. For those folks who have done it and continue to serve—that 1 percent of our Nation that defends the other 99 percent of our Nation—we could not be more grateful for them and for their family members.

To our Gold Star families, those who are left behind to continue the legacy of those who have made the ultimate sacrifice, we thank you for your service and for your love of country.

As a nation, it is our duty to continue to support our Gold Star families, to encourage them, to check on them, and to live life with them.

Just last week, I introduced legislation with Senator CARPER to expand certain educational benefits to the survivors of guardsmen and reservists who have died as a result of their service. This is the least we could do as a nation to walk alongside those Gold Star families.

Over 33,000 Active-Duty Guard, Reserve, and Active-Duty personnel are currently assigned in Oklahoma. We have Oklahomans serving our country and protecting our interests, literally, all over the world right now. We are home to Altus Air Force Base, Tinker Air Force Base, Vance Air Force Base, Fort Sill Fires Center of Excellence in the McAlester Army Ammunition Plant, as well as countless different National Guard locations all around the State. We train and equip our soldiers, airmen, sailors, and marines, and I am proud of the Oklahomans who wear the uniform.

As we continue this Military Appreciation Month, I hope all Americans take the time to remember that 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, whether you are awake or asleep, someone is on guard watching our Nation right now, and someone is defending our freedoms right now. Whether you are hearing about Military Appreciation Month while you are at work, while you are at play, or while you are at rest, someone is not resting right now. They are defending your freedoms, and we are grateful.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado is recognized.

#### REMEMBERING KENDRICK CASTILLO

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, Kendrick Castillo was an 18-year-old senior set to graduate high school at the end of the week when his life was tragically cut short. On Tuesday, May 7, Kendrick Castillo sat in his British literature class, just like any other day in school, when two schoolmates burst into a classroom at the STEM school in Highlands Ranch and opened fire.

When faced with the unthinkable, Kendrick acted out of pure heroism as he put his classmates' lives before his own and charged the shooters. A class-

mate of Kendrick's described his heroism by telling NBC News about his actions, "giving all of us enough time to get underneath our desks, to get ourselves safe, and to run across the room to escape."

Brendan Bialy, a classmate who charged the assailants with Kendrick, told ABC News:

Kendrick Castillo died a legend. He died a trooper. I know he will be with me for the rest of my life.

John Castillo reflected on his son's actions by saying:

He did what he had to do, and I knew that was my son's nature. That was who he was.

Kendrick Castillo displayed courage well beyond his years. He was a member of the robotics club and wanted to study electrical engineering in college and loved spending his free time fishing and camping.

Today, Colorado mourns the loss of a hero as we say good-bye to Kendrick Castillo. As his friends, family, and community all gather at Highlands Ranch for a final farewell, we must pledge to never forget this young man. Kendrick Castillo lost his life saving his fellow classmates. The students of the STEM school in Highlands Ranch experienced an absolute tragedy and showed fearlessness well beyond their years as they took charge in the face of danger.

Now is the time to come together in tragedy to rise above it and remind every single student at that school that we love them, we are with them, and we will never forget them.

I also want to take a moment to honor the first responders who, once again, displayed true bravery in their response to this tragedy. The deputies of the Douglas County Police Department, South Metro Fire Rescue, and all of the neighboring first responders on the scene acted quickly to help stabilize the situation and lead the students and faculty to safety.

This week is National Police Week, a fitting time to reflect on those who protect our sons and daughters every day.

#### NATIONAL POLICE WEEK

Mr. President, in Washington, DC, this week, we are celebrating National Police Week, a time we take each year to thank law enforcement for protecting our communities and to remember the cost of providing this comfort.

Today, thousands of officers and their families will gather on the west front lawn of the Capitol to participate in the 38th Annual Peace Officers' Memorial Service, an event to honor all of those we have lost in the line of duty.

I hope the camaraderie and support they have experienced during the ceremony and throughout the week will bring a bit of comfort to law enforcement and our law enforcement community. I also hope it demonstrates the tremendous gratitude that we all have for these sacrifices.

Police Week also serves to show the law enforcement community that the

lawmakers in Washington have their back. We will continue to help departments all over the country afford lifesaving equipment, like bulletproof vests to help as many officers as possible return home safely every day. In fact, just this week, the Senate is working on legislation to make sure we are providing lifesaving equipment through the Bulletproof Vest Grant Program. We are also working on legislation this week that will help address mental health needs, not just for law enforcement officers themselves but for their families, as well, because we know the pressure and strain that this duty can create and put upon the family.

I know my colleagues in the Senate will join me in thanking the many officers who have joined us in Washington this week. Their bravery and courage allow all of us to enjoy the safety and security we so often take for granted. It should not take a tragedy for any of us to reach out to a police officer, EMS, or a firefighter, to thank them for their work, and to let them know their bravery does not go unnoticed.

Yesterday I had the honor of joining the Colorado memorial ceremony at the fallen officers' memorial. There have been 320 Coloradans over the years who have been added to the fallen officers' memorial. That is 320 too many. Four were added this week: Adams County deputy Heath Gumm, El Paso County deputy Micah Flick, Las Animas County sergeant Matthew Moreno, and Littleton police officer Kevin Denner.

One of the most poignant moments at the ceremony yesterday was the comment made by a police officer who spoke to a widow of a fallen officer, who said: Support for the law enforcement community is needed long after the bagpipes have played. I think that is what we have to do as colleagues together. While the pomp and ceremony memorials end, it is after the bagpipes have finished that we must continue to stand with the men and women on that blue line of service to our communities.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COTTON). The Senator from Wyoming.

#### HEALTHCARE

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I come to the floor to address again today the Democrats' one-size-fits-all healthcare scheme. It is a radical plan to take over all of healthcare in America and to take away health insurance from millions of Americans.

Still, nearly every Senate Democrat running for President and 109 Members of the House of Representatives, Democrats all, have backed one-size-fits-all healthcare. Last week, former Senator Heidi Heitkamp of North Dakota had words of wisdom for her fellow Democrats. She writes in the Washington Post: "Most Americans are satisfied with the healthcare they receive and do not want their coverage options

taken away and replaced," as she said, "with a one-size-fits-all government program."

I agree. The fact is, according to the Census Bureau, 90 percent of Americans have healthcare coverage. Of those, 200 million are covered by private health plans, and 180 million have employer-provided healthcare coverage. Most say that their current plan works well for them.

The 180 million Americans covered through their jobs work hard. These people go out every morning and support their families. According to a survey released last year, the vast majority of people with employer-provided coverage—71 percent of them, to be precise—like their current healthcare plans.

So who exactly are those workers on employer-sponsored plans? Well, many are union members. They negotiate their health coverage through their union representatives. Many are public employees, Federal and State employees, people who serve this country. So why do Democrats who support one-size-fits-all healthcare want to outlaw proven, popular, and predictable health coverage for millions of these working families?

Democrats certainly seem to be putting politics above principle. What is more, they clearly believe that Washington knows best. But shouldn't we be asking what these hard-working Americans who have good private health insurance want? Well, shouldn't we ask them what is best for them and what is best for their families?

Let's take the Teamsters Union, for example. In an article published in 2017, the Teamsters said:

The availability of high-quality health care has been a top selling point for those who belong to unions. It is a benefit these workers have bargained for, and oftentimes they have sacrificed higher pay for these excellent insurance benefits.

Let me underscore this point: The Teamsters Union believes their health benefits are excellent, and maybe Democrats should ask the United Steelworkers about their insurance coverage. If you go to the steelworkers' website, you will find their answer: "The Steelworkers Benefit Plan . . . provide[s] high-quality, affordable health and welfare benefits to USW [United Steelworkers] members and their families."

Basically, if you are a union worker watching this debate right now, you need to know that Democrats in Washington are coming for your hard-earned healthcare benefits. Make no mistake. Under the one-size-fits-all healthcare legislation offered by Senator BERNIE SANDERS and so many Democrats running for President, this high-quality health insurance program and their insurance will cease to exist.

It is no wonder that last year some high-profile public sector unions started sounding the alarm about losing their health benefits. When New York State debated a Sanders-like proposal

to take over healthcare, who raised the loudest objections? Well, it was the public sector unions, of course.

So again, we have millions of union workers, Federal and State employees, and their families, all with excellent healthcare benefits that are on the Democrats' chopping block. Instead of helping fix the Nation's healthcare problems, Democrats are looking to destroy what is actually working.

Remember, it is more than union workers and public sector employees who are threatened. Democrats' one-size-fits-all healthcare plan is gunning for retired military members' health insurance as well. We are talking about the TRICARE health insurance program for military families. There are more than 9 million military families enrolled in TRICARE. Our servicemembers have earned their TRICARE coverage through years of faithful service defending this Nation. I believe one of our greatest responsibilities is to provide for those who protect this Nation, both those who currently serve and our retired servicemembers.

Back home in Wyoming I talk with servicemembers, with veterans, nearly every weekend. These proud Americans want me to make sure that TRICARE works for them and to protect and strengthen benefits that work and that they have earned through their service. Still, far-left Democrats don't want to listen to reason. They are hell-bent on a one-size-fits-all approach to healthcare.

It is especially ironic that Democrats even want to ban ObamaCare plans—the plans they voted for and put in place. It has been less than a decade since Democrats passed ObamaCare, and now they want to repeal it and replace it, basically saying that ObamaCare has failed.

For years I have come to the floor to discuss the shortcomings of ObamaCare. Every time Republicans have offered to improve healthcare, we have heard from the Democrats that ObamaCare is off-limits and they can't possibly make any changes to that law. Now that the Democrats are running for President, suddenly they are singing a different tune. They are done defending ObamaCare. In fact, Democrats are happy to repeal ObamaCare so they can replace it with a one-size-fits-all healthcare plan for America.

Senator Heitkamp is actually warning them not to cast aside ObamaCare and start all over again with a one-size-fits-all plan.

Well, let me just say as a doctor, as a physician who has taken care of patients for decades, my focus continues to be on improving healthcare for American patients and their families. Americans want to focus on real healthcare reforms that make a difference for them and their families in terms of the cost and in terms of the quality of their care. These are the issues that Republicans are working on right now: protecting patients with

preexisting conditions, lowering prescription drug costs, and ending surprise medical bills.

Surprise medical bills are bills patients receive that come out of nowhere. These bills are an unfair financial burden on many families, completely unexpected medical costs that they can't afford and aren't expecting. Just last week I was at the White House with President Trump announcing a plan to help patients by ending these surprise bills.

Republicans also remain committed to protecting patients with preexisting conditions and to lowering the cost of prescription drugs.

Democrats have a choice to make. They can follow the far-left Democrats pushing their radical one-size-fits-all approach to healthcare. Again, this extreme scheme will mean the loss of health insurance coverage for millions and millions and millions of hard-working people, union workers and their families, our veterans, people who helped protect and save this country, Federal and State employees and their families, and all of the Americans who are currently enrolled in ObamaCare plans.

The better option for Democrats is to work with Republicans on common-sense, bipartisan solutions, real reforms that improve healthcare for all Americans. Let's reject one-size-fits-all healthcare that will make Americans pay more to wait longer for worse care.

That is the key. One-size-fits-all healthcare, I will tell people listening in today, means that you will pay more to wait longer for worse care. It is time to reject one-size-fits-all care for Americans. Let us work together to give all patients the care they need from a doctor they choose at a lower cost.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I came to the floor to speak about rising tensions and potential challenges with Iran, but after my distinguished colleague's remarks and as a Member of the Senate Finance Committee who helped write the Affordable Care Act, I wouldn't want to have my silence be an acceptance of his views.

For nearly a decade Republicans have sought to tear down the Affordable Care Act, which some derisively call ObamaCare, with no substitute, with no plan. This administration is actually in a Federal court, arguing that the law is unconstitutional—the very law that gives protections to everyone in this country who has a preexisting condition, such as a child born at birth with some heart disease, a husband who had a heart attack, a woman simply because she is a woman and before was discriminated against because she was a woman. Somehow that was a pre-existing condition and allowed insurance companies to charge twice as much as their male counterparts in the

same age group and same geography. It was the Affordable Care Act that ended that discrimination and created the protections.

It was the Affordable Care Act that ended lifetime caps so that if you had a major illness such as cancer, before you hit the ceiling on your insurance and you were one illness away from bankruptcy—the Affordable Care Act ended lifetime caps so that if you had a serious illness you were still covered.

The Affordable Care Act created the possibility for our children to be able to stay on our insurance until the age of 26. That was not the law before.

The list goes on and on. So it is that which Democrats have been about and, expanding upon that, the opportunity to create a universal system for everyone—something we all desire.

IRAN

Mr. President, as important as that issue is, I have come to the floor in alarm to demand answers by this administration about Iran, about its policy, about what intelligence the administration has. For more than a week we have seen press reports and heard rumors about the “threats” to U.S. interests and possibly American citizens by Iran.

For more than a week I have been demanding, along with others, that the administration provide senior level officials to brief Members of the U.S. Senate.

For more than a week, the administration has ignored these requests. For all intents and purposes, it has refused to provide Members of Congress with information critical to our national security—information it says indicates that American citizens and American assets may be in harm's way.

After specifically requesting information on security posture at our diplomatic facilities in Iraq on Monday, this morning, I read from press reports that the administration is ordering the departure of staff from our Embassy in Baghdad and our consulate in Erbil. As the ranking member—the senior Democrat—of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, it is outrageous to be learning about the evacuation of an Embassy from media reports. There are only two reasons to make such an order: We have credible intelligence that our people are at risk, or there is some type of preparation for military action against Iran.

This behavior is unacceptable. By refusing to provide Members of Congress with critical information, this administration is blatantly disregarding the fundamental governing structures of the United States as outlined in our Constitution.

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee is charged with writing the laws that authorize the use of military force and of oversight of the State Department and the safety of those who work there. The administration must provide this committee with the information we need to judiciously and appropriately make policies.

While I hear there is a briefing for all Senators rumored for next week, that is not confirmed, nor is it an acceptable timeline. Next week may be too late. We do not need another Iraq weapons of mass destruction moment that led us to one of the worst, most disastrous military engagements when there were no weapons of mass destruction to be found. We need clarity. We need answers, and we need them now. We cannot make foreign policy and national security decisions while flying in the blind.

Make no mistake—I have no doubts that Iran continues to be a bad actor in the region and throughout the world. Iranian leaders continue to support dangerous proxy actors throughout the region. Iran continues to violate arms embargoes. Iran continues to oppress its own people. Indeed, I have spent the better part of two decades developing legislation and policies to stop Iran's quest for a nuclear weapon and attacks against our allies, including Israel.

Working across the aisle, often cajoling and prodding the executive branch and our allies, Congress led the effort to build an extensive economic and political pressure campaign to force Iran to the negotiating table. Our allies in Europe, Asia, and across the world, most of whom share our concern about Iran's ability to develop a nuclear weapon and its broader maligned activities, have been critical to this effort.

When building a policy to effectively confront an adversary, you must have an end goal, you must have clear objectives, and you must take actions in pursuit of those objectives. With Iran, our objective was to ensure that Iran never develops a pathway toward a nuclear weapon. So I am all for putting on as much pressure as we can, but that requires also having a clear way of showing how it can be alleviated. There must be a viable, tenable, diplomatic track. If I were to put you in a room, lock the door, throw away the key, and tell you there is no way out and no way to survive, you would sure as hell start looking for ways to fight and break down that door.

For a campaign of maximum pressure, when the moment of maximum leverage is reached, it must be seized. That requires working with our allies to offer a real, diplomatic path to negotiations.

British Major General Chris Ghika, the deputy commander of the American-led coalition to fight the Islamic State, has called into question some of the credibility of the intelligence our officials say we have regarding Iranian-backed forces in Iraq.

Yesterday, Spain pulled a frigate from a U.S.-led naval group that had been scheduled for a joint training mission 2 years ago, saying the original mission had changed.

Our allies are critical not just in confronting Iranian malign activity but in securing our interests across the world.

Let me conclude with two points.

Now is the moment to invest in a diplomatic surge to meaningfully engage our allies and Iran in serious negotiations to end its pathway toward nuclear weapons and its malign activities.

Second, Congress has not authorized war with Iran. The administration, if it is contemplating military action with Iran, must come to Congress to seek approval.

I call on every Member of this body on both sides of the aisle to assert our institutional and constitutional prerogatives and demand information from this administration, demand classified briefings. When matters this serious are at stake, we have to demand more. We cannot and we will not be led into dangerous military adventures. The administration must provide this critical information to Congress, and it must do so immediately.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

#### NATIONAL POLICE WEEK

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. President, I think many of our colleagues here in the Chamber know that Senator ALEXANDER and I host a breakfast on Tuesday Mornings called Tennessee Tuesday. This week at the breakfast, one of our Tennesseans said: I have seen so many men and women in law enforcement uniforms in DC. What is going on? Is this normal?

It gave me the opportunity to say: Actually, this is National Police Week, and this is a week we set aside to honor those men and women who are in law enforcement.

There are tens of thousands of police officers and sheriffs and highway patrolmen across our country. My hope is that each of us will stop this week when we see them and say “thank you” to them for the service they provide our communities, because when it comes to fighting so many of the issues that affect our communities on a day-to-day basis—the issues we face because of drugs and drug trafficking, human trafficking, gangs—it is our local law enforcement that is on those frontlines, and we say “thank you” to them.

This year in Tennessee, three officers have lost their lives. During this week, we remember them and express our gratitude to their families for their service and their sacrifice. We lost Trooper Matthew Elias Gatti from the Tennessee Highway Patrol, who died on Monday, May 6, 2019; Sergeant Steve Hinkle from the Sullivan County Sheriff's Office, who died on Tuesday, February 26, 2019; and Police Officer Nicholas Scott Galinger from the Chattanooga Police Department, who died on Sunday, February 24, 2019. As I talk to our sheriffs and police chiefs and patrol captains, I know there are many more who have been injured, and we remember them.

We also say “thank you so much” to the families of these men and women who have chosen—you know, they real-

ly are called. This is their calling to public service, and we thank them for answering that call and that they choose to serve in our communities to keep us safe so that we know our communities are a place where we can rear our families, where we can enjoy camaraderie with family members, with friends, with our churches.

I will tell you, as I was thinking about this week, I thought, there are so many moms and grandmoms who I think are pretty much like me. Many times I will say I am a “security mom.” I want to make certain that my children and my grandchildren are safe, that our children are safe when they go to sporting events and when they go to school. We say a prayer when they get behind the wheel of a car. We are so grateful that there are law enforcement officers who are there at public events to keep them safe, who watch out if they are going to be speeding on the road and provide the security that is so essential to our way of life.

I have the opportunity as one of these security moms, if you will, to serve on our Senate Judiciary Committee. Just last week, Chairman GRAHAM brought forward three bills that we approved. These are things that are going to help law enforcement officers and their families—providing mental health support for law enforcement and their families, which is vitally important, and, of course, lifesaving bullet-proof vests, which are now essential, and ensuring that our first responders get the benefits they have earned by standing for that duty. When they get ready to retire, those benefits are going to be there.

This week, I have joined Senator CORNYN on his Back the Blue Act, and I thank him for his leadership. I think many of us who stand in this Chamber know that we stand to back that “thin blue line”—that line is the difference between order and chaos in our communities. This bill is going to create new penalties for killing or assaulting law enforcement officers and will protect officers from lawsuits when they intervene to stop a violent crime. It is a commonsense provision, and I am pleased to be in support of this bill.

As we talk about law enforcement and security and having safe communities, we also need to remember our Customs and Border Patrol agents and officers who are on the southern border. When you talk about being a security mom, of course you are going to talk about economic security, healthcare security, job security, and national security, but border security is a part of that. It is a way that we work to keep our communities safe.

We all know there is a humanitarian crisis on the southern border. Much of it is fueled by cartels that are big business. They deal in drug trafficking and human trafficking. It is our first responders who address this in our communities and on our city streets. The issues and the lack of security at that

border have created an environment where now, at this point, every State is a border State and every town is a border town because those problems that come across the southern border with the human trafficking, with the drug trafficking, with the gangs—all of this ends up on the streets in your community.

We are working on legislation that we hope is going to help with this situation. It will target traffickers of unaccompanied minors in the care of Health and Human Services. One of the things that has not happened and needs to happen is that Health and Human Services and Homeland Security need to be able to share all of the information they have on individuals who are bringing these unaccompanied children, individuals who say “I am a next of kin,” individuals who say “I am here, and this child is coming to me.” We want to make certain they are in the country legally. We want to make certain they have a relationship with these children so that we are protecting and looking out for the security of these children and making certain they are not being trafficked.

As we talk about our children, some of the trafficking—of course, much of the trafficking takes place in the virtual space. It takes place online. It seems impossible, but that is what happens with the human trafficking and the sex trafficking. The adverse impact that this has on young girls and women is horrifying.

Because of my work to prohibit these traffickers from working online, we are pushing forward with privacy legislation. You and I do not want our children to be followed online. That is what is happening, and it is why we need to make certain that moms have the tools they need—that parents have the tools they need—to guard the privacy of their families online.

I recently introduced the BROWSER Act. This is legislation I introduced while I was in the House of Representatives. It is one of the first bipartisan privacy bills we have had. The BROWSER Act will require you to give your consent if you are going to opt in and allow someone to share your information, to have access to your sensitive information.

In this Nation, we have a history of respecting informed consent, and that is what we are saying—that individuals need to give their consent to a company before that company looks at their private information or, worse yet, data mines or, worse yet, shares that information about those individuals with third parties—people they do not know, people they have never seen, people they never will see. Then that tech company—guess what—sells ads. It is paid with your information.

The BROWSER Act also prohibits companies from denying their services to users who refuse to waive their privacy rights. You have a right to privacy, and these companies should not deny you their services because you



say: You cannot share my information. You cannot share my sensitive information. I am not going to opt-in to allow you to do that, big tech company. I am also going to opt-out on non-sensitive data. I am not going to allow you to do that. I do not want my children followed, and I do not want you to be following me. I do not want you to sell my information. I do not want my spam to run crazy with ads and information I do not want.

Individuals deserve their privacy. Americans deserve to know they are protected and have that privacy in the online universe. They deserve to know they are not going to be followed and they are not going to be tracked.

While we are talking about technology, I'd like to bring attention to the global race for 5G, or fifth-generation wireless technology. You are hearing a good bit about this. It doesn't matter if it is in our commercial sector or in our military sector; we are at the forefront of this debate to make certain that we win this race on 5G—that China does not get a foothold, that Huawei does not penetrate our delivery systems—and to make certain that we win this race just like we did the race to 4G, which brought forward a lot of the technologies we all use and take for granted, like those devices we hold in our hands on which we receive our emails, make our phone calls, send text messages, pull up maps, get to a favorite site on which we want to make a purchase, and log on to social media accounts. This is all from a handheld device, and it is what 4G brought us. Well, 5G is going to be as revolutionary as going from analog to digital, and we are going to stay on top of this to make certain we win this race.

Because of this, we have a couple more pieces of legislation that I am going to discuss on the floor at a later date. We have the SECURE 5G and BEYOND Act. Senator CORNYN has the lead on that. I have the SUPPLY CHAIN Act, which will be focused on security in the virtual space and make certain that we will be rooting out these threats that may come to our supply chain and affect our private sector or our governmental sector.

We know it is imperative that, yes, we win the race in 5G but that we protect our networks and that we secure them so the American public knows that its information is not being exploited.

As a mom who values and puts a priority on keeping children and grandchildren safe, it is an honor for me to come to this floor to salute the men and women of law enforcement and to talk about what we need to do every single day from this Chamber to protect our Nation's security and to protect our citizens.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

REMEMBERING RICHARD LUGAR

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I honor the life and legacy of the late Senator Richard Lugar.

My colleagues and I in the Senate were deeply saddened to hear of the passing of our dear colleague and friend. His selfless service and tireless dedication to the State of Indiana and to this Nation inspired many to follow in his footsteps and govern using his principled commitment to the rule of law and desire for constructive compromise.

From an early age, Senator Lugar understood the value of hard work and dedication to what was important. He became an Eagle Scout and was the valedictorian of his classes in both high school and college. He was later a Rhodes Scholar at the prestigious University of Oxford in England. Senator Lugar's commitment to his education served him very well later in his career as a distinguished statesman.

As a fellow Eagle Scout, Senator Lugar knew that the knowledge and skills gained in Scouting always had a use and were a central part of the Boy Scout motto "Be prepared." He learned early on the importance of core Scouting values, such as trust, loyalty, courtesy, reverence, and the rest. He displayed these values not only in his nearly four decades-long career in the Senate but also as a loving husband and father to Charlene, his wife, and their four sons.

These critical skills also served him well as the mayor of Indianapolis. As a former mayor myself, I know the need for every citizen to play an active role in the day-to-day lives of their towns and cities. Senator Lugar understood this, too, and the value in working together to make our cities, States, and Nation better places. As mayor, he envisioned the unification of the city of Indianapolis with the surrounding Marion County, and he did it. He ushered in steady, uninterrupted economic growth for that region.

In a nearly four decades-long career in the Senate, it is difficult to pinpoint Senator Lugar's greatest achievements. However, I think it is safe to say that some of his most important work came as chairman or ranking member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Under his steady leadership and acute attention to detail, the committee considered critical issues at a milestone in the future of world diplomacy and democracy.

Senator Lugar's contributions were instrumental in, as its name suggests, the formation of the Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction Program in 1991, which was intended to dismantle nuclear warheads at the close of the Cold War. This program was enacted at a critical moment in the Soviet Union's dissolvent. If action had not been taken by Congress at this important juncture, dangerous nuclear weapons from the former Soviet Union could have been at risk of falling into the wrong hands.

These efforts laid the groundwork for the implementation of future programs that have been responsible for dismantling hundreds of nuclear warheads, bi-

ological weapons, and dangerous missiles. Quite simply, Senator Lugar's work changed the course of history—toward a safer world for the generations that followed.

I had the honor of working with Senator Lugar when I was on the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee. He was instrumental in the origination and legislation of President Bush's program, named the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, or PEPFAR for short. PEPFAR was life-changing legislation for those stricken with potentially fatal diseases like HIV and AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria. Unlike many foreign assistance programs that do not impact those directly on the ground, PEPFAR taught people how to avoid contracting the HIV/AIDS disease and provided countries with the ability to care for their citizens who were already infected.

Senator Lugar was also a committed man of faith. As a member of the United Methodist Church, his moral compass was guided strongly by his faith. He was always one to do what he thought was right rather than what was the easiest.

The United States is a better place because of Senator Lugar's tireless service and commitment to what is right. I and Diana, my wife, send our deepest condolences to his loved ones and know he will find eternal peace and happiness in knowing he had a profound effect on all who knew him as a colleague, as a father, and as a friend.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. BLACKBURN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### AMERICAN MINERS ACT

Mr. MANCHIN. Madam President, I rise today to call for immediate action on the American Miners Act.

We have an obligation to the miners across America who served our Nation by providing us with the energy throughout our greatest advancements. They deserve to know that their pensions, which they rightfully worked for, will be funded fully, and they deserve to have accessible healthcare, which was guaranteed to them as well.

As the Senate fails to act, we continue to put our retired miners' healthcare and pension benefits in jeopardy yet again.

I have been working with everyone and from every angle in order to prevent our miners from losing their healthcare and retirement benefits, but, once again, they are facing a deadline that puts their whole livelihood at risk.

This has been a long fight, and it is far from over. Everyone who has joined me on this journey understands that



fighting for working people is what we were sent here to do.

These retired miners are walking the halls and fighting for what is rightfully theirs. I am doing this for them and their families. I promised them that this body would not abandon them, and I refuse to let them down.

The 1974 Pension Plan will be insolvent by 2022 if we do not act now. Miners who receive their healthcare through companies who went bankrupt in 2018 are at risk of losing coverage in the coming months if we fail to act soon. Unlike many other public and private pension plans, the 1974 Pension Plan was well managed and 94 percent funded prior to the crash of 2008. However, the 2008 financial crisis hit at a time when this plan had its highest payment obligations due to retirements.

If the plan becomes insolvent, these beneficiaries face benefit cuts, and the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation will assume billions of dollars in liabilities.

To address this, we have to shore up the 1974 Pension Plan, which is heading for insolvency due to the coal company bankruptcies and the 2008 financial crisis; ensure that the miners who are at risk due to 2018 coal company bankruptcies will not lose their healthcare; and extend the Black Lung Disability Trust Fund tax at \$1.10 per ton of underground-mined coal and 55 cents per ton of surface-mined coal for 10 years.

West Virginia has more retired union miners than any other State. More than 27,000 retirees live in West Virginia alone.

I have two letters that I would like to read into the RECORD that explain what we are dealing with in all parts of our State.

This is Roy from West Virginia, and he says:

I am a 63 year old, 3rd generation coal miner. I started in the mine 3 days prior to graduating from high school. Unfortunately, I had to find other employment in 1999 after 27 years of mining because my mine shut down. Although the job that I was hired at paid a lot less (75% less), I felt that we would survive because of the promise of lifetime healthcare.

When I went into mining, I felt that if I put in my time, I would be taken care of in my older years. Now that I am approaching that stage of my life and am faced with the fact of healthcare concerns of people my age group, I am fearful of losing the security that my pension and health benefits will provide to me and my wife of 43 years.

Fourteen years ago, my wife was diagnosed with severe rheumatoid arthritis. The cost of her medications alone would total more than my pension income, making retirement an impossibility. The idea of her not being able to receive the proper treatment for her condition is not an option. If necessary, I will continue to work to provide the medical care that she needs and deserves.

Senator Manchin, for the concerns that have been mentioned in this letter, I deeply appreciate the support that you have lent to the passage of the Miner's Protection Act and hope that your fellow legislators will consider the same.

This is Lisa from Fraziers Bottom, WV:

My husband was employed by a UMWA represented mine for the 34 years he worked in the mining industry. He worked a 6 day workweek. He turned down some very promising job offers because we were always led to believe that after 20 years of UMWA service, we would have family insurance for life. A large part of the reason he stayed loyal to the mining industry was because of the retirement pension and family health insurance we would have upon his retirement.

He was injured on the job in 2013 and was unable to return to work. We had the comfort of knowing that he would be able to receive his pension and that the two of us would have no worries about health insurance.

In April 2015, I was diagnosed with breast cancer that spread to my lymph nodes. I had chemotherapy from May 2015 to November 2015, followed by radiation that lasted until February 2016. I was hospitalized three times during treatment, had to undergo a lot of diagnostic testing, and a blood transfusion. Unfortunately, I was unable to finish my treatment due to this rigorous and intense treatment damaging my heart. I have to follow up with regular treatment by a cardiologist and now have frequent testing to make sure the cancer hasn't come back.

Another side effect I have from having had chemotherapy is chemo-induced peripheral neuropathy that affects both my hands and feet. My medications cost several hundred dollars a month. I am 53 years old and unable to work due to all the side effects from my having cancer. My medical bills and medications have cost many thousands of dollars and I don't have to worry about anything other than getting well, thanks to the UMWA insurance we have.

Since my husband can no longer work and I too am unable to work, our income has taken a downward turn. The security of having this insurance means the world to us. We [are] neither asking nor expecting nothing other than what we were promised. Please, please pass this Senate Bill, not only for the two of us, but for the many other UMWA retirees and spouses that are also in the same situation.

We have countless letters that come in on a weekly basis, and it is basically stories. The thing I would want to make sure that all my colleagues know and all of America knows is that the miners provided the energy that built the industrial might that we have—an industrial revolution. They built the factories. They mined the coal and made the steel to build the factories, and they built the guns and ships that defended this country. They have given everything they have had, and this was a promise by the U.S. Government in 1946.

Because of the bankruptcy laws that erupted and basically evolved over the 1980s, they were left with nothing, and that is what they have. They didn't take home in the paycheck extra money. They didn't take home anything else except the promise and guarantee that they would have their healthcare and the benefits of a pension.

The average pension for a miner retired is less than \$600, and most of those are for widows. This is something that we promised. This is something we worked for, we are fighting for, and I am not going to give up until this promise is fulfilled.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

#### PRESCRIPTION DRUG COSTS

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Madam President, I rise today to join my colleagues in calling for necessary and long-overdue changes in how our country addresses the cost and affordability of prescription drugs.

You are going to hear today from, in addition to myself, Senator BLUMENTHAL, Senator SMITH, and Senator KAINE, as well as Senator DURBIN, who spoke on these issues earlier, to highlight this egregious public health issue facing our country.

It is unacceptable that lifesaving treatments and cures are increasingly out of reach for the people who need them the most. That is why the Senate must act now to pass legislation that would lower the cost of prescription drugs. Healthcare represents one-sixth of our economy, and out-of-pocket costs account for over 10 percent of our Nation's healthcare spending, from consumers to hospitals and nursing homes.

One report found that between 2012 and 2016, the price of branded prescription drugs increased 110 percent. That is not 11 percent; that is 110 percent. Even drugs that have been available for decades, like insulin, are no longer affordable. It is outrageous, it is dangerous, and it has real consequences for real people.

For most Americans, this is deeply personal. I know it is for me. I will never forget the frightening day when we learned my daughter had a nut allergy. She was a toddler, and we were actually in a cabin. We were out in the middle of nowhere, and she ate a cashew for the first time. Her throat started to close up, although we didn't really know that was what was happening.

I still remember us driving as fast as we could through the woods for about 45 minutes to the closest emergency room, where finally they were able to help her. That was when we discovered that she had a nut allergy.

She now keeps an EpiPen with her at all times. So when the price of an EpiPen increased by three times the original amount, I knew just how dangerous that cost increase would be to the people who rely on the medication, and I spoke out.

It wasn't just me. It was moms and dads across the country who spoke out. They spoke out by writing letters. They spoke out on email. They spoke out on their Facebook pages. They spoke out on social media. It was literally a nationwide effort to take this on. We successfully worked to bring that cost down, but companies shouldn't just respond when there is outrage over social media.

By the way, not every drug has a constituency like that of parents who have

kids that have nut allergies. There are a lot of rare drugs for which maybe only hundreds of families understand what a price increase means. There are drugs that have constituencies who are disabled or people who aren't going to be able to basically mob the halls of Congress to make a change.

Besides that, I don't think that is how we want to make change, anyway. Wouldn't it be better if we responded in a policy way, in a bipartisan way, and simply made some changes to the policies of our government and of our country to bring down the price of prescription drugs—not just the drugs that are most famous but for all drugs.

There are many examples of why prescription drug pricing is now out of control and why we have to take action. For instance, a Wall Street Journal article reported that the price for a multiple sclerosis drug went up 21 times in a decade—21 times. No one could explain that except that it allows the company that makes that drug to profit big time.

A Stat News story reported that the price for a leukemia drug was raised four times over the course of a single year, and it now costs nearly \$199,000 a year.

We know that the price of certain insulin products rose 700 percent, accounting for inflation, in two decades. When the State of the Union happened this year, I invited a guest, and that guest was a woman named Nicole Smith Holt, and it was her son, a young man named Alec, who was a 26-year-old restaurant manager. He worked in my State. He worked hard. He was a good guy, and he was on his parents' health insurance until he was 26. When that health insurance ended, when he could not get that health insurance, he then had to pay for the insulin himself since he was a diabetic. It was \$1,200 a month. He was unable to afford his insulin. So what did he do? Sadly, he did what too many people are doing in America right now. He started rationing that insulin. He rationed that insulin, and he died waiting for his next paycheck. He was a restaurant manager in the suburbs of the Twin Cities.

His mother sat at the State of the Union, looking down at the President, looking down at the Congress, to make the point that she needed action, and in the memory of her son Alec, she was going to make sure that action happens.

Congress has a duty to act, and the President should support these efforts. Committees in the House of Representatives, for the first time, have already advanced proposals to reduce the cost of prescription drugs, and we should be moving similar legislation here in the Senate.

Yes, it is true that there are two pharma lobbyists for every Member of Congress. That is a fact, and for years they have felt that they owned Congress. That has to change. They do not own me, and they do not own the people who are speaking up today.

## STOP STALLING ACT AND CREATES ACT

Madam President, two of the bills the House Judiciary Committee have already advanced with bipartisan support are companions to bipartisan legislation that I am leading in the Senate with Senator GRASSLEY: the Stop STALLING Act, which addresses the abuse of the FDA petition process by pharma companies, and my bill to crack down on anti-competitive pay-for-delay agreements.

In addition to these commonsense measures, the House Judiciary Committee also passed a version of the bipartisan CREATES Act, which Senator LEAHY and Senator LEE and others have led and which I have been a co-sponsor of for years, to deter branded drug companies from withholding testing samples to develop new generics.

Recently, on "60 Minutes," there was a story of the work that is being done in Connecticut in response to what is going on between the generic companies and the pharmaceutical companies. That is what these bills get at—to get products out on the market, to stop the pay-for-delay, in which Big Pharma pays off generics to keep their products off the market.

Yes, we should take up these bills. It is very important, but we must do more. We must also make sure that Medicare negotiates for prices. Right now there is literally a ban on negotiation, so 43 million seniors cannot get the benefit of less expensive drug prices. That doesn't help just 43 million seniors if we lift that ban; it also helps everyone in America because they are such big purchasers of prescription drugs that it will bring down the cost for everyone.

The other bill I noted was the one about the petitioning process that was designed to allow interested parties to raise legitimate health and safety issues related to generic drug applications, but for years branded drugmakers have filed sham petitions to delay the FDA's approval of the competing generic drugs.

Studies show that the FDA denies more than 90 percent of petitions relating to generics and that more than 10 percent of generics between 2011 and 2015 were filed by branded pharmaceutical companies. Our legislation would help to deter those who engage in sham petitioning. According to the CBO—the Congressional Budget Office—that would save U.S. taxpayers \$117 million over the next 10 years.

These are ideas that have been out there for a long time. These are things that we believe would make a major difference.

## SAFE AND AFFORDABLE DRUGS FROM CANADA ACT

Madam President, another one I would like to mention is a bill that I first introduced with the late Senator John McCain to allow Americans to bring in certain safe, less expensive drugs from Canada. I have continued this bipartisan effort by introducing

the Safe and Affordable Drugs from Canada Act. Senator GRASSLEY has now taken the place of Senator McCain, and we have introduced that bill.

## LIFEBOAT ACT

Madam President, finally, we should act to hold drugmakers accountable for the opioid crisis they helped to create by passing the LifeBOAT Act, led by our colleague Senator MANCHIN, who was just in this Chamber, which would establish a permanent funding stream to provide and expand access to treatment for addiction. It is only fair that the companies made wealthy from addiction be held responsible to fund a pathway for recovery. There are many options, and, alone, none of these will fix this problem. But, together, along with other legislation that has been proposed by my colleagues, we can make a difference. We can no longer pretend this is happening. It is time for us to make a dent, to bring down the cost of prescription drugs, and to stop coddling the pharmaceutical companies.

This is about, as I mentioned, Nicole and her son, whom she no longer can share time with. He has left us, but she will not let it go.

This is about Jessica, a mother whose specialty drug costs to treat her arthritis are \$50,000 a year.

This is about a woman from Crystal, MN, who told me "I am practically going without food" to pay for her prescriptions. This is happening in America.

Madam President, I note that my colleague Senator BLUMENTHAL is here, and I know that he has remarks as well.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Thank you, Madam President. I will be speaking in just a moment, but I understand the minority leader, Senator SCHUMER, is on his way to speak before me, so he should be here within moments.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. While we await for Senator SCHUMER, I want to mention just a few examples of what we are talking about here with drug prices—a woman named Paula. Paula has been prescribed a treatment for her multiple sclerosis. It costs over \$5,000 a month. She has been getting copay assistance from a grant but does not know how she is going to afford it and whether she is going to be able to afford her lifesaving medication.

Julie, another example, is covered under her husband's employer plan. She currently has to pay a \$500 copay for a drug that she needs—the same drug that was once offered in a generic form for \$50, a fraction of the new cost. The generic drug has been discontinued, creating an impossible choice between paying \$500 or not filling her prescription. Because of the high cost, she goes without this drug.

Diane—Diane has an EpiPen for bee stings and is unhappy with the high cost. She says:

Now that I am retired, it is horrific how I have to buy them in a pack of two, and they cost more than before. The prices have just skyrocketed. Every year I throw away something that is so expensive that I cannot use. It is way overpriced.

Angie, from Savage, MN, is a mother, a wife, and a teacher. In May of 2018, she was admitted to a hospital, where MRI scans showed brain lesions. She was eventually discharged from the hospital and was instructed to follow up with a neurologist. She received a multiple sclerosis diagnosis. She was prescribed a new medication that is also one of the most effective drugs available today for treating MS. Payment for the expensive drug was denied.

These are just examples of the people we see every day.

I yield the floor.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, first, I want to thank the Senator from Minnesota—the senior Senator—for all of the great work she has done in working to reduce the high cost of drugs for the American people.

THE MIDDLE EAST

Madam President, on a much different subject but a very important one—Iran and the Middle East—I have returned to the floor this afternoon amid several concerned reports about the Trump administration's position on Iran.

Earlier this week, it was reported that the administration's national security team discussed a plan that would deploy at least 120,000 U.S. troops in the Middle East. Today we learned that personnel were removed from the U.S. Embassy in Iraq. The President himself initially denied there was a plan and then seemed to confirm the reports by saying that he would "absolutely" send troops, and, if he did, "it would be a hell of a lot more than 120,000."

The news comes as quite a surprise to the American people, who have grown quite tired of wars in the Middle East, of the loss of life and fortune when there is so much that has to be done in America.

The American people deserve to know what is going on here. We are talking about not only putting 120,000 troops in harm's way in this possible deployment but also about the safety and the actions of the thousands of troops we have stationed in the Middle East right now.

So I am calling on Acting Defense Secretary Shanahan and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, General Dunford, to come testify before the Senate Armed Services Committee in an open setting before the end of the week. The hearings that are done in secret do not inform the American people of what is going on, and they are entitled to know because the lessons of history teach us that when things are done in secret, behind closed doors, mistakes can be made and momentum built for a course of action that the Nation ultimately regrets.

So I repeat: The American people deserve to know what is going on. If the President and Republicans in Congress are planning to take the United States into a conflict, even a war in the Middle East, the American people deserve to know that, and they deserve to know why.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Madam President, I want to begin by thanking the minority leader for bringing this issue as straightforwardly and as clearly as he has. As a member of the Armed Services Committee, I demand to know from the Acting Secretary of Defense and other relevant officials why we have deployed these American military assets, including an aircraft carrier group, a number of bombers and Patriot missile units to one of the most dangerous parts of the world, where they may unexpectedly provoke act of war.

We are on a dangerous path without a strategy. We are embarked on a course of potential war without informing the Congress or the American people. We have demanded repeatedly that we be briefed, and it must be in public.

This situation has reached a point of potential conflagration. The tinderbox of the Middle East is no place to operate on impulse or whim. That is the appearance this administration has created by lacking a clearly articulated strategy for the American people to know and assess. On the Armed Services Committee, we have asked repeatedly for this kind of information, and so far the administration has refused to provide it. So this kind of open hearing is necessary to be open information for the American people, and they deserve and need no less.

PRESCRIPTION DRUG COSTS

Madam President, I turn now to a topic that is of great consequence to the American people for their health and their economic well-being.

As we all know and as the senior Senator from Minnesota, my great friend AMY KLOBUCHAR, has very eloquently and powerfully described, the high cost of essential medicines in this country is a national disgrace. It is immoral. For the greatest country in the world to compel ordinary Americans to choose between covering the cost of their rent and putting food on the table or paying for their medicine needed to stay alive is absolutely abhorrent and unacceptable.

The only people who benefit under the current system are the high-paid executives, whose pay is increased even more by this unjust and intolerable system. It yields them greater profit without any greater help to the American people.

It has to stop, and the good news is, we have bipartisan agreement that it must stop. After years of disagreement, we are starting to see Republicans and Democrats coming together and con-

fronting the skyrocketing cost of prescription drugs. Drug companies' price-gouging, their manipulation of their monopolistic power to raise those prices and make the industry's practices noncompetitive and to exclude even new products from coming to market—all of these abuses have become so extreme and so outrageous that there is now bipartisan consensus that we need to stop it.

I am proud today to support the Affordable Prescriptions for Patients Act. It is a bipartisan piece of legislation, and it will finally put a stop to some of the most egregious monopolistic and predatory tactics within the drug industry. These tactics would make even the robber barons of the Gilded Age blush with guilt and embarrassment for the obvious anti-consumer effects that impact the average American.

These patent abuses go by colorful names like "patent thickening" and "product hopping," but these names obscure their very pernicious purpose. Patent thickening and product hopping are only the tip of this monopolistic iceberg. While these terms may be unfamiliar to many Americans, almost everyone is familiar with the harmful effects these predatory practices produce.

The fault here is with the people who take advantage of shortages and market power. They exploit them in the same way that anti-trust abuses have been done over the decade, and they are the reason we have anti-trust laws. Now, to confront this even more egregious example of abuses of market power, we need these new laws.

According to one study in 2017, across the top 12 grossing drugs in America, drugs companies filed an average of 127 patent applications per drug. By creating a thicket, a genuine thicket of patents around their drugs, drug companies are able to double the number of years of market exclusivity that they have before a competitor can enter the market.

During this time, these drug companies are able to charge consumers extraordinarily high prices for drugs they desperately need. If you use HUMIRA or have rheumatoid arthritis, you should be deeply concerned about patent thickening. According to one study, the manufacturer of HUMIRA has filed 247 patents so it can exclude competitors from the market. It keeps those competitive adversaries from producing drugs and can do so for a total of 39 years. During those 39 years, the cost of HUMIRA in the future—they will do it for 39 years—is just going to keep climbing. According to reports, between 2012 and 2015 alone, the average amount that Medicare and Medicaid spent on each patient using HUMIRA more than doubled—from \$16,000 to \$33,000. Things will only get worse in the years to come.

Rheumatoid arthritis patients are hardly the only ones who should be concerned about patent thickening. A large number of patents have been filed

to protect the market exclusivity of drugs that treat conditions like cancer, stroke, blood clots, diabetes, multiple myeloma, and macular degeneration.

Patent thickets will keep competitors off the market. It will cost consumers thousands, perhaps hundreds of thousands of dollars, each year. It isn't only the patients who use the drugs who suffer these effects; we all pay the cost of higher insurance when those insurers have to pay higher costs for drugs. It hits all of us, not just the patients who suffer from these medical conditions.

Unfortunately, this obviously anti-competitive practice is not the only way drug companies abuse the patent system to keep drug prices high. Just before the protections for their first drug expire, brand-name drug companies pull a bait-and-switch, pushing consumers onto a new, slightly different drug. That means any generic competition coming to market will struggle to penetrate the market, and consumers will be stuck with the brand-name drug for even longer, likely at a significantly higher cost. In this way, the brand-name company succeeds in gouging customers and keeping their profits growing. That is their objective—not better product, not better health, not better patient experiences, only higher profits.

One of the most famous examples of product hopping—the practice I have just described—concerns Namenda, a drug to treat Alzheimer's. This drug was produced by a company called Actavis. When Actavis originally released Namenda, it was usually taken by patients twice a day, but a number of years before Namenda's market exclusivity was going to expire, Actavis went to the FDA to approve a new version of Namenda, this one taken just once a day. A new drug? No. A different way of taking it? Maybe. To improve patient health? No. To increase profits? Yes.

Although the FDA had approved this drug in 2010, Actavis strategically waited 3 years to introduce this, with the apparent goal of extending its exclusivity in the U.S. market. Once the new drug was introduced, Actavis pushed all of its customers onto it, while pulling the old drug from the market. As a result, Actavis was able to continue charging monopoly prices on essentially the same drug long after Namenda's first patent was expected to expire.

We have reached the time to stop patent thickening and product hopping once and for all. We have reached the time to bring sanity and fairness to the drug market so consumers can see lower prices.

I am proud to be joining with Senator CORNYN of Texas to introduce the Affordable Prescriptions for Patients Act. It will fight these abusive practices and give consumers some much needed relief from higher drug costs. I thank Senator CORNYN for his leadership. We joined in this partnership, and

it has taken many months to draft and introduce this measure. I thank his staff, as well as my own, for all of their hard work on this bill reaching this bipartisan consensus.

This legislation will embolden and encourage our anti-trust forces to pursue pharma companies that are getting away with anti-competitive practices. It will also give clear guidance to our courts to allow them to quickly and easily distinguish between product hopping and patent thickening from truly innovative, truly inventive conduct that benefits patients.

This legislation makes sure that any company caught redhanded engaging in these harmful practices will have to pay and be held accountable.

This legislation will also lower healthcare costs for millions of Americans by increasing competition in the market. If we pass this legislation, millions of Americans may no longer have to choose between food on the table, their rent payment, and the medicine they need and deserve. That is a choice no one should ever have to make in the greatest country in the history of the world.

We cannot allow drug companies to continue their monopolistic practices and predatory abuses that only increase the profit of those companies. We cannot allow those drug companies to reap massive personal benefits for their executives, while Americans are struggling to make ends meet. I urge the Senate to immediately take up this legislation to protect American patients today.

I happily yield the floor to my colleague from Minnesota.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Ms. SMITH. Madam President, I rise today to join Senator KLOBUCHAR and my colleagues on behalf of all Minnesotans and Americans who struggle to afford their prescription drugs.

The increasing price of prescription drugs is a top concern for Americans and Minnesotans. Every day, companies are launching new treatments at astronomical prices, and they are spiking the price of older drugs, like insulin. Americans are taking notice of this greedy behavior that puts patients last.

The No. 1 issue I hear about from Minnesotans is the cost of healthcare and specifically the cost of prescription drugs. Every day, Minnesotans inspire me to fight to lower the price of prescription drugs, Minnesotans like Rachael Malmberg, a military veteran with cancer.

Before Rachel battled cancer, she battled teams on the ice, playing hockey for the University of Minnesota and the U.S. Olympic Team. Rachael's daily medicine is stabilizing her cancer, but it comes at a great cost. Even with health insurance, she still pays \$9,000 a month. For Rachael, affording her prescription drugs is a matter of life or death.

I have also talked with Minnesotans like Nikki Foster, a mom living with

multiple sclerosis in Brooklyn Park, MN. Nikki received her MS diagnosis only 3 months after running her first half-marathon. The diagnosis was frightening, and Nikki wondered if she would ever be able to run again. I am happy to say that 4 years later, Nikki is walking and running just fine. Her progress is due largely to the treatment regimen her doctors prescribed. However, with the rising price of her primary medication, Nikki wonders how long she is going to be able to afford it. When her medication was first introduced to the market in 2004, the price was around \$16,000 a year. Today, it is more than \$80,000.

Without significant changes in the formulation of her medicine, the price has skyrocketed 440 percent. Those higher prices translated to higher monthly costs and a constant source of worry for Nikki.

Finally, I am inspired by the memory of Alec Smith. Here is Alec's story. Alec transitioned off his mom's health insurance at age 26. He was a type 1 diabetic, so he depended on insulin to survive. Without insurance, Alec faced a \$1,300-a-month cost for managing his diabetes. Most of that was driven by the high price of the insulin. Alec had a good job, but his diabetes treatment was eating up nearly 45 percent of his monthly salary, and that is on top of regular expenses for food and rent and other basic necessities. So Alec did what he had to do. He rationed his insulin to make ends meet. Unfortunately, less than a month after his 26th birthday and less than 1 month after he transitioned off his mom's insurance, Alec passed away. He was the victim of insulin rationing.

Colleagues, we are at a crisis point. Thousands of people like Alec are rationing their prescriptions so they can afford them, and sometimes they are literally paying with their lives. Patients with health insurance, like Nikki and Rachael, are facing higher and higher out-of-pocket costs, and seniors are being forced to choose between paying for groceries and paying for their medicine.

In the wealthiest country in the world, this is unacceptable. It is morally wrong that the pharmaceutical companies are raking profits off of skyrocketing prices while Americans struggle to pay for their prescription drugs. That is simple to understand, but the industry would have you believe otherwise.

Their first argument. Well, drug pricing is so complex; it is impossible to understand; and Congress should study the problem. I would argue this complexity serves a function. Complexity obscures all the ways the drug companies are gaming the system to drive up profits. Colleagues, we can't be paralyzed by complexity. We need to create more transparency in drug pricing.

So then the pharmaceutical companies come back with their second argument. They say high prices are the result of altruistic purposes, like investing in research, development, and innovation, but, colleagues, remember, it is taxpayers, not drug companies, who are subsidizing the basic research that leads to innovation and new cures through the National Institutes of Health. Innovation can't help people if it is too expensive to afford.

So then comes their closing argument. We aren't the problem, say the drug companies. It is the PBMs. It is the insurers. It is everybody else but us. I would argue that everyone has a role to play. Lots of companies profit from high drug prices all along the supply chain. That needs to be fixed, and all of these players need to be held accountable. Pointing fingers and shifting blame will not bring down high drug prices. Comprehensive solutions will.

In the coming weeks, I will be reintroducing the Affordable Medications Act, which is a comprehensive solution that targets the multiple causes of the skyrocketing price of prescription drugs, and a number of my Democratic colleagues are working with me on this bill. It would increase transparency and hold pharmaceutical companies accountable for their role in setting high prices. My bill would make prescription drugs more affordable by allowing Medicare to use its buying power to negotiate lower prices, just like we already do with the Department of Veterans Affairs.

My bill goes further by penalizing drug companies that spike prices and allowing for the safe importation of lower cost drugs from other countries like Canada. My bill would spur innovation by creating a fund for new antibiotics and funding for clinical drug trials, and it would protect competition by blocking unfair, anticompetitive drug monopoly practices. This bill would eliminate the blame game and put patients at the center of the solution.

Now, I recently introduced bipartisan legislation with Senator CASSIDY to help bring low-cost biosimilars, like insulin, to the market. I am working to reintroduce legislation that would limit the ability of the big brand name drug companies to keep lower cost generic drugs off the market.

Many of these proposals have bipartisan support. Many more should, but we haven't brought any of these bills up for a vote in the Senate. I urge my colleagues to take up these proposals and the drug pricing bills making their way through the House right now as we speak. Alec, Nikki, Rachael, and all of our constituents don't have the luxury of waiting for Congress to break through legislative gridlock until they can afford what they need to live.

Thank you, Senator KLOBUCHAR, for drawing attention to this issue and for inviting me to join with you today.

I yield to my colleague from Virginia, Senator KAINE.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia is recognized.

Mr. KAINE. Madam President, I rise with my colleagues to just tell stories I am hearing from Virginians. Having completed a campaign last November, I was out doing a lot of listening and have continued to do a lot of listening since then. In your own mind, you kind of categorize the stories, and, first, above all else, are stories about healthcare. I hear stories about a lot of things, but I hear stories about healthcare probably as much as all other areas combined. In the area of healthcare, the issue of the price of prescription drugs is No. 1.

Hundreds of Virginians have reached out to me to let me know about the high cost of prescription drugs and how that affects not only their health but even their ability to put food on their table or a roof over their heads. Today I want to share some stories from Virginians and then talk about some commonsense legislation and a present opportunity to bring drug prices down.

Andrew from Great Falls shared this story with me. His father was being treated for CML, which is a leukemia that is effectively curable, and he was prescribed the drug Gleevec. Now, this story goes back a little bit, and here is what Andrew said:

In the United States, Gleevec costs approximately \$159 to manufacture for a year's dose.

That is the manufactured cost.

In India, a generic version of this drug costs about \$400 a year to purchase for use. In Canada, the price is around \$8,800 a year for a generic of the drug, and \$38,000 a year for the branded drug. In the United States, there is no available generic, and the brand name drug's marketing cost is \$146,000 a year. This is not a drug that consumers can simply choose to take or not take—to be blunt, they will . . . literally die of cancer if they don't take it.

Now, since Andrew wrote me the letter, a generic has been approved in the United States that has provided him and other families relief, but for a long period of time, \$146,000 in the United States for a drug that costs \$159 to manufacture, and the price to patients in other countries is dramatically less.

Daniel from Martinsville in Southern Virginia wrote to me about the high price of insulin, which is a common theme, I know, for all of us here with constituents.

He writes:

I paid \$505.00 for 3 bottles of Humalog Insulin . . . at Walgreens. This is a three month supply, but another Eli Lilly insulin is required by my wife in order for her to avoid death [and that is hundreds of dollars more].

Laurie from Norfolk wrote to me to share her story. Laurie has rheumatoid arthritis, and she lives on Social Security. She writes:

The drug company wants \$65,000 for the drug. With my Medicare part D, they only want \$8,000—[that is good, but that is] over 1/3 of my annual income [as a senior on Social Security for one drug]. I have applied for the drug companies patient assistance program [because] the pain is too great. I can't use

my hand without the drug. The drug companies are getting away with robbery. We need Medicare to have the authority to negotiate drug prices.

Ron from Arlington, just across the Potomac, wrote me after he went to renew a prescription he had been taking for more than a year.

That is an outrageous increase of 100 percent or \$100 more out of my pocket for exactly the same thing [every time I buy it]. I am a retired federal employee on a limited income and I am locked into this insurance plan for the rest of the year. So I have to take \$100 more out of my pocket to obtain the exact same thing.

Every time he buys it, 100 percent increase in the price.

Marie from Virginia Beach wrote me about a drug that costs \$375,000 a year. She writes:

Without the drug I most likely will be bedridden. I cannot afford the exorbitant price. . . . I recognize the recovery cost of research is the main expense, since manufacturing cost is extremely cheap, but when the sufferers cannot afford your drug, then what have you gained?

Medicare is prohibited from negotiating the price of prescription drugs. Medicare Part D enrolls over 43 million seniors nationwide, giving the program incredible bargaining power if it could only be used for their benefit.

Many seniors are on fixed incomes. The average senior gets Social Security. Their median income is \$28,000, so an \$8,000 drug cost is one-third to a quarter of their income. In the wealthiest Nation in the world, seniors should not have to choose between paying for their medication and putting food on the table or heating their home. So many of these seniors tell me about getting medication and then thinking: If I cut the pill in half and just take half a dose, maybe I can save some money—but that then comes at an incredible reduction in the efficacy of the prescription you are taking to control your healthcare condition.

This is why I joined with Senator KLOBUCHAR, and I appreciate her organizing this group of us on the floor today, to introduce the Empowering Medicare Seniors to Negotiate Drug Prices Act, which allows Medicare to negotiate drug prices. This is simple, basic, best business practice. Everybody will negotiate prices. Why should we bar the Medicare Part D Program that provides a prescription drug benefit to 43 million people—why should we bar them from negotiating for drug prices?

According to a recent analysis, Medicare would have saved \$14.4 billion. That is billion with a "b." Medicare would have saved \$14.4 billion on just 50 drugs in 2016 if the program had paid the same prices as the Department of Veterans Affairs, which is allowed to negotiate. That is a whole separate level of absurdity. Why would we, as Congress, allow the Department of Veterans Affairs, as they buy these same drugs from the same manufacturers, to negotiate and get a volume discount but tell the Medicare Program they

can't? We actually know how much money we would save because of allowing the Veterans Affairs Department to negotiate, which they should be able to, but why would we then handcuff Medicare Part D and not allow them?

If Medicare would have saved \$14.4 billion just in those 50 drugs in 1 year, that is \$14.4 billion that could be used for better healthcare, the deficit reduction, tax relief, Pell grants, education expenses. There is also a savings not just to Medicare but to patients that would also be in the billions.

Every corner pharmacy negotiates the price of prescription drugs. Every Walmart does. When they are buying prescription drugs to sell in their pharmacy, they negotiate based on volume. It makes no sense that the Federal Government is not allowed to do the same thing.

Another area is biologic medicines. They represent a new and very promising area of treatment. I do want to stop here and say I am not one of these people who use a big broad brush and say pharmaceutical companies are bad. Why are we living longer? Why is the average age going up and up and up? It is going up and up and up because of better medical care, and much of that medical care and improvement is innovation in the pharmaceutical industry, so I am not on a campaign to say pharmaceutical companies are bad. They are producing lifesaving prescriptions that are easing suffering and prolonging life. It is just that the price Americans pay for those drugs is so far out of whack with what other nations do, and one of the things that is innovative, that is great is biologic medicines.

When competing products—they are called biosimilars—attempt to enter the market, they often find it impossible to navigate the thicket of patent laws that protect the branded product because they lack access to readily accessible information. So when biosimilar manufacturers are able to uncover the web of patents, expensive litigation too often results in patents being found to be invalid or unenforceable.

That is why I joined with Senator COLLINS from Maine on a second bill to introduce the Biologic Patent Transparency Act. Our bill promotes patent transparency by requiring manufacturers of approved products to disclose and list patents covering their products with the FDA in what we call the FDA Purple Book. The legislation encourages manufacturers to apply for patents sooner, allow prospective biosimilar manufacturers to challenge weaker or invalid patents earlier in the product development process to eliminate waste, and the legislation will help us bring needed biosimilar treatments to patients faster and ultimately help lower drug prices.

Finally, a word about insulin. Over 30 million people—that is like the combined population of about 19 or 20 States—live with diabetics in the

United States, and insulin is a critical and life-sustaining daily treatment for 7½ million of those people. Yet, between 2012 and 2016, spending on insulin nearly doubled, even while there was little change in the actual use of insulin. So what explains that?

The price hikes we have experienced have caused Virginians who need these drugs, whose stories I have indicated, to endure severe financial hardship, ration their supplies, or even skip the needed medication.

In February, I joined all my Democratic colleagues on the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee, where I sit with Senator SMITH, who preceded me, and we sent a letter to three insulin manufacturers requesting information about recent price increases, how the revenue contributes to research and development, and what companies are doing to help patients access affordable insulin.

In closing, I said there are not only good ideas in Senator KLOBUCHAR's bill and in others, but there is also a good time. In the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee, our Chair, Senator ALEXANDER, and our ranking member, Senator MURRAY, have indicated that one of the bills we want to work on this year is a bill of single-shot strategies to reduce medical costs. It is not going to be the rewrite of the healthcare system. Senator ALEXANDER and Senator MURRAY were heard to describe that if we can do a bill with a series of singles, that would be a very good thing. So we will work together as colleagues to come up with a series of strategies that could bring healthcare costs down, and we have an opportunity in this bill to have some of those provisions deal with provisions just like those I have described that can reduce the cost of prescription drugs.

I am proud to join my colleagues to share stories of Virginians. It is probably the single-most frequent complaint I hear, and it is a complaint we can do something about.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CRAMER). The Senator from Minnesota. Ms. KLOBUCHAR. I thank the Senator from Virginia for his thoughtful remarks and the Senator from Connecticut, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, as well as Senator SMITH, my colleague.

The time for action is now. We have all cited numerous examples of people who, literally, are taking drugs that, in the case of insulin, was \$17 a vial and is now \$1,213 a month. That is simply outrageous. We have people who can't afford drugs that they used to just take as commonplace, and there were no changes made.

So for me, a lot of this is what happens when you have monopolies, what happens when you don't have competition. So the answer is to look at all of the measures we could take to ensure that there is better price negotiation and more competition. One of them, as Senator KAINE mentioned, is Medicare

negotiation, unleashing the power of 43 million Americans. That is a lot of people. Seniors are good at getting deals. That is 43 million people. Yet they are banned from negotiating with Medicare to get better deals for themselves. That should change.

We need less expensive drugs from other countries—safe drugs. That would certainly create more competition. We had bipartisan support for a proposal like that. Senator GRASSLEY and I have the bill that would take one country, Canada. In Minnesota and in the Presiding Officer's State of North Dakota we can see Canada from our porch. The point is that we see those less expensive drugs right across the border. We should be able to have that competition.

Then, look at the CREATES Act and some of the other ways of stopping pay-for-delay and stopping, as Senator BLUMENTHAL was describing, these patent abuses to try to make sure we have more competition. I think there is starting to be general agreement on this issue that we have to take on these pharmaceutical prices. The time for describing the problem is still here because it seems like some of our colleagues don't get it, but the time for action is certainly now.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

#### NATIONAL POLICE WEEK

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, this week, as we know, our Nation observes National Police Week, a time when we pay tribute to our law enforcement officers, especially those who died in the line of duty. Today I rise to honor their dedication and their significant and tremendous sacrifice.

On Monday evening, thousands of people gathered on the National Mall to pay tribute to the 371 officers who gave their lives in the line of duty. Four officers from Kansas were among those memorialized on Monday.

Last June, Wyandotte County sheriff's deputies Theresa King and Patrick Rohrer were shot and killed while preparing to transport a prisoner. Theresa King joined the Wyandotte County Sheriff's Office in 2005. A working mother of three children, Theresa, or "TK," was known for coming to work every day with a smile and a willingness to help out in any way that she could. She is a founding member of the Kansas City-based Lancaster-Melton Peacekeepers Civitan Club, a group of law enforcement officers and their families dedicated to honoring slain officers.

Patrick Rohrer, a husband and father of two children, joined the Wyandotte County Sheriff's Office in 2011. Patrick was known as a dedicated deputy that never lost his sense of humor and often peppered his colleagues with his favorite "Star Wars" quotes. He was also known for his competitive spirit.

Patrick had been a varsity letterman on the swim team at Shawnee Mission



Northwest High School. His family's motto became "Keep on Swimming."

I will echo Wyandotte County's Sheriff Don Ash's words in memorializing the deputies: "Theresa and Patrick were heroes in every sense of the word" when they put "their lives between a cold-blooded killer and the citizens they swore an oath to protect."

In September, Deputy Sheriff Robert Kunze of the Sedgwick County Sheriff's Office was fatally shot during an encounter with a suspect in a stolen vehicle. He, too, was a husband and father who had served with the Sedgwick County Sheriff's Office for 12 years and had previously served with the Shawnee County Sheriff's Office for 6 years.

Robert Kunze's impact on the department was made apparent when Sedgwick County's Sheriff Jeff Easter referred to his death as the loss of a "family member." Robert was known as an exceptional law enforcement officer and has been remembered by his colleagues as having a contagious laugh that always made others feel welcome.

This year we also memorialized Jefferson County undersheriff George Burnau, who died in the line of duty on April 29, 1920. His dedication set an example for generations of law enforcement officers in Kansas and around the country, those that followed him.

I would like to honor one additional law enforcement officer who is serving on my staff as a Department of Justice fellow. ATF Special Agent Matt Beccio has become an integral part of our team over the past year, giving sound advice on issues relating to Justice and traveling to Kansas to meet with local law enforcement officials. His firsthand enforcement experience and passion for bettering the lives of law enforcement officers across the country have been tremendous assets to our office. This week Matt led members of my staff in participating in Police Week's 5K memorial run alongside Kansas law enforcement and their colleagues from across the country.

Thank you, Matt, for your dedication and for using your role in our office to better support your colleagues in law enforcement.

During National Police Week and throughout the year, we are reminded that law enforcement needs our support. We must provide them with the resources they need to do their jobs. As chairman of the Appropriations Subcommittee that funds the Department of Justice and, particularly, those law enforcement grants, I am committed to doing so.

We know we must provide the tools that law enforcement needs to build and strengthen the bonds of trust with those they serve and provide our best efforts to address the underlying challenges and the challenges of our society and of our country that face each and every community.

We honor the service and sacrifice of our Nation's fallen law enforcement officers, not only for the sake of those

who have departed but as a reminder to all of us that remain.

May God bless our law enforcement officers and protect them from harm as they faithfully perform their duties each and every day.

#### 65TH ANNIVERSARY OF BROWN V. BOARD OF EDUCATION

Mr. President, on the 65th anniversary of the Supreme Court decision on *Brown v. Board of Education*, I rise to pay tribute to the Topeka, KS, families, led by the Browns and all Kansans who took part in challenging the injustice of racial segregation.

For 60 years, leading up to *Brown*, much of America adhered to the Supreme Court ruling in *Plessy v. Ferguson* that established the doctrine of "separate but equal." However, when applied to school buildings and the education of our children, nothing about it was equal.

In 1951, Linda Carol Brown was in the third grade and would walk six blocks to a bus stop that would take her to Monroe Elementary, more than a mile away from her home, despite the fact that Sumner Elementary was seven blocks from her home. Even after repeated applications for attendance at the neighborhood school, the Browns and other families were rejected. They were rejected because of the color of their skin.

In that year, 13 parents, led by Linda's father Oliver, filed suit against the Topeka Board of Education on behalf of their 20 children. Combining other cases throughout the country, Thurgood Marshall argued on their behalf before the U.S. Supreme Court—the Court that he would later join as a Justice.

On May 17, 1954, the Supreme Court unanimously issued its landmark decision announcing that *Plessy's* "separate but equal" doctrine violated the Fourteenth Amendment. While full integration would take years to accomplish, the events set in motion by these determined parents were irreversible, and they are worthy of our respect and honor today.

Nowhere was this truer than in the city where it all started. Before the case had even reached the Supreme Court, the Topeka Board of Education began integrating its primary schools.

Kansas had its pre-Civil War bloodshed to determine whether the Territory would enter the Union as a free State or slave State, and Wichita was home to one of the first sit-ins to integrate drugstore lunch counters. But it is *Brown v. Board of Education* that is our State's greatest connection to the Nation's pursuit of racial justice.

That these events happened in Kansas reflect the imperfect history of our State and of our Nation, but also the resolve of individual Kansans and national organizations like the NAACP to right wrongs and to make "a more perfect union," as our Constitution contemplates.

On this anniversary of *Brown v. Board of Education*, we remember the

legacy left behind by Linda Brown and her parents. Linda Brown just passed away last year, and we honor her, her family, and all those involved in the civil rights movement.

This legacy is one that requires all Americans—each of us—to uphold the self-evident truth that all men and women are created equal. Let us remember the legacy of *Brown v. Topeka Board of Education*, and in doing so, I ask every American to commit to racial justice and equal opportunity.

#### DISASTER RELIEF

Mr. President, I rise to speak about the devastation I have seen as I toured flooded areas of Kansas, as well as parts of Missouri, Nebraska, and Iowa, and the need for Congress to pass a disaster bill to provide assistance to impacted agricultural producers.

Kansas farmers and ranchers have endured several challenging years. Since 2013, net farm income has been cut in half due to low commodity prices. The flooding across Kansas and the Midwest has been one more setback in the long list of challenges facing our farmers and ranchers.

In the days following the worst flooding, I visited areas of Kansas that were underwater. I saw farm ground that cannot be planted or put into use until significant time, effort, and resources are invested in restoring that land. Continued rainfall across the State and region has threatened to cause additional flooding in many areas as well as delayed planning for many farmers.

It is important and it is necessary that Congress meet the challenge of providing assistance to those producers, many of whom lost everything. As negotiations continue on a disaster bill, I would like to highlight the importance of providing funds for the Emergency Conservation Program and amending the current disaster program to help cover the cost of lost stored grain.

The Emergency Conservation Program was authorized to help producers restore land damaged from natural disasters, including floods. Kansans are, unfortunately, familiar with ECP as a result of assistance our State received to help rebuild fences following the devastating wildfires of 2017 and 2018. However, this program does not currently have sufficient funds to cover producers impacted by this year's floods.

I asked Secretary Perdue about the ECP budget shortfall at a recent Ag Appropriations Subcommittee hearing, and as expected, he gave his full endorsement and support for Congress to provide funds for ECP in this disaster bill. Secretary Perdue recognizes that funds must be provided to ECP and other ag disaster programs to help producers restore damaged land and remove flood debris. Congress must also provide assistance to producers who lost stored grain due to floods.

Oftentimes, the farmer's income or revenue is not money in the bank but instead grain stored in a bin waiting to



be sold. With market uncertainty due to trade disputes, farmers have more grain in storage than usual, waiting for prices to increase. When that grain is wiped out by floods, it is similar to the family's savings account being drained of its cash.

Currently, disaster programs are not equipped to help these producers who lost a year's worth of work and income when their stored grain was damaged or destroyed. Congress has the opportunity in the disaster bill to give USDA the authority to cover the loss of stored grain and to help these producers get back on their feet.

While faced with these great challenges, farmers and ranchers continue to provide the food, fuel, and fiber to our Nation and the world. Agriculture is one of the most demanding ways of life. It is full of uncertainty, but it is also a very noble calling.

It is imperative that Congress pass a disaster bill to help producers who lost goods to floods and other disasters and to make certain farmers and ranchers across the Nation know that we appreciate what they do to provide for our Nation.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I would ask unanimous consent that Senator PORTMAN and I be recognized for up to 25 minutes.

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

#### RETIREMENT SECURITY

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, shortly, I am going to be joined by Senator PORTMAN. The two of us have been working for well over a decade on retirement savings issues. When both of us were Members of the House of Representatives, we worked on pension legislation together. It was unusual at that time to have a Democrat and a Republican working together.

There was a great deal of discussion about tax reform at that time, and it seemed like neither the Democratic nor Republican leadership was interested in dealing with retirement savings at that point. Yet Congressman Portman and I joined forces, recognizing the need to strengthen retirement savings in this country. We authored a bill known as the Portman-Cardin bill. It was more of a process than it was legislation. We brought all stakeholders together, and we sat around, listened to each other, and came to a consensus bill that was enacted into law and made permanent. It provides greater portability among the different pension plans in this country, recognizing that employees were shifting jobs, and therefore it was necessary for them to be able to protect their retirement savings.

We looked at increasing the amount of money that individuals could put away for retirement. One of the provisions provided for catchup for people over 50 years of age because we recognized that people—particularly

women—who entered the workforce at a later time didn't have as many years to put money away for retirement savings.

We simplified the retirement plans so that small companies could establish a pension plan and have safe harbor, so it was not as complicated to set up pension plans.

We established a saver's credit. We did that because we recognized that the Tax Code itself wasn't necessarily a great enough incentive to get younger and lower wage workers interested in participating in a retirement plan. We found that if an employer put money on the table, most employees would opt to join that pension plan. Witness the Thrift Savings we have here as Federal employees.

We recognized that a lot of the smaller companies didn't offer those types of plans. So we developed the saver's credit, which allowed lower wage workers to be able to get government help with putting money away for their retirement.

Quite frankly, the law that was passed back then did dramatically help the number of people who participated in retirement savings. We also included an automatic enrollment feature, and that also helped dramatically increase the number of people participating in retirement savings.

I give that as background because Senator PORTMAN and I have joined up again in the Senate in an effort to build on the success we had over a decade ago.

We had a hearing this past week, and in that hearing, we brought up the fact that several provisions that Senator PORTMAN and I had been working on are included in the recent legislation, which is legislation that had passed the House of Representatives and passed the Senate Finance Committee in the last Congress and the chairman and ranking member of the Senate Finance Committee have filed in this Congress. That includes many important provisions to improve retirement savings.

We hope that bill will be considered on the floor very shortly. We want to get that done. Yet we recognize that we need to go further than that. For that reason, Senator PORTMAN and I have introduced the Retirement Security and Savings Act this year, and it includes many important provisions. It deals with the fact that we have yet to fully accomplish what we need to for retirement savings.

According to a 2019 GAO estimate, 48 percent of those who are near retirement age—those over 55 years of age—have no retirement nest egg, and 29 percent have no savings or pensions.

Since the great recession, personal savings rates in this country have been flat.

Access to employer-sponsored plans and participation are still at way too low of a rate. For private sector workers, 68 percent have access to plans, but barely over 50 percent actually participate in plans. For part-time workers,

the numbers are much lower—only 39 percent have an opportunity and only 22 percent actually participate in plans. For small businesses, only about 50 percent provide retirement access to their employees, and 34 percent participate. In the lowest quintile—those at the lowest incomes—44 percent have access to retirement savings through their employment; yet only half that number actually participate.

The urgency of this is really underscored by the fact that we have now gone from a landscape that included mostly defined-benefit plans where the employer had a plan for you, that employer took the risks, and you had a guaranteed benefit when you retired—you didn't have to think about how much money you put away because your company was protecting you on retirement with a defined benefit. We have gone from a defined-benefit world to a defined-contribution world.

I am going to yield at this point to Senator PORTMAN to go over the provisions we are including in the Portman-Cardin bill. I believe we will have time, and I will come back and comment on some of the particular provisions.

I want to compliment Senator PORTMAN for his longstanding commitment to dealing with this national need. America's economy is strong, but it is not strong on personal savings and retirement savings, and we need to do better. It has been a pleasure to work with Senator PORTMAN in regard to these issues.

Mr. PORTMAN. Thanks to my colleague from Maryland for yielding to me. It is great to be back on the floor with him talking about retirement savings.

Back in 1996 and again in 2001 and 2006, we passed legislation while we were in the House of Representatives together to encourage people to save more for their retirement by providing more incentives, such as increasing, as an example, the amount you could put aside in a 401(k) or an IRA and catchup contributions and simplifying the rules for small businesses, and we made some progress.

Those legislative initiatives resulted in about a doubling of 401(k) assets and about a tripling of IRA assets but still way too little in savings. Senator CARDIN talked a little about that. Our national savings rate is a problem. Our personal savings rate is a problem. Our economy would be stronger if we had more savings.

The real problem is that people just aren't saving enough for their retirement. Social Security is an absolutely essential safety net. Everybody wants to be sure it will be there into the future. But it is tough to live on your Social Security benefit alone. People need that private retirement savings.

We want to encourage people to save more for their own retirement. What is more important than peace of mind in retirement, knowing that you have the ability to take care of your needs—maybe long-term care needs, maybe

healthcare needs, or maybe just being able to have a comfortable retirement. This is something we are focusing on again.

The Senate did recently pass legislation that helps. It is called the RESA legislation. We both support that strongly, but our legislation builds on that and expands it pretty substantially. Senator CARDIN just talked a little about it. It is legislation that we spent 18 months developing.

We heard from stakeholders all over the country. There is a reason that a lot of people are supporting this legislation, including the AARP, the chamber of commerce, and a lot of people who are in the retirement business—the American Benefits Council and others—because we took our time and went to them and said: Hey, what do people really need right now to expand their choices in retirement to be able to save more?

We came up with four or five different challenges in our current retirement system and then specific proposals to address those.

One is, we have an aging baby boomer population—I am among them, and I think all three of us are, Mr. President—that is not saving enough. That is a concern.

Second is a lack of access to employer-sponsored plans. We want everybody who is in the workplace to have access to a 401(k). Yet, when we look at this, particularly with smaller businesses, a lot of people don't have access or a chance to save.

A 401(k) is great because the employer typically puts in a match for you. So it is not just your money that is at a tax advantage, but, unlike an IRA, the employer puts in a match, and usually they help you with your decisions in terms of what kinds of investments to make with that 401(k).

Third, we found that typically with lower income Americans, there was a real issue with the amount of savings. Who needs money more in retirement than lower income Americans, because that is when they don't have other savings to help them through retirement.

Again, all of this is predicated upon the reality that we are living longer as Americans, longer and healthier lives, so we need more of those assets in retirement.

The final one is inadequate lifetime savings. A lot of people have a 401(k) or an IRA, and when they stop working, they think, this is great. They take the lump sum and maybe spend some of that—maybe buy the boat, maybe go on a nice vacation—and suddenly find, oh my gosh, I am living longer and longer. I hadn't expected to be in my nineties and still here. Yet the trend right now is that people are living longer. We have to ensure that there is longer lifetime savings as people are living longer and healthier lives.

After 18 months working with all these troops on the outside, we came up with 57 different provisions to address these four areas. How do we do it?

First, it allows those who saved too little to set more aside for their retirement.

For seniors—people who are over 60 years old—we have a special catchup contribution. If you are over 60 years old, under our legislation, you have the opportunity to put more aside in your retirement plan. That is important. Contribution limits go from \$6,000 to \$10,000 for workers over age 60 with a 401(k).

Senator CARDIN talked a little about this, but among these baby boomers, based on a 2019 GAO report this year, nearly half—48 percent of all retirees over the age of 55 have no retirement nest egg saved. Some may have a public pension, for instance, but still, when you add that in, 30 percent have neither private retirement savings nor any kind of pension benefits that they are going to get in the future. You have a lot of people out there with nothing. This will help with regard to those individuals.

We also say that with regard to this first issue, it is not just being able to make a catchup contribution, but we tell employers: If you set up a plan that allows you to match 6 percent of pay rather than 3 percent of pay, we will give you a break from some of the onerous retirement rules in a safe harbor.

That will encourage more of those employers to do that. That provides a tax credit to those employers who offer these safe harbor plans. So it gives more generous benefits to employees. We think that is appropriate to help save for retirement. It also helps employees who are struggling to save for retirement and pay off student loan debt, people who are saying: I would love to save for retirement, but how can I do that when I have this student loan debt to pay off?

In Ohio, by the way, the average debt for someone coming out of a college or university is \$27,000. A lot of people don't have enough disposable income to say: I am going to save for retirement and pay off college debt.

What we do here is we say that employers will now be able to make a matching contribution to the employee's retirement account in the amount of his or her student loan payment. So employers can do this. It is a good way to help people pay off their debt, to help the individual pay off their debt. The employer putting a match in for the same amount is also a good way to attract employees. If you are a business owner out there, you will like this because it will give you an advantage in the marketplace by saying: Hey, come work for me. We will help you on your student debt.

The second issue we talked about today is with regard to small businesses. This is important because we know that this is where most people work who don't have access to retirement plans. They work for smaller businesses. Bigger businesses tend to offer retirement plans, very generous

ones. The smaller businesses tend not to.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics survey that Senator CARDIN talked about earlier shows that 68 percent of private sector workers have access to employer-sponsored plans, but it drops to only 49 percent for small businesses. So, if you work for a small business, it is less than half. By the way, it is only 39 percent if you are a part-time worker, which we also address.

The bill takes a number of important steps to help small businesses offer 401(k)s and other retirement plans for the workers. It increases the current law tax credit that is already out there, but it improves it and increases it from \$500 to as much as \$5,000 for small businesses that are starting new retirement plans. It simplifies top-heavy rules for small business plans to reduce the cost of enrolling new employees. It also establishes a new 3-year, \$500-per-year tax credit for small businesses that automatically reenroll all of the participants in the plans at least once every 3 years. This is one of the issues out there. If you don't do auto enrollment—in other words, opt in—and you opt out, you are not going to get the participation rate you want.

By the way, this is legislation that Senator CARDIN and I promoted back in the 2006 legislation that said to employers: Hey, you can do an auto enrollment. The participation then went from 75 percent to about 95 percent because there was auto enrollment. It is good for younger people. If you are just told "Hey, unless you do something, you are going to automatically be enrolled in this 401(k)," that really encourages them to get into retirement savings. All of that is to help these small businesses, and we think it is going to make a big difference.

Third, one of the big problems we face is that plan participation rates for low-income workers are well below what they are for others. So this bill expands access to retirement savings plans for hard-working, lower income Americans. The way we do that—and Senator CARDIN is the expert on this—is to ensure that those people who are of low income have the ability to get into retirement plans with matches. That will incentivize them to get in. Only 22 percent of low-income workers participate in retirement plans today. Again, these are people who need savings the most.

The bill expands what is called the saver's credit. It expands the income thresholds to give more Americans access to increased credit amounts. It increases the government match for low-income savers with a saver's credit. By the way, the saver's credit goes directly into the retirement accounts. I think it is important because you don't want this money wasted, and you don't want it used for other purposes—so-called leakage in retirement accounts. This goes right into retirement accounts. We mentioned that only 39 percent have plans but, again, that only 22

percent participate. So this is important.

It also expands the eligibility of 401(k)s to include part-time workers. This is very important to the AARP and others out there who are looking at these part-time numbers and saying: Oh my gosh. There are only 22 percent who participate. That is it. So we have to do more there. It allows part-time workers who complete between 500 and 1,000 hours of service for 2 consecutive years to be able to join in with a 401(k).

These provisions are all designed to help particularly low-income Americans start to build nest eggs for retirement.

A significant challenge we face—again, as I said earlier—is this lack of lifetime savings. Our bill provides more certainty and flexibility during Americans' retirement years.

Last year, a study by Northwestern Mutual found that 66 percent of Americans believe they will outlive their retirement savings. So two-thirds of Americans are saying: I am going to live longer than my retirement savings. By the way, they are probably right. People are living longer and healthier lives and are running out of their retirement savings. It is a major concern.

We have a number of initiatives to try to provide more certainty and flexibility to seniors in their retirement years. Specifically, the bill increases the age for the required minimum distribution from age 70½, which it is now, to 72 and to 75. So it takes it up to 75 years old. Why is that important? For those of you who are not in retirement, you may not know there is a rule that says you have to start taking your money out of retirement at 70½. Now, if you are like my father, who was working full time at 70½, it was a head scratcher. Why should I take my money out of my 401(k) when I am still working? I ran into a guy like that last weekend in Ohio who said the same thing—that this makes no sense.

What we have said is, OK, we are going to kick it up to 75 years old but that if you have less than \$100,000 in your retirement account, you will not be subject to the minimum required distribution rules at all. This is a great relief to a lot of seniors who are trying to save that money for retirement and don't want to pull it out because, although they may work until 75, they still know they are going to have another, maybe, 20 years to live, and they want to be sure they have that retirement savings in there.

I am really excited about all of these provisions.

I am hearing a lot about this last one. Here is Tom Kermode, from Geauga County, OH, who wrote:

Relief from required minimum distributions would be very helpful in that it affords me and other senior taxpayers the freedom to save to help fund my retirement years. Why should I be forced to deplete my retirement account at age 70½ instead of remaining financially independent?

You are darned right, Tom. Thanks for your letter.

The bill also provides help in other ways. It reduces the current penalty for one's failing to take the required distribution from 50 percent of the shortfall amount to 25 percent in most cases and to as low as 10 percent in some cases if one self-corrects the error.

Finally, in order to help those who are in retirement, the legislation encourages the use of qualifying longevity annuity contracts, QLACs. What are they? They are retirement plans that provide annual payments to individuals who outlive their life expectancies. Basically, think of an annuity or a periodic payment. When you retire, instead of taking a lump sum, you have one of these contracts in which you are able to ensure that you are not going to outlive your retirement savings.

There are affordable options for a lot of Americans who are trying to hedge the risk of outlasting their savings. We should encourage those more, and that is what we do in our legislation.

These are all commonsense reforms. They deal with all four of these challenges that we have seen, as we have looked at the retirement system, that have been based on a lot of input from a lot of people. My hope is that we will be able to get this done.

Our coalition includes the American Benefits Council, the AARP, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the Insured Retirement Institute, Fidelity, Nationwide, T. Rowe Price, Vanguard, the Women's Institute for a Secure Retirement, the International Association of Fire Fighters, the American Council of Life Insurers, and The ERISA Industry Committee, to name a few. There are a lot more too.

We have had the opportunity to work together for a couple of decades now on these issues. I am glad that we are taking this next step to provide additional options for people to build and save for their retirements and to have more peace of mind in retirement.

I yield to Senator CARDIN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, let me again thank my colleague Senator PORTMAN.

He has explained what is included in the Retirement Security and Savings Act that we filed this week. It builds on what has worked, and it takes on new opportunities to increase savings and retirement security.

He mentioned the automatic enrollment, which is the safe harbor here, because Americans make decisions by inaction. Now, with automatic enrollment, they will be in retirement plans and will have the opportunity to opt out.

It increases the saver's credit's eligibility, but, importantly, it makes it refundable, and it deposits it directly into a savings account so that low-wage workers will, indeed, have savings opportunities.

It increases the tax credits for small business so that the burden of setting

up a plan for your employees will be matched with this credit so that more workers will have opportunities for savings retirement.

It expands part-time workers—a group that, today, is underrepresented in retirement savings.

It deals with the student debt issue. I really thank Senator PORTMAN and also Senator WYDEN for their help in recognizing that a lot of young workers would love to put money into retirement, but they have to pay off their student loan debt. So that, at least, can be used as a match by an employer for a savings account.

It also deals with lifetime income. How many people have we run into, as Senator PORTMAN has pointed out, who have outlived their retirements? They didn't expect to live to be 95 and still have active lifestyles. So we significantly increase the opportunities for lifetime income options, as well as what Senator PORTMAN said in dealing with required minimum distributions.

There are a lot of other issues. I think there are 50 issues in the bill. There are a lot of other issues that are important. There are issues that we want to work on, including relating to the recoupment of benefit payments.

The bottom line is that we want to improve the retirement security for Americans. As Senator PORTMAN pointed out, Social Security is very important. It is a three-legged stool. Let's work together to increase private savings in retirement, which is exactly what this bill does.

I think we have 1 minute left, so I yield to Senator PORTMAN.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I thank my colleague from Maryland for his partnership on this over the years.

Let me just make the obvious point for those who are watching today. I am a Republican, and he is a Democrat. We are actually talking about doing legislation together. It is bipartisan. I would say, in the retirement space, we have tried to keep it nonpartisan because this is so important to the people we represent.

The committee also happens to be represented by a Republican and a Democrat who believe in this. Senator GRASSLEY was the chairman of the committee back in 2001 when we first passed this major legislation to increase what people could save for their retirement. He is the chairman again, and he believes in this. Senator WYDEN is the ranking Democrat, the top Democrat. He also was a former Gray Panthers executive director and also has a provision in our bill that is very important, as Senator CARDIN talked about, with regard to student loan debt.

The constellations are kind of properly aligned. I think the ability for us to get this done might be counter to a lot of the partisanship and the gridlock we see here in this town. This is bipartisan stuff. It always has been. We have spent our time, have done it right, and have used input from all sorts of outside stakeholders. We have the opportunity here to improve our national

savings, which everyone says is important, including the Congressional Budget Office, and to help people have peace of mind in retirement. What could be more important?

Again, I thank my colleague from Maryland for allowing me to join him on the floor to talk about the importance of this legislation.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to take a look at this. I hope they will sign it and be cosponsors on this legislation. Let's get this passed. Let's do it this year.

I yield the floor.

#### NOMINATION OF KENNETH KIYUL LEE

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise today in opposition to the nomination of Kenneth Lee to the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit.

Mr. Lee has been nominated to a California seat on the Ninth Circuit over the objections of Senator HARRIS and myself. Neither Senator HARRIS nor I returned blue slips for Mr. Lee; yet the majority moved forward with his nomination, disregarding our concerns.

In doing so, the majority is violating Senate norms and traditions by—for the first time ever—ignoring the lack of a blue slip from the Judiciary Committee's ranking member. Let me repeat: This has never been done before.

There was no need to proceed with Mr. Lee's nomination over our objections.

As has been true of many of my Democratic colleagues, Senator HARRIS and I made it clear to the Trump administration that we were ready to work with the White House to find a consensus pick for this and two other Ninth Circuit California seats.

Sadly, our willingness to work with the administration has not been reciprocated. Once again, the majority is insisting on moving ahead with a nomination, despite the strong objections of both home-State Senators.

Senator HARRIS and I refused to return blue slips for Mr. Lee for two key reasons.

First, Mr. Lee has a long record of controversial writings and statements on race and diversity, immigration, affirmative action, women's rights, and other issues.

Second, Mr. Lee failed to disclose dozens of problematic writings to our in-state judicial commissions and to the Judiciary Committee itself.

That failure raises significant doubts about Mr. Lee's candor and judgment, and it should be concerning to all Members of this body. In fact, when another nominee for the Ninth Circuit, Ryan Bounds, also failed to turn over his writings, his nomination was rejected by the Senate.

Mr. Bounds had failed to identify to Oregon's in-state judicial screening commission at least five articles that took controversial positions on issues including campus sexual assault and diversity at institutions of higher education, whereas Mr. Lee failed to dis-

close either to my and Senator HARRIS's screening commissions or to the Judiciary Committee itself more than 75 articles.

Importantly, several of Mr. Lee's articles demonstrate a continuity between what he wrote and the positions he has continued to advocate well into his legal career.

For example, Mr. Lee was a vocal critic of affirmative action, writing: "Our stance on affirmative action has always been that it ultimately hurts the recipients instead of helping them. . . . Black students will unfortunately be treated as inferiors because people will always assume that they were accepted solely because of their race."

In a 2003 piece, written while he was a practicing attorney, Mr. Lee criticized the Supreme Court's opinion in the Bakke case, which upheld the use of race as one of several criteria to be considered in college admissions.

Mr. Lee wrote that "[t]he Supreme Court can no longer hide behind the wishful thinking of Bakke," which he said "was based on the naive assumption that universities would consider race merely as a tie-breaker."

Mr. Lee has not backed away from his opposition to affirmative action and so the Congressional Black Caucus wrote a letter stating: "While many of [Mr. Lee's] most disturbing writings have come from when he was in college and law school, there is every indication that these views were well-settled and carried through his career."

In a 2005 article, written years after he graduated from law school, Mr. Lee criticized President George W. Bush's plan to allow undocumented immigrants to work legally within the United States.

Mr. Lee wrote: "By describing illegal immigrants as 'hard-working men and women' who are pursuing 'better lives,' [President Bush] blurs the distinction between illegals and those who came to America following the rules."

Mr. Lee's portrayal of undocumented immigrants is both inaccurate and troubling.

Mr. Lee has also taken extreme positions on women's rights. He argued that feminism "is not about extending equal rights and opportunities to women . . . [but] is about adhering to a stifling orthodoxy." He attacked feminists for "support[ing] unfettered abortion-on-demand."

As NARAL put it in a letter submitted to the committee, Lee's writings "suggest a disdain for women that is concerning in any context, but especially so for someone up for a lifetime seat on the federal bench."

In conclusion, I believe Mr. Lee's record shows that he is far outside the legal mainstream.

Given the positions he has taken in dozens of articles and given his failure to disclose writings to my commission and to the Judiciary Committee I cannot support Mr. Lee's nomination to the Ninth Circuit.

I will vote against Mr. Lee and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

#### LEGISLATION SESSION

#### MORNING BUSINESS

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—H.R. 986 and H.R. 2157

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I understand there are two bills at the desk due for a second reading en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the titles of the bills for the second time.

The senior assistant bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 986) to provide that certain guidance related to waivers for State innovation under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act shall have no force or effect.

A bill (H.R. 2157) making supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes.

Mr. PORTMAN. In order to place the bills on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I would object to further proceeding en bloc.

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

#### RECOGNIZING AND SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF NATIONAL SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS AND PREVENTION MONTH

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Judiciary Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 178 and that the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant bill clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 178) recognizing and supporting the goals and ideals of National Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month.

There being no objection, the committee was discharged, and the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. PORTMAN. 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. 178) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.  
(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of April 30, 2019, under "Submitted Resolutions.")

## EXECUTIVE SESSION

## EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate resume executive session.

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

Under the previous order, all postcloture time has expired.

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

Mr. ROUNDS. 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 Texas (Mr. CRUZ).

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

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

The result was announced—yeas 52, nays 45, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 110 Ex.]

## YEAS—52

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

## NAYS—45

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

## NOT VOTING—3

|        |      |        |
|--------|------|--------|
| Booker | Cruz | Hirono |
|--------|------|--------|

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.

## ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the remaining votes be 10 minutes in length.

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

## CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

## CLOTURE MOTION

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

Mitch McConnell, James E. Risch, Roy Blunt, Mike Rounds, Thom Tillis, David Perdue, John Cornyn, Mike Crapo, John Thune, John Hoeven, Johnny Isakson, John Boozman, Roger F. Wicker, Pat Roberts, Steve Daines, John Kennedy.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Wendy Vitter, of Louisiana, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Louisiana, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO), and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) are necessarily absent.

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 51, nays 45, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 111 Ex.]

## YEAS—51

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

## NAYS—45

|         |            |          |
|---------|------------|----------|
| Baldwin | Blumenthal | Cantwell |
| Bennet  | Brown      | Cardin   |

|              |           |            |
|--------------|-----------|------------|
| Carper       | Kaine     | Sanders    |
| Casey        | King      | Schatz     |
| Collins      | Klobuchar | Schumer    |
| Coons        | Leahy     | Shaheen    |
| Cortez Masto | Manchin   | Sinema     |
| Duckworth    | Markey    | Smith      |
| Durbin       | Menendez  | Stabenow   |
| Feinstein    | Merkley   | Tester     |
| Gillibrand   | Murphy    | Udall      |
| Harris       | Murray    | Van Hollen |
| Hassan       | Peters    | Warner     |
| Heinrich     | Reed      | Whitehouse |
| Jones        | Rosen     | Wyden      |

## NOT VOTING—4

|        |        |
|--------|--------|
| Booker | Hirono |
| Cruz   | Warren |

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 51, the nays are 45.

The motion is agreed to.

## CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

## CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Brian J. Bulatao, of Texas, to be an Under Secretary of State (Management).

Mitch McConnell, Roger F. Wicker, Steve Daines, James E. Risch, Roy Blunt, Tim Scott, Mike Rounds, David Perdue, Mike Crapo, John Thune, John Hoeven, Johnny Isakson, John Boozman, Pat Roberts, John Kennedy, Thom Tillis, John Cornyn.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Brian J. Bulatao, of Texas, to be an Under Secretary of State (Management), shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

This is a 10-minute vote.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) are necessarily absent.

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 90, nays 5, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 112 Ex.]

## YEAS—90

|            |          |              |
|------------|----------|--------------|
| Alexander  | Brown    | Coons        |
| Baldwin    | Burr     | Cornyn       |
| Barrasso   | Cantwell | Cortez Masto |
| Bennet     | Capito   | Cotton       |
| Blackburn  | Cardin   | Cramer       |
| Blumenthal | Carper   | Crapo        |
| Blunt      | Casey    | Daines       |
| Boozman    | Cassidy  | Duckworth    |
| Braun      | Collins  | Durbin       |

|            |           |            |
|------------|-----------|------------|
| Enzi       | Lee       | Rubio      |
| Ernst      | Manchin   | Sasse      |
| Feinstein  | Markey    | Schumer    |
| Fischer    | McConnell | Scott (FL) |
| Gardner    | McSally   | Scott (SC) |
| Graham     | Menendez  | Shaheen    |
| Grassley   | Merkley   | Shelby     |
| Hassan     | Moran     | Sinema     |
| Hawley     | Murkowski | Smith      |
| Heinrich   | Murphy    | Stabenow   |
| Hoeven     | Murray    | Sullivan   |
| Hyde-Smith | Paul      | Tester     |
| Inhofe     | Perdue    | Thune      |
| Isakson    | Peters    | Tillis     |
| Johnson    | Portman   | Toomey     |
| Jones      | Reed      | Van Hollen |
| Kaine      | Risch     | Warner     |
| Kennedy    | Roberts   | Whitehouse |
| King       | Romney    | Wicker     |
| Lankford   | Rosen     | Wyden      |
| Leahy      | Rounds    | Young      |

## NAYS—5

|            |         |       |
|------------|---------|-------|
| Gillibrand | Sanders | Udall |
| Harris     | Schatz  |       |

## NOT VOTING—5

|        |           |        |
|--------|-----------|--------|
| Booker | Hirono    | Warren |
| Cruz   | Klobuchar |        |

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 90, the nays are 5.

The motion is agreed to.

## CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The 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 Jeffrey A. Rosen, of Virginia, to be Deputy Attorney General.

Mitch McConnell, John Hoeven, Roger F. Wicker, Chuck Grassley, James E. Risch, Johnny Isakson, John Barrasso, Steve Daines, David Perdue, Jerry Moran, John Cornyn, John Thune, Richard Burr, Mike Crapo, Pat Roberts, Lindsey Graham, Shelley Moore Capito.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Jeffrey A. Rosen, of Virginia, to be Deputy Attorney General, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO), and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber wishing to vote or to change their vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 52, nays 44, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 113 Ex.]

## YEAS—52

|           |           |         |
|-----------|-----------|---------|
| Alexander | Blackburn | Boozman |
| Barrasso  | Blunt     | Braun   |

|          |            |            |
|----------|------------|------------|
| Burr     | Hoeven     | Roberts    |
| Capito   | Hyde-Smith | Romney     |
| Cassidy  | Inhofe     | Rounds     |
| Collins  | Isakson    | Rubio      |
| Cornyn   | Johnson    | Sasse      |
| Cotton   | Kennedy    | Scott (FL) |
| Cramer   | Lankford   | Scott (SC) |
| Crapo    | Lee        | Shelby     |
| Daines   | McConnell  | Sullivan   |
| Enzi     | McSally    | Thune      |
| Ernst    | Moran      | Tillis     |
| Fischer  | Murkowski  | Toomey     |
| Gardner  | Paul       | Wicker     |
| Graham   | Perdue     | Young      |
| Grassley | Portman    |            |
| Hawley   | Risch      |            |

## NAYS—44

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

## NOT VOTING—4

|        |        |
|--------|--------|
| Booker | Hirono |
| Cruz   | Warren |

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 52, the nays are 44.

The motion is agreed to.

## EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Jeffrey A. Rosen, of Virginia, to be Deputy Attorney General.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

## LEGISLATIVE SESSION

## MORNING BUSINESS

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

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

## GHOST ARMY CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL ACT

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, due to a regrettable clerical error, the senior Senator from Maine, Ms. COLLINS, was not added as an original cosponsor and co-lead of S. 1421, the Ghost Army Congressional Gold Medal Act, when we introduced the bill together on May 9, 2019. I wish to clarify that Senator COLLINS is in fact the lead cosponsor of this important legislation and has been an indispensable partner in this endeavor. I thank her for her leadership in ensuring that the heroic Americans of the 23d Headquarters Special Troops and the 3133d Signal Service Company are appropriately honored for their service as a "Ghost Army" during World War II with a Congressional Gold Medal.

## SYRIA

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, today I wish to bring attention to the Assad regime and its Russian and Iranian backers' latest assault on innocent civilians under a rain of airstrikes and barrel bombs, which has sparked the worst violence in a year and a half in the Idlib and Hama provinces. The regime and its enablers would yet again have us believe that they are striking "terrorists." However, facts simply bely that worn-out ruse; their airstrikes have hit 18 hospitals in the past 2 weeks alone, denying lifesaving facilities to more than 100,000 people and destroying at least 10 schools, according to NGOs monitoring the situation. Relief workers on the ground assess that Assad's forces are responsible for scores of civilian deaths over the past 2 weeks, as well as displacing 150,000 desperate and terrified people.

Assad's barrel bombs and starvation campaign, along with violence from terrorist organizations, has already sent 5 million Syrians fleeing to neighboring Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey, and Iraq. Despite already fragile economic and political systems, these countries have shown an extraordinary openness in hosting those fleeing. It is absolutely critical that those refugees be allowed to return in a manner that is safe, voluntary, and dignified and that they not be forced to return to situations in Syria where they face conscription, retaliation, detention, torture, or murder at the hands of the Assad regime.

In the face of such wanton cruelty and profound suffering, the United States can and must show renewed leadership in Syria, but instead, President Trump froze and then terminated stabilization assistance in Syria. The Trump administration must restart stabilization funding in Syria. Furthermore, Congress can show leadership by passing the Caesar Syria Civilian Protection Act, which would impose new sanctions on the Assad regime and its Russian and Iranian supporters.

## 54TH ANNIVERSARY OF HEAD START

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, I would like to take a moment to celebrate the 54th anniversary of Head Start and the 25th birthday of Early Head Start.

Head Start and Early Head Start provide essential early childhood education services to almost 6,000 low-income children and families in Connecticut. In addition, across the 38 Connecticut centers, over 7,000 children have been able to access healthcare services, 2,000 families have gotten help through crisis intervention programs, and over 800 parents advanced their own education. For these families and

thousands of others across the country, Head Start is a lifeline for struggling families and a stepping stone out of poverty.

Fifty-four years since its founding, the work of Head Start and Early Head Start remains paramount. Children in poverty are more than twice as likely to suffer traumatic childhood experiences such as abuse, neglect, homelessness, and parental substance abuse. Exposure to these kinds of trauma results in greater likelihood of chronic disease, mental illness, and substance use disorders, as well as decreased likelihood of high school graduation and increased likelihood of involvement with the juvenile justice system. We know that children having access to safe and stable environments mitigates these effects and that Head Start is on the frontline of providing children with nurturing relationships.

This Saturday, not only do we celebrate the Head Start program reaching another milestone, but we celebrate the hundreds of thousands of dedicated Head Start staff and educators who work hard every day to support and teach the next generation.

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

##### 300TH ANNIVERSARY OF LITCHFIELD, CONNECTICUT

• Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the town of Litchfield, CT, as it celebrates 300 years of local government.

Incorporated in 1719 by an act of the Colonial Assembly of Connecticut, Litchfield was first settled the following year and consisted of a mere home lots. Before long, the town grew thanks to a breadth of small industries, its significant position as part of two stagecoach lines, and its 1751 designation as the county seat.

A beautiful, welcoming place to live and flourish, Litchfield is located in the bucolic hills of western Connecticut and is home to a multitude of historic places of interest.

One of the most notable parts of the town are its historical houses. These remarkable structures are not only fascinating because of their fine, antique architecture and design, but also for their many famous residents. Some held temporary visitors, such as Sheldon's Tavern, where George Washington slept during the American Revolution. Others were the homes of important Connecticut luminaries including Revolutionary War patriot Ethan Allen, Governor and signer of the Declaration of Independence Oliver Wolcott, cofounder of the Litchfield China Trading Company Alexander Catlin, and Continental Army Colonel Benjamin Tallmadge.

Litchfield has a number of other wonderful historical attractions, including the Tapping Reeve Law School. Started in 1775, Tapping Reeve began with Aaron Burr as its first student.

Throughout its 58 years as a functioning law school, it educated over 1,200 students from throughout the Nation. Tapping Reeve counts Connecticut Governor Samuel A. Foot, U.S. Senator John C. Calhoun, Connecticut Governor Roger Sherman Baldwin, and Levi Woodbury, the first U.S. Supreme Court justice to attend law school, among its alumni. Now the restored law school building and Tapping Reeve House are available for public tours, thanks to the Litchfield Historical Society.

The Connecticut General Assembly recognized Litchfield's rich past and important role throughout our State's history by designating the borough of Litchfield a historic district in 1959. Litchfield remains a constantly growing yet still peaceful part of our State, which is highly regarded by residents and visitors alike. I have greatly enjoyed visiting Litchfield on numerous occasions and appreciating its quintessential New England characteristics.

A town with a commendable dedication to its impressive past and a positive, thoughtful look toward the future, Litchfield is an extraordinary Connecticut town. I hope my colleagues will join me in congratulating Litchfield on three centuries of distinction, and I send my best wishes for the town's future success.●

##### REMEMBERING TYRONE THOMPSON

• Ms. ROSEN. Mr. President, today, it is with both great pride and tremendous sadness that I honor the legacy of an incredible Nevadan, Assemblyman Tyrone Thompson, who was taken from us far too soon, earlier this month. A proud native of Las Vegas, Assemblyman Thompson, a product of Nevada's public education system, graduated from Valley High School in 1985. He then went on to earn his bachelor's degree in criminal justice with a minor in sociology from Northern Arizona University, and he earned his masters of arts degree in organizational management from the University of Phoenix in 2000.

Thompson was first appointed to the Nevada State Legislature by the Clark County Commission on April 16, 2013 as the representative for District 17. During the 79th and 80th legislative sessions, he fought for improvements to our States' public education system as chairman of the education committee. Then, during the 80th session, Assemblyman Thompson's leadership skills were recognized by his peers in the Statehouse when he was appointed majority whip for the Nevada Assembly.

In October 2017, Thompson was inducted into the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences Hall of Fame at Northern Arizona University, his alma mater.

Assemblyman Tyrone Thompson had a heart that was bigger than life. Whether it was tackling homelessness

in our State, increasing access to quality education, mentoring, or fighting to expand social services, Assemblyman Thompson always followed through on his word. Our community lost a champion on May 4, 2019, but Tyrone Thompson lives on through a legacy unmatched in Nevada. He touched countless lives, inspired so many, and planted seeds of selfless acts throughout Nevada.

We honor him and his family as we carry his heart, passion, selflessness, and community-minded spirit with us every day.●

#### MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message from the President of the United States was communicated to the Senate by Ms. Roberts, one of his secretaries.

#### PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE

REPORT RELATIVE TO THE ISSUANCE OF AN EXECUTIVE ORDER DECLARING A NATIONAL EMERGENCY TO DEAL WITH THE THREAT POSED BY THE UNRESTRICTED ACQUISITION OR USE IN THE UNITED STATES OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY OR SERVICES DESIGNED, DEVELOPED, MANUFACTURED, OR SUPPLIED BY PERSONS OWNED BY, CONTROLLED BY, OR SUBJECT TO THE JURISDICTION OR DIRECTION OF FOREIGN ADVERSARIES—PM 17

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs:

*To the Congress of the United States:*

Pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 *et seq.*) (IEEPA), the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1601 *et seq.*), and section 301 of title 3, United States Code, I hereby report that I have issued an Executive Order declaring a national emergency to deal with the threat posed by the unrestricted acquisition or use in the United States of information and communications technology or services designed, developed, manufactured, or supplied by persons owned by, controlled by, or subject to the jurisdiction or direction of foreign adversaries.

Foreign adversaries are increasingly creating and exploiting vulnerabilities in information and communications technology and services, which store and communicate vast amounts of sensitive information, facilitate the digital economy, and support critical infrastructure and vital emergency services, in order to commit malicious cyber-enabled actions, including economic and industrial espionage against



the United States and its people. Although maintaining an open investment climate in information and communications technology, and in the United States economy more generally, is important for the overall growth and prosperity of the United States, such openness must be balanced by the need to protect our country against critical national security threats. To deal with this threat, additional steps are required to protect the security, integrity, and reliability of information and communications technology and services provided and used in the United States.

The Executive Order prohibits certain transactions involving information and communications technology or services where the Secretary of Commerce (Secretary), in consultation with the Secretary of the Treasury, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, the Attorney General, the Secretary of Homeland Security, the United States Trade Representative, the Director of National Intelligence, the Administrator of General Services, the Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission, and, as appropriate, the heads of other executive departments and agencies (agencies), has determined that:

(i) the transaction involves information and communications technology or services designed, developed, manufactured, or supplied, by persons owned by, controlled by, or subject to the jurisdiction or direction of a foreign adversary; and

(ii) the transaction:

(A) poses an undue risk of sabotage to or subversion of the design, integrity, manufacturing, production, distribution, installation, operation, or maintenance of information and communications technology or services in the United States;

(B) poses an undue risk of catastrophic effects on the security or resiliency of United States critical infrastructure or the digital economy of the United States; or

(C) otherwise poses an unacceptable risk to the national security of the United States or the security and safety of United States persons.

I have delegated to the Secretary the authority to, in consultation with, or upon referral of a particular transaction from, the heads of other agencies as appropriate, take such actions, including directing the timing and manner of the cessation of transactions prohibited pursuant to the Executive Order, adopting appropriate rules and regulations, and employing all other powers granted to the President by IEEPA, as may be necessary to implement the Executive Order. All agencies of the United States Government are directed to take all appropriate measures within their authority to carry out the provisions of the Executive Order.

I am enclosing a copy of the Executive Order I have issued.

DONALD J. TRUMP.  
THE WHITE HOUSE, May 15, 2019.

## MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:02 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. 2379. An act to reauthorize the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Program.

At 12:01 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 299. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to clarify presumptions relating to the exposure of certain veterans who served in the vicinity of the Republic of Vietnam, and for other purposes.

H.R. 389. An act to authorize the Secretary of the Treasury to pay rewards under an asset recovery rewards program to help identify and recover stolen assets linked to foreign government corruption and the proceeds of such corruption hidden behind complex financial structures in the United States and abroad.

H.R. 1037. An act to increase transparency with respect to financial services benefitting state sponsors of terrorism, human rights abusers, and corrupt officials, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1060. An act to provide regulatory relief to charitable organizations that provide housing assistance, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1313. An act to amend the Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007 to clarify certain allowable uses of funds for public transportation security assistance grants and establish periods of performance for such grants, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1437. An act to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to require the Under Secretary for Management of the Department of Homeland Security to achieve security of sensitive assets among the components of the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1594. An act to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to establish a process to review applications for certain grants to purchase equipment or systems that do not meet or exceed any applicable national voluntary consensus standards, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1912. An act to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to provide for requirements relating to documentation for major acquisition programs, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2066. An act to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to establish the Intelligence Rotational Assignment Program in the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2578. An act to reauthorize the National Flood Insurance Program, and for other purposes.

## MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 389. An act to authorize the Secretary of the Treasury to pay rewards under an asset recovery rewards program to help identify and recover stolen assets linked to foreign government corruption and the proceeds of such corruption hidden behind complex financial structures in the United States and

abroad; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

H.R. 1037. An act to increase transparency with respect to financial services benefitting state sponsors of terrorism, human rights abusers, and corrupt officials, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

H.R. 1060. An act to provide regulatory relief to charitable organizations that provide housing assistance, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

H.R. 1313. An act to amend the Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007 to clarify certain allowable uses of funds for public transportation security assistance grants and establish periods of performance for such grants, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 1437. An act to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to require the Under Secretary for Management of the Department of Homeland Security to achieve security of sensitive assets among the components of the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 1594. An act to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to establish a process to review applications for certain grants to purchase equipment or systems that do not meet or exceed any applicable national voluntary consensus standards, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 1912. An act to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to provide for requirements relating to documentation for major acquisition programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 2066. An act to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to establish the Intelligence Rotational Assignment Program in the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

## MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bills were read the second time, and placed on the calendar:

H.R. 986. An act to provide that certain guidance related to waivers for State innovation under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act shall have no force or effect.

H.R. 2157. An act making supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, 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-1284. A communication from the Senior Official performing the duties of the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting the report of nine (9) officers authorized to wear the insignia of the grade of major general 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-1285. A communication from the Chairwoman of the Nuclear Weapons Council,

transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the President's budget request for the National Nuclear Security Administration for fiscal year 2020; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-1286. A communication from the Assistant Director, Senior Executive Management Office, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Assistant Secretary of Defense (Nuclear, Chemical & Biological Defense Program), Department of Defense, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 14, 2019; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-1287. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on the ongoing bilateral security relationship between the United States and the Republic of Cyprus; to the Committees on Foreign Relations; Armed Services; and Appropriations.

EC-1288. A communication from the Chairman of the Securities and Exchange Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's fiscal year 2017 FAIR Act Commercial and Inherently Governmental Activities Inventory; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

### REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. JOHNSON, from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, without amendment:

S. 347. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 40 Fulton Street in Middletown, New York, as the "Benjamin A. Gilman Post Office Building".

H.R. 540. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 770 Ayrault Road in Fairport, New York, as the "Louise and Bob Slaughter Post Office".

H.R. 828. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 25 Route 111 in Smithtown, New York, as the "Congressman Bill Carney Post Office".

H.R. 829. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1450 Montauk Highway in Mastic, New York, as the "Army Specialist Thomas J. Wilwerth Post Office Building".

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".

### EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. TILLIS for Mr. INHOFE for the Committee on Armed Services.

Army nomination of Col. Edward S. Smith, to be Brigadier General.

Marine Corps nominations beginning with Col. Marcus B. Annibale and ending with Col. Brian N. Wolford, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 15, 2019. (minus 1 nominee: Col. Daniel Q. Greenwood)

Army nomination of Maj. Gen. Duane A. Gamble, to be Lieutenant General.

Navy nomination of Rear Adm. Scott D. Conn, to be Vice Admiral.

\*Army nomination of Gen. James C. McConville, to be General.

\*Marine Corps nomination of Lt. Gen. David H. Berger, to be General.

Air Force nomination of Maj. Gen. Marc H. Sasseville, to be Lieutenant General.

Air Force nomination of Maj. Gen. Eric T. Fick, to be Lieutenant General.

Army nomination of Lt. Gen. Joseph M. Martin, to be General.

Army nomination of Lt. Gen. Laura J. Richardson, to be Lieutenant General.

Army nomination of Maj. Gen. Robert P. White, to be Lieutenant General.

Navy nomination of Vice Adm. William R. Merz, to be Vice Admiral.

Navy nomination of Rear Adm. Ross A. Myers, to be Vice Admiral.

Marine Corps nomination of Lt. Gen. Eric M. Smith, to be Lieutenant General.

Air Force nomination of Lt. Gen. Arnold W. Bunch, Jr., to be General.

Air Force nomination of Col. David A. Harris, Jr., to be Brigadier General.

\*Navy nomination of Adm. William F. Moran, to be Admiral.

Navy nomination of Vice Adm. Robert P. Burke, to be Admiral.

Marine Corps nomination of Lt. Gen. Herman S. Clardy III, to be Lieutenant General.

Army nominations beginning with Brig. Gen. Peter B. Andrysiak, Jr. and ending with Brig. Gen. David Wilson, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 11, 2019. (minus 1 nominee: Brig. Gen. David M. Hamilton)

Air Force nomination of Col. Tracy D. Smith, to be Brigadier General.

Air Force nomination of Col. Frank W. Roy, to be Brigadier General.

Army nomination of Maj. Gen. Leopoldo A. Quintas, Jr., to be Lieutenant General.

Army nomination of Brig. Gen. Kenneth A. Nava, to be Major General.

Army nominations beginning with Brig. Gen. Francis J. Evon, Jr. and ending with Brig. Gen. David J. Mikolaities, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 29, 2019.

Army nomination of Brig. Gen. Mark J. Schindler, to be Major General.

Army nominations beginning with Brig. Gen. John F. Hussey and ending with Col. Michael K. Pyle, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 29, 2019.

Army nominations beginning with Col. Nicole M. Balliet and ending with Col. James A. Zollar, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 29, 2019.

Army nominations beginning with Col. Bradley J. Cox and ending with Col. Adam C. Volant, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 29, 2019.

Army nominations beginning with Col. Andrew C. Diefenthaler and ending with Col. James M. Jones, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 29, 2019.

Navy nomination of Rear Adm. Sean S. Buck, to be Vice Admiral.

Marine Corps nomination of Lt. Gen. John J. Broadmeadow, to be Lieutenant General.

Marine Corps nomination of Lt. Gen. Brian D. Beaudreault, to be Lieutenant General.

Marine Corps nomination of Lt. Gen. George W. Smith, Jr., to be Lieutenant General.

Marine Corps nomination of Lt. Gen. Robert F. Hedelund, to be Lieutenant General.

Army nominations beginning with Brig. Gen. Rodney L. Faulk and ending with Col. Wanda N. Williams, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 30, 2019. (minus 1 nominee: Col. Jed J. Schaertl)

Air Force nomination of Maj. Gen. David S. Nahom, to be Lieutenant General.

Air Force nomination of Lt. Gen. Marshall B. Webb, to be Lieutenant General.

Army nominations beginning with Col. Jack M. Davis and ending with Col. Mark W. Thompson, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on May 2, 2019.

Army nomination of Brig. Gen. Jeffery D. Broadwater, to be Major General.

Mr. TILLIS for Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, for the Committee on Armed Services I report favorably the following nomination lists which were printed in the RECORDS on the dates indicated, and ask unanimous consent, to save the expense of reprinting on the Executive Calendar that these nominations lie at the Secretary's desk for the information of Senators.

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

Air Force nomination of Christopher B. Athearn, to be Colonel.

Air Force nominations beginning with Erika O. Bernardo and ending with Carole M. Y. Villamaria, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 11, 2019.

Air Force nominations beginning with Corey T. Beals and ending with Christopher R. Williams, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 11, 2019.

Air Force nomination of Daniel W. Schlieder, to be Major.

Air Force nominations beginning with Deborah J. Angeles and ending with Keri L. Young, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 11, 2019.

Air Force nomination of Douglas P. Wickert, to be Colonel.

Air Force nomination of Richard T. Cooney, Jr., to be Colonel.

Air Force nominations beginning with Tammie A. Canada and ending with Douglas N. Schneekloth, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 29, 2019.

Air Force nominations beginning with Alexander A. Adeleye and ending with Desbah R. Yazzie, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 29, 2019.

Air Force nominations beginning with Leo J. Burkardt and ending with David M. Maurer, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 29, 2019.

Air Force nominations beginning with Michael R. Cabral and ending with Ray A. Zuniga, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 29, 2019.

Air Force nomination of Tann S. Jones, to be Major.

Army nomination of Theodore W. Kleisner, to be Colonel.

Army nomination of Robert W. Hughes, to be Colonel.

Army nomination of Larry R. Jordan, Jr., to be Colonel.

Army nomination of Kontrina S. Park, to be Major.

Army nomination of Marcus L. Jordan, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Army nominations beginning with Robert M. Hudson and ending with James D. Sizemore, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 4, 2019.

Army nominations beginning with John E. Callihan II and ending with Jeffrey F. Ryan, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 4, 2019.

Army nomination of Boguslaw A. Augustyn, to be Colonel.

Army nominations beginning with James R. Achenbach and ending with Keith B. Weber, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 4, 2019.

Army nominations beginning with Keith A. Archibald and ending with Frank L. Witsberger, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 4, 2019.

Army nominations beginning with Timothy B. Alexander and ending with Wing Y. Yu, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 4, 2019.

Army nomination of Christopher L. Metzger, to be Major.

Army nomination of Jonathan W. Anderson, to be Major.

Army nomination of Brian J. Reed, to be Colonel.

Army nomination of Thomas J. Wargo, to be Colonel.

Army nomination of Terrence Sommers, to be Colonel.

Army nomination of David M. Rozelle, to be Colonel.

Army nomination of Tony L. Dedmond, Jr., to be Colonel.

Army nomination of Ray G. McCulloch II, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Army nomination of Cory J. Cousins, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Army nomination of Damon L. Augustine, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Army nomination of Paul J. Stambaugh, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Army nomination of Brenton D. Griffith, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Army nomination of Andrew E. Radbill, to be Major.

Army nominations beginning with Richard Elias and ending with William A. Watts, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 29, 2019.

Army nominations beginning with Marlon G. Burns and ending with Michael F. Wood, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 29, 2019.

Army nominations beginning with Paul R. Barbo and ending with Mark A. Wurth, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 29, 2019.

Army nominations beginning with Frederick W. Alf III and ending with Michael D. Lewis, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 29, 2019.

Army nominations beginning with Timothy S. Adams and ending with Dennis R. Turner, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 30, 2019.

Army nominations beginning with Carol A. Anderson and ending with Abdul R. Willis, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 30, 2019.

Army nominations beginning with Thomas A. Bryant and ending with Arthur F. Yeager, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 30, 2019.

Army nominations beginning with Jeremy J. Bearss and ending with Michelle Thompson, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 30, 2019.

Army nomination of Rebecca A. Brawner, to be Major.

Marine Corps nominations beginning with Leslie S. Albers and ending with Sean E. Zukowsky, which nominations were received

by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 11, 2019.

Navy nomination of Steven J. Debich, to be Commander.

Navy nomination of Neil Partain, to be Commander.

Navy nomination of Robert G. Graham, to be Lieutenant Commander.

Navy nomination of Laura C. Gilstrap, to be Commander.

Navy nomination of Micheal K. Wagner, to be Captain.

Navy nomination of Jason T. Stepp, to be Captain.

Navy nomination of Stephen C. Plew, to be Captain.

Navy nomination of Michael D. Krisman, to be Captain.

Navy nomination of Michael J. Cirivello, to be Commander.

Navy nomination of Zachary J. Conley, to be Commander.

Navy nomination of Brentone E. Helbig, to be Commander.

Navy nomination of Patrick H. O'Mahoney, to be Captain.

Navy nominations beginning with Guy W. Jensen and ending with Venita M. Simpson, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 4, 2019.

Navy nomination of Marissa A. Mayor, to be Lieutenant Commander.

Navy nomination of Adam C. Hancock, to be Captain.

Navy nomination of John J. Eastman, to be Commander.

Navy nomination of Terence B. McAdoo, to be Lieutenant Commander.

Navy nomination of Donald A. Sinitiere, to be Lieutenant Commander.

Navy nominations beginning with Robert H. Battle and ending with Keith E. Wilber, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 11, 2019.

Navy nomination of Riley A. Walls, to be Lieutenant Commander.

Navy nomination of Benjamin D. Adams, to be Lieutenant Commander.

Navy nomination of Jessica M. Miller, to be Lieutenant Commander.

Navy nomination of Frank R. Bittner, to be Lieutenant Commander.

Navy nomination of David M. Groves, to be Lieutenant Commander.

By Mr. JOHNSON for the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

\*Ron A. Bloom, of New York, to be a Governor of the United States Postal Service for a term expiring December 8, 2020.

\*Roman Martinez IV, of Florida, to be a Governor of the United States Postal Service for a term expiring December 8, 2024.

\*James A. Crowell IV, of the District of Columbia, to be an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia for the term of fifteen years.

\*Jason Park, of the District of Columbia, to be an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia for the term of fifteen years.

\*Michael Eric Wooten, of Virginia, to be Administrator for Federal Procurement Policy.

\*Dale Cabaniss, of Virginia, to be Director of the Office of Personnel Management for a term of four years.

\*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

(Nominations without an asterisk were reported with the recommendation that they be confirmed.)

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. HEINRICH (for himself and Mr. PORTMAN):

S. 1471. A bill to require digital engineering as a core competency of the Armed Forces, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. WYDEN (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. SCHATZ, Ms. WARREN, Mr. BOOKER, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. SANDERS, Ms. HARRIS, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. BROWN, and Mr. BENNET):

S. 1472. A bill to amend the Help America Vote Act of 2002 to require paper ballots and risk limiting audits in all Federal elections, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

By Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself and Mrs. CAPITO):

S. 1473. A bill to amend the Safe Drinking Water Act to require the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to set maximum contaminant levels for certain chemicals, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. WICKER, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. REED, Mr. KAINE, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL):

S. 1474. A bill to amend the Afghan Allies Protection Act of 2009 to make 4,000 visas available for the Afghan Special Immigrant Visa program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. THUNE (for himself, Mr. CASEY, Mr. WYDEN, and Mr. ROBERTS):

S. 1475. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code to extend and modify certain charitable tax provisions; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself and Mr. CASSIDY):

S. 1476. A bill to waive the 24-month waiting period for Medicare eligibility for individuals disabled by Huntington's disease; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. WARNER, Ms. WARREN, Mr. SANDERS, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Mr. CARDIN):

S. 1477. A bill to amend the Federal Power Act to establish an Office of Public Participation and Consumer Advocacy; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. CRUZ (for himself, Mr. COTTON, and Mr. TILLIS):

S. 1478. A bill to repeal the Office of Financial Research, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself and Ms. CORTEZ MASTO):

S. 1479. A bill to further development of Next Generation 9-1-1 to enhance and upgrade the 9-1-1 systems of the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. CORNYN (for himself, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. PERDUE, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mrs. FISCHER, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. BLUNT, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, and Mr. DAINES):

S. 1480. A bill to protect law enforcement officers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BROWN (for himself, Ms. SMITH, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. TESTER, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. HARRIS, Mr. CASEY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. PETERS, Mr. KING, Ms. ROSEN, Mr. LEAHY, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. JONES, and Mr. Kaine):

S. 1481. A bill to amend title XXVII of the Public Health Service Act to provide for a special enrollment period for pregnant women, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. HARRIS, Mr. CARPER, and Mr. WYDEN):

S. 1482. A bill to establish an integrated national approach to respond to ongoing and expected effects of extreme weather and climate change by protecting, managing, and conserving the fish, wildlife, and plants of the United States, and to maximize Government efficiency and reduce costs, in cooperation with State, local, and Tribal governments and other entities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. Kaine (for himself, Ms. BALDWIN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, and Ms. HIRONO):

S. 1483. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to require institutions of higher education to have an independent advocate for campus sexual assault prevention and response; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

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

S. 1484. A bill to provide disaster relief assistance to individuals for the purpose of clearing fallen debris, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. MANCHIN (for himself and Mr. GARDNER):

S. 1485. A bill to improve the collection and aggregation of fixed and mobile broadband internet access coverage data, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. MANCHIN:

S. 1486. A bill to amend title 11, United States Code, to include certain pension as administrative expenses in bankruptcy, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. MERKLEY (for himself, Ms. HARRIS, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. SANDERS, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, and Mr. SCHATZ):

S. 1487. A bill to amend the Clean Air Act to create a national zero-emission vehicle standard, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. UDALL (for himself and Mr. WYDEN):

S. 1488. A bill to improve the integrity and safety of interstate horseracing, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. WARNER (for himself, Mr. RUBIO, and Mr. CORNYN):

S. 1489. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to authorize borrowers to separate joint consolidation loans; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. WARNER (for himself and Mr. ISAKSON):

S. 1490. A bill to amend the General Education Provisions Act to allow the release of education records to facilitate the award of a recognized postsecondary credential; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mrs. MURRAY (for herself, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. BROWN, Mr. CASEY, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. DURBIN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. HARRIS, Mr. KING, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. REED, Mr. SANDERS, Mrs. SHAHEEN, and Ms. WARREN):

S. 1491. A bill to prohibit forced arbitration in work disputes, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mrs. MURRAY (for herself, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. CASEY, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. HARRIS, Ms. HASSAN, Ms. HIRONO, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. ROSEN, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. SCHATZ, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. SMITH, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. WARREN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Mr. WYDEN):

S. 1492. A bill to prevent harassment at institutions of higher education, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. JONES:

S. 1493. A bill to direct the Secretary of Defense to develop workforce development investment incentives and to consider a qualified training program of an offeror as part of the past performance rating of such offeror, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. GRAHAM:

S. 1494. A bill to amend the William Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2008 to protect alien minors and to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to end abuse of the asylum system and establish refugee application and processing centers outside the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. MCSALLY (for herself, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. BLUNT, Ms. ERNST, Mr. SCOTT of Florida, and Mr. ROUNDS):

S. 1495. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to enhance the prevention of sexual assault and related offenses in the Armed Forces, to enhance protections of victims of such offenses, to improve the investigation and prosecution of such offenses, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. WARNER (for himself, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. Kaine, and Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina):

S. 1496. A bill to amend the loan counseling requirements under the Higher Education Act of 1965, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. WYDEN:

S. 1497. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to improve cost and quality transparency under the Medicare program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. WARREN (for herself, Mr. SCHATZ, and Mr. WHITEHOUSE):

S. 1498. A bill to require the Secretary of Defense to enhance the readiness of the Department of Defense to challenges relating to climate change and to improve the energy and resource efficiency of the Department, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

## SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. BOOZMAN (for himself and Mr. COTTON):

S. Res. 211. A resolution recognizing the Aviation Cadet Museum in Eureka Springs, Arkansas, as "America's National Aviation Cadet Museum"; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. MERKLEY (for himself, Mr. YOUNG, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. PAUL, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. BRAUN, Mr. BROWN, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. CARDIN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. SMITH, and Mrs. FEINSTEIN):

S. Con. Res. 16. A concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) continues to make an invaluable contribution to United States and international security, and noting former Senator Richard G. Lugar's indispensable contributions to international security and reducing nuclear weapons-related risks; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

## ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 116

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 116, a bill to address maternal mortality and morbidity.

S. 133

At the request of Ms. MURKOWSKI, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 133, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the United States merchant mariners of World War II, in recognition of their dedicated and vital service during World War II.

S. 151

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the names of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) and the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) 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. 178

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 178, a bill to condemn gross human rights violations of ethnic Turkic Muslims in Xinjiang, and calling for an end to arbitrary detention, torture, and harassment of these communities inside and outside China.

S. 286

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. SMITH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 286, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for the coverage of marriage and family therapist services and mental health counselor services under part B of the Medicare program, and for other purposes.

S. 362

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 362, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reform taxation of alcoholic beverages.

S. 371

At the request of Mrs. FISCHER, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 371, a bill to provide regulatory relief to charitable organizations that provide housing assistance, and for other purposes.

S. 373

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 373, a bill to provide for the retention and service of transgender individuals in the Armed Forces.

S. 382

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the name of the Senator from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 382, a bill to authorize a special resource study on the spread vectors of chronic wasting disease in Cervidae, and for other purposes.

S. 457

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 457, a bill to require that \$1 coins issued during 2019 honor President George H.W. Bush and to direct the Secretary of the Treasury to issue bullion coins during 2019 in honor of Barbara Bush.

S. 460

At the request of Mr. WARNER, the names of the Senator from Iowa (Ms. ERNST) and the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES) were added as cosponsors of S. 460, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the exclusion for employer-provided education assistance to employer payments of student loans.

S. 466

At the request of Mr. WARNER, the names of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW), the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS) and the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 466, a bill to provide that certain guidance related to waivers for State innovation under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act shall have no force or effect.

S. 500

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 500, a bill to amend title 54, United States Code, to establish, fund, and provide for the use of amounts in a National Park Service Legacy Restoration Fund to address the maintenance backlog of the National Park Service, and for other purposes.

S. 504

At the request of Ms. SINEMA, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 504, a bill to amend title 36, United States Code, to authorize The American Legion to determine the requirements for membership in The American Legion, and for other purposes.

S. 511

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the names of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) and the Senator from Nevada (Ms. ROSEN) were added as cosponsors of S. 511, a bill to promote and protect from discrimination living organ donors.

S. 569

At the request of Mr. YOUNG, the name of the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 569, a bill to direct the Secretary of Transportation to issue regulations relating to commercial motor vehicle drivers under the age of 21, and for other purposes.

S. 589

At the request of Mr. LANKFORD, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 589, a bill to provide for a period of continuing appropriations in the event of a lapse in appropriations under the normal appropriations process, and establish procedures and consequences in the event of a failure to complete regular appropriations.

S. 622

At the request of Mr. JONES, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) was added as a cosponsor 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. 636

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the names of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) and the Senator from Nevada (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO) were added as cosponsors of S. 636, a bill to designate Venezuela under section 244 of the Immigration and Nationality Act to permit nationals of Venezuela to be eligible for temporary protected status under such section.

S. 651

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the names of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) and the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. HASSAN) were added as cosponsors 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 Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) and the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) 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. 703

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 703, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to address health, safety, and environmental hazards at private military housing units, to pro-

hibit the payment by members of the Armed Forces of deposits or other fees relating to such housing units, and for other purposes.

S. 754

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. HASSAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 754, a bill to encourage partnerships among public agencies and other interested parties to promote fish conservation, and for other purposes.

S. 756

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 756, a bill to modify the prohibition on recognition by United States courts of certain rights relating to certain marks, trade names, or commercial names.

S. 758

At the request of Ms. DUCKWORTH, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 758, a bill to ensure affordable abortion coverage and care for every woman, and for other purposes.

S. 802

At the request of Mr. DAINES, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 802, a bill to amend part A of title IV of the Social Security Act, and for other purposes.

S. 820

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mrs. FISCHER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 820, a bill to strengthen programs authorized under the Debbie Smith Act of 2004.

S. 839

At the request of Mr. KAINE, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 839, a bill to extend Federal Pell Grant eligibility of certain short-term programs.

S. 846

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 846, a bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to limit certain rolling stock procurements, and for other purposes.

S. 880

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the names of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN), the Senator from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA) and the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) were added as cosponsors of S. 880, a bill to provide outreach and reporting on comprehensive Alzheimer's disease care planning services furnished under the Medicare program.

S. 901

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the names of the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) and the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) were added as cosponsors of S. 901, a bill to amend the



Older Americans Act of 1965 to support individuals with younger onset Alzheimer's disease.

S. 944

At the request of Mr. SCHATZ, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 944, a bill to enhance the security operations of the Transportation Security Administration and the stability of the transportation security workforce by applying a unified personnel system under title 5, United States Code, to employees of the Transportation Security Administration who are responsible for screening passengers and property, and for other purposes.

S. 998

At the request of Mr. HAWLEY, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. HASSAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 998, a bill to amend the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to expand support for police officer family services, stress reduction, and suicide prevention, and for other purposes.

S. 1012

At the request of Mr. MANCHIN, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1012, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to protect the confidentiality of substance use disorder patient records.

S. 1039

At the request of Mr. UDALL, the names of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN) and the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1039, a bill to limit the use of funds for kinetic military operations in or against Iran.

S. 1060

At the request of Mr. VAN HOLLEN, the names of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) and the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY) were added as cosponsors of S. 1060, a bill to deter foreign interference in United States elections, and for other purposes.

S. 1148

At the request of Mr. HOEVEN, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) was added as a cosponsor of 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.

S. 1162

At the request of Mr. CRUZ, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) was added as a cosponsor of 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.

S. 1168

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the names of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY), the Senator from Mis-

souri (Mr. HAWLEY), the Senator from Iowa (Ms. ERNST), the Senator from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN), the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CRAMER), the Senator from Mississippi (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH), the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER), the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) were added as cosponsors of 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.

S. 1195

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the names of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN), the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE), the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER), the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT), the Senator from Indiana (Mr. YOUNG), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) and the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS) were added as cosponsors of 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.

S. 1203

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of 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.

S. 1209

At the request of Mr. CASSIDY, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1209, a bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act with respect to approval of abbreviated new drug applications.

S. 1210

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY) was added as a cosponsor of 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.

S. 1218

At the request of Mr. VAN HOLLEN, the names of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. LANKFORD) and the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) were added as cosponsors of 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.

S. 1235

At the request of Mrs. BLACKBURN, the names of the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER), the Senator from Alabama (Mr. JONES), the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) were

added as cosponsors of S. 1235, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of ratification of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, giving women in the United States the right to vote.

S. 1263

At the request of Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1263, a bill to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish an interagency task force on the use of public lands to provide medical treatment and therapy to veterans through outdoor recreation.

S. 1370

At the request of Mr. CASSIDY, the names of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN), the Senator from Arizona (Ms. MCSALLY), the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER), the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. KENNEDY) and the Senator from Nebraska (Mrs. FISCHER) were added as cosponsors of S. 1370, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to treat certain military survivor benefits as earned income for purposes of the kiddie tax.

S. 1374

At the request of Ms. MCSALLY, the names of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. HASSAN) and the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) were added as cosponsors of S. 1374, a bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to eliminate the waiting periods for disability insurance benefits and Medicare coverage for individuals with metastatic breast cancer, and for other purposes.

S. 1388

At the request of Mr. PETERS, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. HASSAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1388, a bill to manage supply chain risk through counterintelligence training, and for other purposes.

S. 1394

At the request of Ms. BALDWIN, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1394, a bill to provide collective bargaining rights for public safety officers employed by States or their political subdivisions.

S. 1416

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1416, a bill to amend the Federal Trade Commission Act to prohibit anticompetitive behaviors by drug product manufacturers, and for other purposes.

S. 1421

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1421, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the 23d Headquarters Special Troops and the 3133d Signal Service Company in recognition of their unique and distinguished service



as a “Ghost Army” that conducted deception operations in Europe during World War II.

S. 1422

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. SMITH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1422, a bill to transfer revenues from the net investment income tax to the Federal Hospital Insurance Trust Fund.

S. 1438

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1438, a bill to amend title 39, United States Code, to extend the authority of the United States Postal Service to issue a semipostal to raise funds for breast cancer research.

S. 1448

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1448, a bill to require certain practitioners authorized to prescribe controlled substances to complete continuing education.

S. 1459

At the request of Mr. HAWLEY, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1459, a bill to control the export to the People's Republic of China of certain technology and intellectual property important to the national interest of the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 1462

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the names of the Senator from Nevada (Ms. ROSEN), the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND), the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) and the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1462, a bill to prevent a person who has been convicted of a misdemeanor hate crime, or received an enhanced sentence for a misdemeanor because of hate or bias in the commission, from obtaining a firearm.

S.J. RES. 11

At the request of Mr. MERKLEY, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 11, a joint resolution to prohibit the unauthorized use of United States Armed Forces in hostilities with respect to Venezuela.

S. CON. RES. 10

At the request of Mr. GARDNER, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) was added as a cosponsor of S. Con. Res. 10, a concurrent resolution recognizing that Chinese telecommunications companies such as Huawei and ZTE pose serious threats to the national security of the United States and its allies.

S. RES. 188

At the request of Mr. CRUZ, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 188, a resolution encouraging a swift transfer of power by the military

to a civilian-led political authority in the Republic of the Sudan, and for other purposes.

## STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. THUNE (for himself, Mr. CASEY, Mr. WYDEN, and Mr. ROBERTS):

S. 1475. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code to extend and modify certain charitable tax provisions; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 1475

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Charities Helping Americans Regularly Throughout the Year Act of 2019”.

### SEC. 2. DETERMINATION OF STANDARD MILEAGE RATE FOR CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTIONS DEDUCTION.

(a) DETERMINATION OF STANDARD MILEAGE RATE FOR CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTIONS DEDUCTION.—Subsection (i) of section 170 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended to read as follows:

“(i) STANDARD MILEAGE RATE FOR USE OF PASSENGER AUTOMOBILE.—For purposes of computing the deduction under this section for use of a passenger automobile, the standard mileage rate shall be the rate determined by the Secretary, which rate shall not be less than the standard mileage rate used for purposes of section 213.”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by this section shall apply to miles traveled after the date of the enactment of this Act.

### SEC. 3. MANDATORY E-FILED BY EXEMPT ORGANIZATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 6033 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by redesignating subsection (n) as subsection (o) and by inserting after subsection (m) the following new subsection:

“(n) MANDATORY ELECTRONIC FILING.—Any organization required to file a return under this section shall file such return in electronic form.”.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Paragraph (7) of section 527(j) of such Code is amended by striking “if the organization has” and all that follows through “such calendar year”.

(c) INSPECTION OF ELECTRONICALLY FILED ANNUAL RETURNS.—Subsection (b) of section 6104 of such Code is amended by adding at the end the following: “Any annual return required to be filed electronically under section 6033(n) shall be made available by the Secretary to the public as soon as practicable in a machine readable format.”.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), the amendments made by this section shall apply to taxable years beginning after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(2) TRANSITIONAL RELIEF.—

(A) SMALL ORGANIZATIONS.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—In the case of any small organizations, or any other organizations for which the Secretary of the Treasury or the Secretary's delegate (hereafter referred to in this paragraph as the “Secretary”) deter-

mines the application of the amendments made by this section would cause undue burden without a delay, the Secretary may delay the application of such amendments, but such delay shall not apply to any taxable year beginning on or after the date 2 years after of the enactment of this Act.

(ii) SMALL ORGANIZATION.—For purposes of clause (i), the term “small organization” means any organization—

(I) the gross receipts of which for the taxable year are less than \$200,000; and

(II) the aggregate gross assets of which at the end of the taxable year are less than \$500,000.

(B) ORGANIZATIONS FILING FORM 990-T.—In the case of any organization described in section 511(a)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 which is subject to the tax imposed by section 511(a)(1) of such Code on its unrelated business taxable income, or any organization required to file a return under section 6033 of such Code and include information under subsection (e) thereof, the Secretary may delay the application of the amendments made by this section, but such delay shall not apply to any taxable year beginning on or after the date 2 years after of the enactment of this Act.

### SEC. 4. MODIFICATION OF RULES RELATING TO DONOR ADVISED FUNDS.

(a) ALLOWANCE OF TAX-FREE CHARITABLE DISTRIBUTIONS FROM INDIVIDUAL RETIREMENT ACCOUNTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Clause (i) of section 408(d)(8)(B) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking “or any fund or account described in section 4966(d)(2)”.

(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by this subsection shall apply to distributions made in taxable years beginning after December 31, 2018.

(b) RETURN DISCLOSURES.—

(1) DISTRIBUTIONS.—Subsection (k) of section 6033 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended—

(A) in paragraph (2), by striking “and” at the end;

(B) in paragraph (3), by striking the period at the end and inserting a comma; and

(C) by adding at the end the following new paragraphs:

“(4) list the total number of such funds which were in existence for the 36-month period ending at the close of such taxable year,

“(5) list the total number of funds described in paragraph (4) which made at least 1 grant during the period described in such paragraph, and

“(6) set forth—

“(A) whether such organization has a publicly available policy with respect to funds which are inactive, dormant, or do not make distributions during the period described in paragraph (4),

“(B) a description of the organization's policy for responding to funds described in subparagraph (A) or a statement that no such policy is in effect, and

“(C) whether such organization regularly and consistently monitors and enforces compliance with the policy described in subparagraph (A) with respect to such funds.”.

(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by this subsection shall apply to returns for taxable years beginning after December 31, 2019.

### SEC. 5. MODIFICATION OF THE TAX RATE FOR THE EXCISE TAX ON INVESTMENT INCOME OF PRIVATE FOUNDATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 4940(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking “2 percent” and inserting “1 percent”.

(b) ELIMINATION OF REDUCED TAX WHERE FOUNDATION MEETS CERTAIN DISTRIBUTION REQUIREMENTS.—Section 4940 of such Code is amended by striking subsection (e).

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to taxable years beginning after the date of the enactment of this Act.

By Mr. CORNYN (for himself, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. PERDUE, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mrs. FISCHER, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. BLUNT, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, and Mr. DAINES):

S. 1480. A bill to protect law enforcement officers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I come to the floor to talk about Police Week and some legislation we have introduced to honor and support our men and women in blue called, not surprisingly, the Back the Blue Act. With regard to the comments of my friend from Illinois, who was bemoaning the fact that there didn't seem to be bipartisan legislation that could come to the floor of the Senate, be debated, voted on, and passed with concurrence of the House of Representatives and the President's signature, I note that, actually, there is a lot we could be doing together.

I have been on the floor a number of times describing the humanitarian and security crisis at our southern border. That is something we could work together to address. I have introduced bipartisan and bicameral legislation with my friend and colleague HENRY CUELLAR at the House of Representatives that would address that humanitarian crisis and, I believe, take big steps toward stopping it. That is something we could do together.

I know the Democratic whip from Illinois doesn't particularly like the idea that President Trump is nominating highly qualified people for the judiciary and for executive branch nominations—the types of people we are voting on today and will vote on tomorrow. Obviously, that is not high on his agenda, but I submit that there are a lot of other things we could do besides fixing this humanitarian crisis.

We could work on roads and bridges together. I know that Chairman BARRASSO of the Environment and Public Works Committee is soliciting the views of a number of Senators and is going to come to the floor, hopefully, in the next couple of months with some ideas on what that infrastructure package should look like. I actually think that is the best way to handle that.

Again, these are nonpartisan issues. Infrastructure is not a partisan issue, but figuring out how to pay for it is the biggest challenge.

I note that Ms. PELOSI, Senator SCHUMER, the Democratic leader, and the President met and talked about a \$2 trillion pricetag. Well, it seems to me that is backward. We ought to be talking about what sort of plan makes sense and where we can get the votes to build consensus on that plan rather than saying that we want to spend this much money on a plan to come.

That is why I think the committee work that is being done in the Senate, in the Environment and Public Works Committee, and, hopefully, in the House is so important. Once the Environment and Public Works Committee makes a proposal and votes that out of the committee on a bipartisan basis, then, the Senate Finance Committee will be asked to come up with a way to pay for it. That is always the part that people want to talk about the least, but it is important.

It is important we not continue to spend money we don't have and increase our deficits and debt. Rather, we need to come up with a user-fee model, which is what the gas tax is designed to do, and find a way not to pay for that infrastructure and deal with the congestion and traffic by just borrowing from Peter to pay Paul, literally just increasing the money we borrow and giving that tab to our children and grandchildren to pay back. There are a lot of really good ideas out there and ones on which I think we ought to work together.

I don't share the dystopian views of the Senator from Illinois in terms of the Senate. The Senate is not broken. It is just a matter of political will to try to work together to get beyond the petty disagreements that seem to come up every day and to just do our work. Sometimes you don't necessarily appear on TV or have your name appear in lights when you are doing that sort of hard work, but it is essential to get the Senate's work done and, indeed, to get the work of the American people done. Those are some things we could work on together if there is a political will to do so.

Mr. President, this week, tens of thousands of Americans will make their way to Washington for National Police Week, our annual opportunity to honor the brave men and women in blue who have lost their lives while protecting our communities.

Of course, this includes many officers from Texas. I am particularly proud of the Fort Worth Police Pipes and Drums Band and the Texas Department of Public Safety Pipes and Drums Corps that performed on the National Mall yesterday.

Law enforcement is a calling answered by a select few. These brave men and women have chosen a difficult and sometimes dangerous life, dedicated to upholding the law, defending our civil liberties, and protecting our cities and our neighborhoods. They wake up each morning and put on a uniform, never knowing what the day may hold. It requires a lot of courage and sacrifice—both from the officers and their families—and I am grateful for those who selflessly serve our communities each day.

Each year for Police Week, we honor the law enforcement community to remember those who have made the ultimate sacrifice. One of the most emblematic reminders of that sacrifice is the National Law Enforcement Officers

Memorial, which is here in Washington, DC. It is a beautiful tribute to the Federal, State, and local law enforcement officials who have died in the line of duty and features marble walls filled with more than 21,000 names. Each of those names represents an American hero. Sadly, this year, we add the names of 13 Texans to that memorial. These officers gave their lives in service to their communities and to our country, and we thank them and their families for their sacrifices, and we remember and honor their names.

Each year for Police Week, we pay tribute to those who go to work and never come home. We honor the lives of those we have lost. We share in the grief of their families, and we promise never to forget the stories of heroism they left behind.

While we remember the fallen this week, I hope we will also take time to consider how we can do more to support and serve those who have taken the oath to defend us.

Throughout my career in public office, I have had the pleasure of interacting with law enforcement officials from across my State and, certainly, here at the Federal level, including our incredible Capitol Police officers. I am continually impressed and inspired by their professionalism, their conviction, and their unwavering commitment to enforcing the law, and I want to ensure that they have what they need when they put on that uniform with confidence every morning.

Last Congress we made a lot of progress, and two bills that I introduced then are now law. The first is the Justice Served Act, which I introduced with my colleague Senator KLOBUCHAR, another example of bipartisan legislation. This bill provides grants to State and local governments to prosecute cold cases by making sure the newly tested DNA evidence is used to investigate and prosecute unsolved cases. The Justice Served Act helps to ensure that violent criminals are taken off the streets and brought to justice.

We also passed legislation I introduced with Senator PETERS from Michigan to authorize the Project Safe Neighborhoods program at the Department of Justice. This is a nationwide partnership among Federal, State, and local law enforcement and prosecutors who use data-driven, evidence-based, and trauma-informed practices to reduce violent crime. It is inspired by a successful program that was initiated at the State level in Texas, when I was attorney general, but the truth is it started in the Eastern District. I believe it was in Virginia. Of course, it was designed to focus on reducing gun crime and gun violence by targeting those who repetitively used firearms in the commission of violent crimes.

We were glad to use the examples in Virginia and in Texas to bring the model to the Nation and to promote this proactive and collaborative approach to prevent violence in our neighborhoods.

I am appreciative of the fact that our colleagues have seen fit to work together to pass both of these bills and of President Trump for signing those, but I know there is a lot more that we can and should do.

Today I am introducing another piece of legislation called the Back the Blue Act, which I am introducing along with our colleagues Senator CRUZ from Texas and Senator TILLIS from North Carolina. This legislation sends a strong message to the more than 900,000 law enforcement officers serving in our country that we support them and that we will not tolerate any act of violence against them, period.

In recent years, we have seen brutal and inexcusable attacks on law enforcement officers across the United States, including one in Texas that rocked our entire State.

In 2016, a man killed five police officers and injured nine others in Dallas. It was a sobering reminder of the danger these officers face every day and a call for us to take action to do more to support them.

This bill makes clear our support for these public servants who dedicate their lives to protecting and serving us. The Back the Blue Act would add stiff mandatory penalties and make it a Federal crime to kill or attempt to kill a law enforcement officer, a Federal judge, or a federally funded public safety officer. It would also make it a Federal crime to assault a law enforcement officer.

There is zero justification for attacking a police officer—none. We need to show that we value their lives, and we need to make it absolutely clear that we will hold those who carry out crimes against them accountable. The Back the Blue Act sends that message loud and clear.

I think it is important to point out that this legislation would also help make our communities stronger by allowing grant funds to be used for efforts that help foster more trust between the police and the communities they protect. This bill would better serve the men and women who work tirelessly in our communities each day.

There is no doubt in my mind that our Nation is better and safer because of the hard work and dedication of our law enforcement officials. Here in the Senate we should do all we can to help them do their job as effectively and as safely as possible. The Back the Blue Act would be a great start.

I hope my colleagues will consider this legislation and decide to support it and, more importantly, show our law enforcement across the country that we stand shoulder to shoulder with them.

By Mr. KAINE (for himself, Ms. BALDWIN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, and Ms. HIRONO):

S. 1483. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to require institutions of higher education to have an independent advocate for campus sex-

ual assault prevention and response; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President. Sexual assault is a major issue on our Nation's college campuses. In 2016, the Department of Justice found that one in four college women are sexually assaulted while in school. Alarming, the majority of these crimes will go unreported. The consequences of these crimes are often damaging to a student's mental, physical, and emotional well-being and the aftermath can drive many survivors to drop out of school.

Sexual assault survivors deserve access to a safe and supportive educational environment. I have met with students in Virginia, most recently at the University of Virginia and Virginia Tech, who have expressed the need for someone on campus to turn to for unbiased advice, guidance, and support following an assault. Given the prevalence of this issue, it is clear that our federal higher education policy must do more to prevent sexual assaults and ensure that survivors have access to and can navigate through a plethora of resources.

This is why I am pleased to reintroduce today the Survivor Outreach and Support Campus Act of 2019 or SOS Campus Act. The SOS Campus Act requires every institution of higher education that receives federal funding to designate an independent advocate for campus sexual assault prevention and response. The advocate will help students access all of the resources available to them, both on and off campus, in the wake of a sexual assault and will guide them through the process of reporting their assault if they choose to do so, acting always in the interests of the victim, not the university.

The SOS Campus Act requires that the confidential advocate is responsible for ensuring that survivors, regardless of whether they decide to report the crime, have access to emergency and follow-up medical care, guidance on reporting assaults to law enforcement, medical forensic or evidentiary exams, crisis intervention, and information on their legal rights. The advocate will also conduct a public information campaign on campus to inform students of their services, and train other university staff to provide information to students about the advocate.

I am proud to reintroduce this legislation with Senators BALDWIN, HIRONO and FEINSTEIN, which would ensure all college students across our country have access to a supportive advocate for sexual assault survivors. It is our responsibility as public servants to advocate relentlessly for reforms to prevent sexual assault and protections for survivors. I strongly encourage my colleagues in the Senate to consider this legislation when we consider reauthorization of the Higher Education Act.

By Mr. MANCHIN:

S. 1486. A bill to amend title 11, United States Code, to include certain

pension as administrative expenses in bankruptcy, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, today I am introducing the Prioritizing Our Workers Act, which will make changes to the current bankruptcy code, requiring companies going through bankruptcy proceedings to pay unpaid vested benefits, like workers' pensions, before they pay out other claims against them.

I firmly believe that no one should be denied their pension because their employer goes bankrupt. Hard-working men and women across the country go to work every day for years, paying into these pension plans each paycheck with the expectation that one day they can retire and provide for their families.

Companies offering pension plans made promises to their workers and need to live up to those promises, no matter what else happens to that company financially.

In West Virginia, we are far too familiar with coal and steel companies leaving their workers out to dry in this way. This is absolutely unacceptable. That is why I am introducing this bill, and I look forward to my fellow Senators joining me to support and protect pensions across this country.

By Mr. UDALL (for himself and Mr. WYDEN):

S. 1488. A bill to improve the integrity and safety of interstate horseracing, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

Mr. UDALL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 1488

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

#### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Racehorse Doping Ban Act of 2019".

#### SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) INTERSTATE OFF-TRACK WAGER; HORSEMEN'S GROUP; HOST RACING ASSOCIATION; OFF-TRACK BETTING SYSTEM.—The terms "interstate off-track wager", "horsemens' group", "host racing association", and "off-track betting system" have the meanings given those terms in section 3 of the Interstate Horseracing Act of 1978 (15 U.S.C. 3002).

(2) VETERINARIAN-CLIENT-PATIENT RELATIONSHIP.—The term "veterinarian-client-patient relationship" has the meaning of that term as used in the Principles of Veterinary Medical Ethics of the American Veterinary Medical Association (as in effect on the date of the enactment of this Act).

#### SEC. 3. INDEPENDENT ANTI-DOPING ORGANIZATION FOR INTERSTATE HORSE-RACING.

(a) IN GENERAL.—There shall be an independent anti-doping organization with responsibility for ensuring the integrity and safety of horseraces that are the subject of interstate off-track wagers.

(b) DUTIES.—The duties of the independent anti-doping organization referred to in subsection (a) with respect to horseraces described in that subsection are the following:

(1) Developing, publishing, and maintaining rules with respect to—

(A) substances, methods, and treatments that may not be administered to a horse participating in such a horserace;

(B) substances, methods, and treatments that may be administered to a horse participating in such a horserace in the context of a veterinarian-client-patient relationship; and

(C) the use of substances, methods, and treatments permitted under subparagraph (B), including rules with respect to the period before a horserace (which may not be less than 24 hours before a horserace) during which a horse may no longer receive such substances, methods, and treatments.

(2) Implementing programs relating to anti-doping education, research, testing, and adjudication to prevent any horse participating in a horserace described in subsection (a) from racing under the effect of any substance, method, or treatment that could affect the performance of the horse (other than a substance, method, or treatment described in subparagraph (B) of paragraph (1) administered during a time period that is permitted under subparagraph (C) of that paragraph).

(3) Excluding from participating in any horserace described in subsection (a) any person that the independent anti-doping organization or a State racing commission determines—

(A) has violated a rule with respect to a substance, method, or treatment that may not be administered to a horse participating in such a horserace under subparagraph (A) of paragraph (1);

(B) has violated 3 or more times a rule with respect to a substance, method, or treatment permitted under subparagraphs (B) and (C) of that paragraph that has the ability to affect the performance of a horse; or

(C) is subject to a suspension from horseracing activities by any State racing commission.

(c) DEADLINE.—The independent anti-doping organization referred to in subsection (a) shall publish the rules required by subsection (b) not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(d) SUSPENSION OF EXCLUSION PERIOD.—The independent anti-doping organization referred to in subsection (a) may—

(1) suspend a period of exclusion from participating in a horserace imposed on a person pursuant to subsection (b)(3) if the person provides substantial assistance to the organization or other persons that results in the discovery of—

(A) a violation of a rule published under subsection (b) by another person; or

(B) a violation of Federal or State law by another person; and

(2) reinstate all or part of a period of exclusion imposed on a person and suspended under paragraph (1) if the person fails to provide substantial assistance described in that paragraph.

(e) CONSULTATIONS.—In developing, publishing, and maintaining rules under subsection (b)(1), the independent anti-doping organization referred to in subsection (a) may consult with State racing commissions, host racing associations, horsemen's groups, and other interested persons.

(f) TRANSITION RULE WITH RESPECT TO FUROSEMIDE.—During the 2-year period beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act, the independent anti-doping organization referred to in subsection (a) shall permit the use of furosemide in a horse partici-

pating in a horserace described in subsection (a) if—

(1) the horse is 3 years old or older; and

(2) the use of furosemide—

(A) complies with the requirements of the document entitled "ARCI-011-020 Medications and Prohibited Substances" published by the Association of Racing Commissioners International, Inc.; and

(B) is within the context of a veterinarian-client-patient relationship.

(g) DESIGNATION OF ORGANIZATION.—The independent anti-doping organization designated pursuant to section 701 of the Office of National Drug Control Policy Reauthorization Act of 2006 (21 U.S.C. 2001) shall serve as the independent anti-doping organization referred to in subsection (a).

#### SEC. 4. CONSENT REQUIRED FOR ACCEPTANCE OF INTERSTATE OFF-TRACK WAGERS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—On and after the date of the enactment of this Act, a host racing association may conduct a horserace that is the subject of an interstate off-track wager, and an interstate off-track wager may be accepted by an off-track betting system, only if consent is obtained from the independent anti-doping organization referred to in section 3(a).

(b) REQUIREMENT FOR AGREEMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—A host racing association shall obtain the consent required by subsection (a) of the independent anti-doping organization referred to in section 3(a) pursuant to an agreement entered into between the association and the organization that specifies the terms and conditions relating to such consent, including—

(A) compliance with the rules published under section 3(b); and

(B) payments to the organization to defray the costs of carrying out the duties of the organization under this Act.

(2) DEFRAYAL OF COSTS.—The independent anti-doping organization referred to in section 3(a) shall ensure that all of the costs incurred by the organization in carrying out the duties of the organization under this Act are defrayed pursuant to agreements entered into under paragraph (1).

### SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

#### SENATE RESOLUTION 211—RECOGNIZING THE AVIATION CADET MUSEUM IN EUREKA SPRINGS, ARKANSAS, AS "AMERICA'S NATIONAL AVIATION CADET MUSEUM"

Mr. BOOZMAN (for himself and Mr. COTTON) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources:

S. RES. 211

Whereas, in 1994, former Aviation Cadet and United States Air Force First Lieutenant Errol Severe founded the Aviation Cadet Museum;

Whereas the flying cadet and succeeding aviation cadet programs served as the primary production source of nearly 500,000 United States Air Force pilots, navigators, and bombardiers from 1917 to 1961;

Whereas the bravery, courage, dedication, and heroism of United States aviators from across the Air Corps and Army Air Forces were critical factors in defeating the enemies of the United States during World War I and World War II;

Whereas the Aviation Cadet Museum in Eureka Springs, Arkansas, exists to exclu-

sively preserve and promote an understanding of the role of aviation cadets in the 20th century; and

Whereas the Aviation Cadet Museum is dedicated to celebrating the spirit of the United States and recognizing the teamwork, collaboration, patriotism, and courage of the individuals who trained and fought and the individuals on the homefront who mobilized and supported the national aviation effort: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate recognizes the Aviation Cadet Museum in Eureka Springs, Arkansas, as "America's National Aviation Cadet Museum".

#### SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 16—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF CONGRESS THAT THE TREATY ON THE NON-PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS (NPT) CONTINUES TO MAKE AN INVALUABLE CONTRIBUTION TO UNITED STATES AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY, AND NOTING FORMER SENATOR RICHARD G. LUGAR'S INDISPENSABLE CONTRIBUTIONS TO INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AND REDUCING NUCLEAR WEAPONS-RELATED RISKS

Mr. MERKLEY (for himself, Mr. YOUNG, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. PAUL, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. BRAUN, Mr. BROWN, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. CARDIN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. SMITH, and Mrs. FEINSTEIN) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. CON. RES. 16

Whereas the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) opened for signature 50 years ago on July 1, 1968;

Whereas the United States and the former Soviet Union averted a catastrophic nuclear exchange during the October 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, which led to a series of bilateral and multilateral agreements to lessen the chance of nuclear war, including the NPT;

Whereas President John F. Kennedy predicted in 1963 that as many as 25 countries would acquire nuclear weapons by 1970 absent a treaty to control nuclear weapons;

Whereas the United States Senate provided its advice and consent to the NPT on March 13, 1969, with a vote on ratification of 83 to 15;

Whereas the NPT has grown to include 191 State Parties, making an irreplaceable contribution to international security by preventing the spread of nuclear weapons;

Whereas former Senator Richard G. Lugar made indispensable contributions to reducing nuclear weapon risks, most notably through his leadership in standing up the Cooperative Threat Reduction Program (commonly referred to as the "Nunn-Lugar Program"), which eliminated 7,600 nuclear weapons in the former Soviet Union;

Whereas Senator Lugar successfully secured the advice and consent of the Senate to the Treaty between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms, signed at Prague April 8, 2010, and entered into force February 5, 2011 (commonly known as the "New START Treaty");

Whereas Article III of the NPT obligates each nonnuclear weapon state to the NPT to conclude a Safeguards Agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to verify treaty compliance, 174 of which are

Comprehensive Safeguards Agreements crafted to detect the diversion of nuclear materials from peaceful to non-peaceful uses;

Whereas the 2018 Department of Defense Nuclear Posture Review affirms, “The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) is a cornerstone of the nuclear nonproliferation regime. It plays a positive role in building consensus for non-proliferation and enhances international efforts to impose costs on those that would pursue nuclear weapons outside the Treaty.”;

Whereas the success of the NPT has and will continue to depend upon the full implementation by all State Parties of the Treaty’s three mutually reinforcing pillars: non-proliferation, access to peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and disarmament;

Whereas, over the past half century, the United States has exhibited leadership in strengthening each of the NPT’s three pillars for the global good, including—

(1) reducing its nuclear weapons stockpile by more than 85 percent from its Cold War heights of 31,225 in parallel with equally massive reductions of the Russian Federation’s stockpile through bilateral coordination;

(2) cooperating with Kazakhstan, Ukraine, and Belarus to facilitate the surrender of nuclear weapons on their soil after the fall of the Soviet Union—leading to each country’s accession to the NPT as nonnuclear weapons states;

(3) providing voluntary contributions to the IAEA to promote peaceful nuclear activities exceeding \$378,000,000 since 2010, including activities that help in the treatment of cancer and other life-saving applications; and

(4) extending deterrence to United States allies in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), Japan, and the Republic of Korea—which is an unmistakable demonstration of the United States commitment to collective security;

Whereas heightened geopolitical tensions in recent years have made cooperation on nonproliferation and arms control issues with the Russian Federation more challenging;

Whereas a range of actions by the Government of the Russian Federation has led to a deterioration in bilateral relations with the United States, including Russia’s brazen interference in the 2016 United States presidential elections, its violation of the Treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Elimination of Their Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles (commonly known as the “INF Treaty”), signed at Washington, D.C., December 8, 1987, and entered into force June 1, 1988, its use of a chemical nerve agent in an assassination attempt against Sergei Skripal and his daughter Yulia in the United Kingdom in March 2018, its illegal annexation of Crimea, its invasion of Eastern Ukraine, and its destabilizing actions in Syria;

Whereas, within a difficult environment, preserving agreements that continue to contribute to United States and global security, particularly the New START Treaty, is important, and that to that end, the Department of State confirmed in February 2018 that Russia had met New START’s Central Treaty Limits and stated that “implementation of the New START Treaty enhances the safety and security of the United States”;

Whereas United States efforts to reduce dangers associated with nuclear arsenals through ambitious arms control agreements with both the Russian Federation and the People’s Republic of China would advance United States and global security, adding to

the benefits of stability and transparency provided by existing agreements.

Whereas, in a March 2018 speech, President Vladimir Putin of the Russian Federation unveiled details of new kinds of strategic nuclear weapons under development, including hypersonic nuclear weapons, nuclear-powered cruise missiles, and multi-megaton nuclear torpedoes shot from drone submarines that may be accountable under the New START Treaty;

Whereas the Russian Federation erroneously claimed that the United States may have not reached New START Treaty central limits by February 5, 2018, as is mandated by the Treaty;

Whereas the Bilateral Consultative Commission (BCC) is the appropriate forum for the Parties to engage constructively on any New START Treaty implementation issues that arise; and

Whereas the collapse of the INF Treaty and expiration of the New START Treaty would lead to the absence of any binding, bilateral treaty or agreement governing United States and Russian nuclear forces, which account for 90 percent of those currently in existence globally, for the first time since 1972: Now, therefore be it

*Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That it is the sense of Congress that—*

(1) the United States should continue to encourage all States Party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) to comply fully with the Treaty;

(2) the United States should maintain support for the IAEA through its assessed and voluntary contributions and promote the universal adoption of the IAEA Additional Protocol;

(3) the United States should—

(A) consider extending the New START Treaty, within the context of wider enhancement of strategic stability between the United States and the Russian Federation and provided the Treaty continues to advance United States national security;

(B) assess whether Russia’s recently announced nuclear capabilities should be accountable under the New START Treaty, and raise the issue directly with the Russian Federation;

(C) conclude an interagency process to consider an extension of the New START Treaty and to engage with the Russian Federation on the full range of strategic stability issues and other arms control and nonproliferation issues;

(D) begin negotiations with the Russian Federation on an agreement to address the massive disparity between the nonstrategic nuclear weapons stockpiles of the Russian Federation and of the United States and to secure and reduce nonstrategic nuclear weapons in a verifiable manner; and

(E) consider the consequences of the New START Treaty’s expiration in 2021 in relation to the insights it provides into the location, movement, and disposition of current and future Russian strategic systems;

(4) the United States strongly condemns the Russian Federation’s violations of the INF Treaty and its noncompliance with its other arms control commitments and treaty obligations, and urges the Russian Federation to come back into full compliance;

(5) in responding to the Russian Federation’s deployment of INF-range systems, advocate for those defense and deterrence steps which preserve NATO alliance cohesion and are aimed at averting an arms race on the European continent;

(6) pursuit of a verifiable and comprehensive arms control agreement with the Russian Federation and the People’s Republic of China, which may capture strategic and non-strategic nuclear weapons capabilities,

would enhance United States and global security by building upon other treaties, agreements, and transparency measures that reduce nuclear risk; and

(7) the United States should continue to encourage opportunities for cooperation with other nuclear weapon possessing states to reduce the salience, number, and role of nuclear weapons in their national military strategies.

#### AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I have 10 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 BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

The Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, May 15, 2019, at 9:30 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled “Oversight of financial regulators.”

#### COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

The Committee on Environment and Public Works is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, May 15, 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 Wednesday, May 15, 2019, at 10:15 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

#### COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

The Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, May 15, 2019, at 9:30 a.m., to conduct a hearing on pending legislation and the following nominations: James A. Crowell IV, and Jason Park, both to be an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia, Ron A. Bloom, of New York, and Roman Martinez IV, of Florida, both to be a Governor of the United States Postal Service, Dale Cabaniss, of Virginia, to be Director of the Office of Personnel Management, and Michael Eric Wooten, of Virginia, to be Administrator for Federal Procurement Policy.

#### COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

The Committee on Indian Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, May 15, 2019, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a business meeting.

#### COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

The Committee on Indian Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, May 15, 2019, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing on pending legislation.

#### COMMITTEE ON RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

The Committee on Rules and Administration is authorized to meet during

the session of the Senate on Wednesday, May 15, 2019, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing entitled, "Oversight of the U.S. Election Assistance Commission."

COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS AND  
ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, May 15, 2019, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON SCIENCE, OCEANS,  
FISHERIES, AND WEATHER

The Subcommittee on Science, Oceans, Fisheries, and Weather of the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, May 15, 2019, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON WATER AND POWER

The Subcommittee on Water and Power of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources is to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, May 15, 2019, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I have a request for one committee to meet during today's session of the Senate. It has the approval of the Majority and Minority leaders.

Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committee is authorized to meet during today's session of the Senate:

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

The Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, May 15, 2019, at 6 p.m., to conduct a hearing on pending military nominations.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Christian Braunlich, an Air Force defense fellow in Senator SULLIVAN's office, be granted floor privileges for the remainder of the Congress.

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

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that my legislative fellow, Adam Bradlow, be granted floor privileges until the end of July of 2019.

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

APPOINTMENT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. For the information of the Senate, the Chair makes the following announcement:

The President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives, pursuant to the provisions of Section 201(a)(2) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, have appointed Dr. Phillip Swagel as Director of the Congressional Budget Office, effective June 3, 2019, for the term expiring January 3, 2023.

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, MAY 16,  
2019

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m., Thursday, May 16; further, that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, morning business be closed, and the Senate proceed to executive session and resume consideration of the Vitter nomination.

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

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M.  
TOMORROW

Mr. GARDNER. If there is no business to come before the Senate, I ask that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 7:30 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, May 16, 2019, at 10 a.m.

CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by the Senate May 15, 2019:

THE JUDICIARY

KENNETH KIYUL LEE, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE UNITED STATES CIRCUIT JUDGE FOR THE NINTH CIRCUIT.