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Senate

The Senate met at 3 p.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 Master, we find shelter in Your shadow, for You are our refuge and fortress.

Lord, we place our trust in You. Rescue our Senators from the forces that seek to threaten freedom. Remind our lawmakers that nothing is impossible for You. Be with them this day as they strive to serve You and country.

We call on You because You have promised to answer us, so satisfy our longings with Your saving power.

Lord, use us all to help heal the wounds of a divided nation. We pray in Your strong 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.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HAWLEY). The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business for which time I might consume, and my guess is it will be about 15 minutes.

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

TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, first of all, my usual 1-minute speech after I open the Senate.

Last week, I spoke about consistent congressional oversight, the checks and balances of government, Congress is to make sure that the executive

branch of government faithfully executes the laws under the Constitution.

In that speech, I talked about how the Democrats have ignored their own party's use of Russian and Ukrainian Government connections to undermine Trump. I noted how the Democrats' action literally fit their own definition of collusion.

Congress ought to conduct aggressive oversight. It is a constitutional demand. However, if you want to be taken seriously in this body and by the American public, you have to be very consistent. Of course, I am pointing out some inconsistencies by the other political party.

When Democrats ignore their own leadership collusion with foreign governments, yet investigate the President after alleging he did the same, that is a lack of consistency and creates doubts about credibility.

WHISTLEBLOWER PROGRAMS IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2019

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, on another subject, I recently introduced the Whistleblower Programs Improvement Act of 2019, a bipartisan bill, and I have the support of the bipartisan whistleblowers caucus.

This legislation strengthens whistleblower protection for whistleblowers working in a variety of key sectors, including our securities and commodities industries and the foreign service.

There has been a lot of talk about government whistleblowers lately that is very appropriate. It is important to remember that many of our whistleblower laws are there to protect just ordinary average Americans who don't work in government at all. Many of the groups helped by this bill work in private industry. In some cases, they are investors or businesspeople who have been on the receiving end of financial fraud.

In other cases, they are employees, like stockbrokers, traders, investment

advisers, administrative professionals, and other support staff, who see activities in the course of their work that they know are outright wrong, and these good people decide to speak out. Speaking out, many times, causes you to eventually seek whistleblower protection.

Among these brave whistleblowers are people like the three employees at Merrill Lynch who had evidence that between 2009 and 2015 their company was misusing customer cash. Now, just think how lucky these savers were who were helped by whistleblowers willing to come out and say a wrong has been committed.

They did it this way: The whistleblowers told the Security and Exchange Commission what they knew. In doing so, they provided information critical to an investigation of the company's practices. That investigation uncovered multiple violations of Federal rules.

Among other things, the Securities and Exchange Commission found the company was not depositing cash in reserve accounts as law required. Instead, the company was using tricky accounting maneuvers to free up billions of dollars per week and then using that money to finance its own trading practices. In the process, it is quite obvious the company was putting its customers' cash at risk.

The Securities and Exchange Commission said: "Had Merrill Lynch failed in the midst of these trades, the firm's customers would have been exposed to a massive shortfall in the reserve account."

The information provided by whistleblowers led to a successful enforcement action, which involved an admission of wrongdoing by the company and a \$415 million settlement.

Now, getting back to the importance of whistleblowers. If these whistleblowers hadn't stepped forward, then, who knows, those shady accounting practices might still be going on this

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



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very day instead of having been stopped—stopped cold. Investors might still be facing the same unnecessary risks.

Now, there are plenty of examples from the commodities industry as well—people like Edward Siedle, a whistleblower who informed the Commodity Futures Trading Commission that JPMorgan Chase was failing to disclose conflicts of interest with some of its clients. Because Mr. Siedle decided to speak out about what he knew, the government collected hundreds of millions of dollars in settlements.

Whistleblowers like Mr. Siedle and the employees at Merrill Lynch deserve our gratitude, and they deserve our support. They help the Security and Exchange Commission and the Commodity Futures Trading Commission to do their job, and they help to promote transparency. With transparency comes accountability—in this case, for our financial system.

I will tell you something else they deserve. They deserve assurance that when they put their jobs and their reputation on the line, they will not be fired just for trying to do the right thing.

They deserve to know that if the government recovers money because of their disclosures, they will be able to get a decision on their award application in a timely fashion. Currently, whistleblowers don't have these assurances.

Last year, despite strong objections that I raised in a brief to the Supreme Court in the case of *Digital Realty v. Somers*, the Court ruled that a whistleblower who reports violations of our Nation's securities laws is protected from retaliation not all the time but only when he or she discloses the wrongdoing directly to the SEC.

Because of this ruling, if a whistleblower in the securities industry reports a concern to a supervisor at their place of work without also going to the SEC, they can be fired without any recourse; in other words, fired for the so-called crime they did, and what did they do? They did nothing more than what you might call the crime of committing truth. They have no legal protection or means of getting their job back.

That is not what Congress intended when it created the current Security and Exchange Commission Whistleblower Program, and that was done back in 2010. It is not what I intended when I voted for that whistleblower protection.

That law was supposed to protect whistleblowers who report wrongdoing. It was supposed to prevent them from being fired without just cause.

This decision has far-reaching implications that potentially affect others beyond those working in the securities industry.

Because the commodities whistleblower program was established through the same public law as the Security and Exchange Commission pro-

gram, that program incorporates many of the same provisions, including similar language to that which the Supreme Court ruled on during the *Digital Realty* case.

That means whistleblowers in yet another program face the prospects of having anti-retaliation provisions Congress put in place a decade ago suddenly yanked away from them. That is unacceptable to me. It is a scenario that should be unacceptable to every Member of this body who cares about keeping our financial system very strong, protecting the investor.

My bill prevents the Supreme Court ruling from becoming the status quo. It makes it clear that whistleblowers who report concerns about possible violations of our Federal securities and commodities laws are fully protected, whether they take their concerns to the Security and Exchange Commission or to the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, or to anyone else in their company who they reasonably believe has the ability to address their concerns. That is what companies should want. They should want it anyway, to keep their public respectability.

It is also a commonsense goal that we ought to be seeking, and it is commonsense.

When an employee tells his or her company about a concern, it gives the company a chance to investigate and address the concerns, and, if necessary, to self-report any problems to the Federal regulators.

Companies that come clean and self-report almost always receive reduced penalties. That is an outcome that is better for the company, and it is obviously better for the investors.

On another matter, my bill addresses concern for securities and commodities whistleblowers. I said before that if the government recovers money as a result of a whistleblower's disclosure, the whistleblower deserves at least an initial decision concerning their award application and to do it in a timely fashion. Unfortunately, my office has heard of far too many cases where whistleblowers have had to wait years to get a decision from the Securities and Exchange Commission after they apply for an award, and you apply for the award after you make the case for the government. Waiting that long is unacceptable. A year should be more than enough time for regulators to reach an initial determination regarding an award application.

My bill makes the 1-year standard law for both the Securities and Exchange Commission and the Commodity Futures Trading Commission whistleblowers. If the agency takes longer than a year to reach an initial decision, the whistleblower office must notify the chairman and the whistleblower of the cause for the delay.

Recently, I had the chance to sit down with Securities and Exchange Commission Chairman Clayton to discuss these changes. My staff worked

closely with the Securities and Exchange Commission and the Commodity Futures Trading Commission to craft the language. Now I urge all of my colleagues to support change, as well.

In addition to these changes, my bill irons out other differences between the Securities and Exchange Commission and the Commodity Futures Trading Commission whistleblower programs and ensures that whistleblowers reporting to both of these bodies have access to the same judicial remedies.

It also enables the Commodity Futures Trading Commission to hold more in the consumer protection fund. That is the fund used to pay out its awards to the whistleblower, and it allows the Commodity Futures Trading Commission to use money from the fund to teach stakeholders about the opportunities that are available to them through the whistleblower program.

Finally, my bill addresses a critical gap in protections provided to Foreign Service employees through the Whistleblower Protection Act. Due to a drafting error in the law, the Office of Special Counsel has stated that it doesn't have the authority to investigate instances of possible retaliation against Foreign Service workers when the retaliation comes in the form of a poor performance evaluation. That is an important task of the Office of Special Counsel and an important protection that Congress has afforded to other government whistleblowers. The Foreign Service office's people should have that as well. My bill closes that gap and makes it clear that Foreign Service workers should receive those same protections.

In closing, this bill contains commonsense changes. It reinforces and extends protections that Congress already granted in the past and ensures that whistleblowers working in different industries who make similar kinds of disclosures are equally treated and equally protected under the law. It also tells the Supreme Court of the United States: You didn't get it right. That is something I am certain we can all get behind—straightening out the Supreme Court when they don't follow congressional intent.

The bipartisan coalition of support for this bill is a strong testament to that. I thank my original cosponsors, Senators BALDWIN, DURBIN, and ERNST, for their enthusiastic support of this legislation. When it comes before the Senate for a vote, I urge all of my colleagues to do the same.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

PROVIDING FOR THE USE OF THE CATAFALQUE SITUATED IN THE EXHIBITION HALL OF THE CAPITOL VISITOR CENTER IN CONNECTION WITH MEMORIAL SERVICES TO BE CONDUCTED IN THE HOUSE WING OF THE CAPITOL FOR THE HONORABLE ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS, LATE A REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE STATE OF MARYLAND

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Con. Res. 27.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the concurrent resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 27), providing for the use of the catafalque situated in the Exhibition Hall of the Capitol Visitor Center in connection with memorial services to be conducted in the House wing of the Capitol for the Honorable Elijah E. Cummings, late a Representative from the State of Maryland.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the concurrent resolution.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the concurrent resolution be agreed to and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 27) was agreed to.

(The concurrent resolution is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

BUSINESS BEFORE THE SENATE AND APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, this week the Senate has several opportunities to make headway on important matters facing our country.

First, we will tend to a pending treaty protocol on the accession of a new member to NATO and reaffirm the importance of the alliance to the security of U.S. interests around the world. Then, we will consider yet another of the President's well-qualified nominees to the diplomatic corps. But while the Senate can take care of some of these matters on their own, much of the pressing business of the American people requires coordination with our colleagues across the Capitol.

Unfortunately, the only thing that seems to really inspire House Democrats these days is their obsession with overturning the results of the 2016 election.

In the weeks since the Speaker of the House gave in to her far-left Members' demands for an impeachment inquiry, she and other prominent House Democrats have insisted over and over and over that impeachment will not stop them from making real progress on legislation.

They say their 3-year-old impeachment parade doesn't have to block traf-

fic and bring other important priorities to a standstill. That is what they have been saying, but actions speak louder than words. We have yet to see any actual indication that House Democrats intend to make good on that commitment.

For months, we have heard the Speaker claim that she would like to get to yes on the USMCA. We have heard that her caucus is "making progress," but nearly a year after this landmark agreement with Mexico and Canada was announced, the most significant update to the North American trade policy in a generation is still waiting for the House to take action. Billions of new dollars in economic growth and 176,000 new American jobs are still waiting on House Democrats.

And that is not all. So far, even something as completely basic as funding our Armed Forces—funding our men and women in uniform—has met the same fate. Democrats have elected to stall it and block it in order to pick fights with the White House. Notwithstanding our bipartisan, bicameral agreement to wrap up the appropriations process in good faith, Senate Democrats voted a few weeks ago to block funding for the Department of Defense. No critical resources for U.S. servicemembers, no predictable planning process for our commanders, no pay raise for our all-volunteer Armed Forces—none of that was allowed to travel through the Senate because our Democratic colleagues just don't care for the occupant of the White House.

Ironically, many of these same colleagues of ours have spent recent days making loud pronouncements on U.S. foreign policy. By the sound of their comments, it almost sounds as if they are coming around to Republicans' long-held views on the necessity of American leadership all around the world. But, once again, actions speak louder, and thus far our Democratic colleagues have not even been willing to get past partisanship for the sake of job No. 1—funding our military.

So this week we will offer our Democratic colleagues a clear test. Are all the declarations that they are willing to work on important legislation just empty talk or will Senate Democrats finally do their part to move the appropriations process forward?

Soon we will vote on advancing a package of domestic funding legislation. As I said last week, I am grateful to Chairman SHELBY and Senator LEAHY for their continued conversations and hopeful they can produce a substitute amendment that will fund a number of urgent domestic priorities. Then, once we complete that work, we will vote to move forward the funding for our national defense—two big votes, two big votes, two big opportunities for our Democratic friends to show the country whether their party's impeachment obsession leaves them any room at all for the pressing business of the American people.

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 2644

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The leader is correct.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2644) to impose sanctions with respect to Turkey, and for other purposes.

Mr. McCONNELL. In order to place the bill on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I object to further proceedings.

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

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

PROTOCOL TO THE NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY OF 1949 ON THE ACCESSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Calendar No. 5, Treaty document No. 116-1, Protocol to the North Atlantic Treaty of 1949 on the Accession of the Republic of North Macedonia.

Pending:

McConnell amendment No. 946, to change the enactment date.

McConnell amendment No. 947 (to amendment No. 946), of a perfecting nature.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

HEALTHCARE

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, I want to tell you a quick story about a woman from Atlanta. Her name is Dawn Jones. Dawn bought what is commonly referred to in the insurance industry as a short-term health insurance plan. She brought it from the Golden Rule Insurance Company,

which is a unit of UnitedHealth, and she needed it because she needed some coverage in between jobs. She was then diagnosed with breast cancer, and she went through a heartbreaking experience, trying to get her insurance company to cover her for her \$400,000 medical bill.

In the end, she could not get her short-term health insurance plan to cover her breast cancer treatments, and here is the reason why. The insurer didn't need to cover preexisting conditions. Short-term plans do not need to cover things we traditionally think of as healthcare insurance today. The protections of the Affordable Care Act require that insurance cover you regardless of whether you are diagnosed with a serious disease, but short-term plans don't need to cover you for those things.

This short-term plan didn't cover her breast cancer, despite the fact that she wasn't diagnosed with breast cancer until after she signed up for the plan. So you may ask: Why is that a preexisting condition if she wasn't diagnosed with breast cancer until she was on this short-term plan?

Well, the insurer in this case made a very innovative argument. It said that she actually had the cancer before she signed up for insurance. So even though she didn't know she had cancer and even though she hadn't been diagnosed with cancer, because she technically had cancer before she got the insurance plan, she had a preexisting condition, and, thus, they would not cover her.

This is a pretty typical story about what happens on these short-term insurance plans in this country. They are more commonly referred to these days as junk insurance plans because, for millions of Americans who sign up for short-term insurance, they find out that it really doesn't cover much of anything.

One Golden Rule plan excludes pregnancy and provides a lifetime maximum benefit of \$250,000. That is, by the way, an incredibly low amount of lifetime coverage—\$250,000. One hospital stay for a serious illness can be over \$250,000. And the icing on the cake—this particular junk plan from Golden Rule doesn't cover a hospital room or nursing services for patients admitted on a Friday or Saturday. So good luck if you get sick on a Friday or Saturday because you are not going to get coverage on those 2 days of the week. These are junk plans because they don't cover what you need, and you, by and large, don't find out about that until you actually need the insurance.

How about a gentleman from San Antonio who actually had his short-term plan for about 6 years? He had been paying it and paying it for 6 years. Because they are technically short-term plans, he was renewing them over and over and over again, and when he was diagnosed with kidney disease, they wouldn't cover him because they went

back to his medical records and found out that he had some blood work done earlier that had shown the initial signs of kidney disease, but he wasn't diagnosed until later on.

What they said—just as they did for the woman in Atlanta—was this: Because you had signs of kidney disease when you were insured with us a year ago, we are not going to cover you now because, technically, you are on a new plan.

He had been getting a plan every 6 months every year. He didn't have any gaps in insurance, but because he technically was signing up for short-term plan after short-term plan, he didn't get covered for his kidney disease.

Over and over, we hear these stories about individuals who go on these junk plans and then find out that they can't get insured for anything—can't get insured for hospital stays on Fridays and Saturdays, can't get insured for mental health treatment, no prescription drug benefits, no coverage for maternity, and all sorts of backbending activity to try to stop people from getting coverage for illnesses.

Yet these plans are becoming more and more prolific. Why is that? The reason is that the Trump administration is using an innovative method to try to get more Americans to sign up for these junk plans, and that is what I wanted to come to the floor and talk about today.

These junk plans are a nightmare for people who get on them and then find themselves on the outside of coverage. When you sign up for health insurance, you basically think it is going to cover a set of things like hospital stays on weekends and coverage for your cancer diagnosis, but these junk plans don't cover those things.

The administration has decided to use a section of the Affordable Care Act that was designed to strengthen our healthcare system and, instead, use it to weaken the healthcare insurance system by providing for more and more of these junk plans.

Here is a little bit of legislative history. There is a section of the ACA that was set up so that you could apply to the State for a waiver to improve coverage. The waiver says that you can do some innovative things in the ACA so long as you prove that whatever you are going to do is going to provide health coverage that is just as comprehensive as what is required under the ACA, that you are not going to cost consumers any more than what they are paying under the ACA, that the number of people who are insured under the ACA in your State isn't going to go down—it is going to stay stable or go up—and you are not going to increase the Federal deficit.

Well, President Trump, in October of 2018, issued new guidance that essentially guts all of those protections for these waivers. President Trump basically says that these short-term insurance plans can be approved, even if they cost people more, even if they

don't cover things like preexisting conditions, and even if they result in fewer people getting insurance.

This October 2018 guidance allowed for these junk plans to be sold in more States to more consumers. Even worse, the 2018 guidance said that these junk plans could be sold side by side with the Affordable Care Act plans right on the same web page, disguising the fact that some plans would actually cover you for your preexisting conditions and others wouldn't.

So, today, we have more and more of these junk plans available to individuals and more people who are vulnerable to all of the old abuses that used to happen left and right in the healthcare insurance system, largely to people who have pretty serious illnesses.

Now, 130 million Americans have a preexisting condition. In my State, over a half million people have some sort of preexisting condition. If they sign up for one of these junk plans—either because they were marketed the plan under the belief that it would cover them or by mistake because they didn't notice the difference between the ACA-regulated plans and the junk plans on the website that they went to—they are at risk of not getting covered for their preexisting condition.

It gets even worse than that because what economists tell us is that these junk plans, which cover very little, are admittedly going to be attractive to some people who are presently pretty healthy. Young people and people who don't have any preexisting conditions may sign up for those junk plans because it doesn't really matter to them at the time that they don't get coverage for much at all; the junk plans are going to have prices that are lower, in most instances, than the plans that cover basic healthcare services. In the short term, that might be OK for the people who are relatively healthy until, of course, they get sick and find out that their junk plan doesn't cover anything. But for the people who have preexisting conditions, who can't sign up for the junk plans, and who need to be on the plans that are regulated by the Affordable Care Act, their premiums are going to skyrocket.

This is health insurance 101. As more healthy people go to the junk plans, leaving behind on the Affordable Care Act plans folks who have these preexisting conditions, their prices will go up.

The Trump administration's junk plan rule is, frankly, bad news for a lot of people who are on junk plans if and when they actually need healthcare insurance, but it is also really terrible news for the 130 million Americans who have preexisting conditions, who are likely going to see their insurance rates skyrocket.

Next week we are going to have a vote on the floor of the U.S. Senate, a vote on a resolution of disapproval for the administration's junk plan guidance. I have listened for a long time to

Members of the Senate on both sides of the aisle talk about how the one thing we agree on is that we need to protect people with preexisting conditions, and though many of our Republican colleagues might not support the Affordable Care Act, they do agree that we should support people with preexisting conditions, which I generally read to mean that we should make sure we don't pass legislation and we don't let the administration do anything that will make it even harder than it already is to live with a cancer diagnosis or a diagnosis of serious heart disease.

Yet it is completely clear that the Trump administration's guidance is going to make life a lot worse for people with preexisting conditions, for those who go on the junk plans, and for those who stay behind.

Here is a quote from an article in *The Atlantic* magazine, which did a summary of these junk plans and what they are like and, frankly, how important they are to insurance companies. The article says that these short-term junk plans "make up a high-profit portion" of the insurance industry's business.

They are largely designed to rake in premiums, even as they offer little in return. And even when they do pay for things, they often provide confusing or conflicting protocols for making claims. Collectively, short-term plans can leave thousands of people functionally uninsured or underinsured without addressing or lowering real systemwide costs.

That is the story of junk plans. They are a pretty good deal for the insurance industry, which is why they have been pushing the Trump administration to allow more of these junk plans to be sold. They are a good deal for the insurance companies because ultimately they don't require the insurance companies to pay out a lot in benefits, but they ultimately make a ton for the insurance companies in the premiums they collect.

It is time for everybody in this body who has stood up and said that they support individuals with preexisting conditions to vote that way. Next week, we will have an opportunity to stop in its tracks the Trump administration's rule allowing for more of these junk plans to be sold to consumers. Because we know the House of Representatives will join us, we now have the chance to actually do something about it and stop this erosion of healthcare for people with preexisting conditions before it is too late.

I get that the country and this Congress are rightly consumed with the ongoing scandal surrounding the impeachment inquiry and the recent heartbreaking, unconscionable events in Syria, but that doesn't mean folks in our States are as concerned with those headline-grabbing issues as we are. They still have to make their budgets balance every single month, and they are deeply worried—at least those families I talked to in Connecticut who are still struggling with serious illnesses—about our ability to

make sure the protections for preexisting conditions, which were a lifeline for millions of Americans when we passed the Affordable Care Act, are not undermined by this President. We have a chance to step up and do something about it next week.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. ERNST). Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The Democratic leader is recognized.

APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, before I get into my main remarks on Syria, I just heard the majority leader, Leader MCCONNELL, say that he wants to see if we can do appropriations bills, that he will see if the Democrats want to legislate. Give me a break. Since we have started to legislate, we have been waiting for 6 months, 9 months. It is well-known in the country that the Senate is the legislative graveyard, that Leader MCCONNELL has not put on the floor bill after bill on major issues that affect the country and that demand attention. Most everybody knows that he is proud that he is the Grim Reaper. So now, in his asking if the Democrats want to legislate, it is all up to Leader MCCONNELL.

On the appropriations bills, of course, we want to legislate when it is being done in a fair way. There are some bills that came out of the Appropriations Committee in a bipartisan way. I think there are four of them that the leader is thinking of putting on the floor, and we would like to move forward on those and have a vigorous process as we go forward.

There are certain bills that were not done with any consultation—the taking of money out of things like MILCON and HHS and putting it for a wall that he knows the Democrats will not go for. Those kinds of things we can't legislate until they become bipartisan, until we work together. There are certain bills—HHS, Defense, MILCON, DHS—that we can't move forward on until we have some bipartisan agreement. Yet, on the bills on which there is agreement, we would be happy to move forward. Of course, that doesn't solve the problem.

After that happens, our House colleagues—Speaker PELOSI, Chair LOWEY—have since suggested that there be a 302(b) conference because even the 302(b)s are different than these bills, and that is the right place to go once the Senate passes these less controversial bills.

I hope we can move forward. I hope we can. The first package of bills—four of the five—is not controversial. The fifth, they didn't even bring to the

floor of the Committee on Appropriations—MILCON. Yet, on those four, moving forward would be a fine thing. Hopefully, we could work out an amendment process whereby Members could offer amendments.

So we will finally legislate after 9 months, not just move judges and other appointees, and that is a good thing. I am glad that Leader MCCONNELL has finally, maybe, felt the pressure and wants to legislate.

TURKEY AND SYRIA

Madam President, let's go to Syria.

Saturday night, President Trump announced on Twitter that he was reversing his decision to host next year's G7 summit at his golf resort in Doral, FL. The President's original decision was the textbook definition of self-dealing—an outrageous move that provoked immediate and rightful condemnations. Over the weekend, multiple outlets reported that the President decided to back down only after hearing of intense opposition from members of his own party, many of whom told him privately they would not defend him on the issue.

It is obvious to almost everyone in America that you don't suggest a resort that you own as the place to have a conference. It makes no sense. Is the President so interested in making a few extra dollars—reports are that he brags what a multibillionaire he is—that he would risk violating the rules and laws of this country, the emoluments clause? It makes no sense.

It is unfortunate that this wasn't the only decision that made no sense. There is an obvious parallel between the President's decision about the G7 and his decision to precipitously withdraw our forces from Syria. Both were done in a sort of whimsical way whereby, from all reports, the President didn't consult with the experts in this latter case—with the military, the State Department, and the CIA.

Both have resulted in condemnation from across the political spectrum. In fact, last week, over 120 House Republicans voted in favor of the resolution criticizing the President's Syria policy. Leaders MCCARTHY, SCALISE, and CHENEY are hardly moderates, in the middle, who always seek compromise. These are pretty hard-nosed people, and they voted to condemn it, so it must be pretty bad. Of course, it is. Former military commanders and some of the President's staunchest allies in the Senate have echoed those sentiments.

Just like the President reversed course on the G7 after a torrent of criticism from his own party, President Trump must dramatically and drastically rethink his policy in Syria, which is far more dangerous because of one word above all else—"ISIS." By his abruptly having pulled troops out of northern Syria, the President has betrayed and deserted our partners and

allies and has created a security vacuum that our longest standing adversaries—Iran, Putin, and Assad—are exploiting. He put American lives in danger by letting hardened ISIS fighters escape captivity and regroup.

As American troops leave Kurdish areas, videos show Kurdish locals hurling rotting vegetables and shouting “America lies.” That is painful. Do you know to whom it is the most painful? Our soldiers who fought alongside the Kurds. The Kurds sacrificed some of their own people so that Americans wouldn’t have to die.

One leading Russian newspaper, which is, no doubt, part of the Putin propaganda machine, ran a column this week that proclaimed Russia’s unexpected triumph in the Middle East and that Putin won the lottery. Meanwhile, public reports suggest that at least 200 people with suspected links to the Islamic State have escaped the displacement camp in northeast Syria as a result of the Turkish invasion, and we in New York know better than anyone what a small group of bad, bad terrorists—evil terrorists—can do in untold damage to our homeland.

This policy is reckless, unthought out, and dangerous. It has been 3 weeks since the announcement of the President’s decision, and he has yet to articulate any plan for what happens next. As a 5-day pause on hostilities comes quickly to an end tomorrow, every Member of this Chamber ought to be asking: What is President Trump’s strategy to secure the enduring defeat of ISIS? How does the President plan to find the escaped ISIS prisoners? How does he plan to fix this mess? These ISIS people are dangerous and can create a problem right here in our homeland.

This morning, according to the New York Times, the President is now considering leaving a small force in eastern Syria. We need to know if that is true. If so, how many? What would be the force’s mission and for how long? Maybe the most pressing question is, How would a deployment in eastern Syria secure ISIS prisoners and help track down those who have escaped? This presents such a great danger to our country.

The President is flitting from one idea to the next and has no coherent, apparent strategy. His own Cabinet officials have yet to even agree on a time to brief the Senators on the administration’s plan. We have been waiting, and we want to hear from the top people—Secretary Esper, Secretary Pompeo, and CIA Director Haspel. This is serious stuff. The Congress has to be briefed. We are worried the reason we are not being briefed is that there is no strategy and that these three people who are in charge of major portions of the American Government—the military, the CIA, the diplomatic corps—don’t have any idea what the President is up to.

The quickest, simplest, and most powerful way to send that message to

the President would be for the Senate to take up and pass the bipartisan House resolution on Syria. Last week, I asked for the Senate’s consent to take it up, but unfortunately it was blocked. We are going to keep going back to it.

It makes a difference when my Republican colleagues stand up to the President. That can affect him more than anything else, so they shouldn’t duck it or be allowed to duck it. When the Republicans pressure the President, as they did on the G7, he considers changing course. So, when it comes to our national security, vital matters of foreign policy, and, yes, especially when it comes to the Constitution, the rule of law, or the integrity of our democracy, the Republicans must put the country over the party.

On Syria and the fight against ISIS, that means Leader McConnell and Senate Republicans should let us vote on the House resolution criticizing the President’s withdrawal.

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

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

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

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

TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I rise this afternoon to talk about the question of impeachment, which, of course, is being debated across the country.

Evidence continues to mount regarding actions the President has taken. Of course, this issue is not only worthy of debate but also worthy of inquiry and review and even debate and discussion here in the Senate.

From the Mueller report to the recent revelations regarding the President’s dealing with Ukraine and its President, evidence indicates that the President is not only willing to take actions which, in my judgment, amount to an abuse of power—in fact, I think the behavior of the President on the phone call with the Ukrainian President was a textbook case of abuse of power. Apparently, he wants to enlist others to defend the indefensible—this behavior—and has said other things that are troubling to so many Americans.

I think it is important to provide some historical perspective on impeachment, and I will seek to do some of that today. This is by no means a full review of the history, but I think it is important to talk about some of the questions our Founders were wrestling with.

Our Founders grappled with many different questions as they debated the

Constitution itself, particularly the nature and the power of the Office of the President of the United States. As our Founders debated how to hold the President accountable during the 1787 Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia, Elbridge Gerry said as follows regarding the issue of impeachment: “A good magistrate will not fear [impeachments]. A bad one ought to be kept in fear of them.”

Consistent with Gerry’s remarks, our Constitution provides an impeachment process for “Treason, Bribery, or other high Crimes and Misdemeanors.” At the time of the drafting, our Founders’ understanding of “high Crimes and Misdemeanors” was informed by centuries of English legal precedent.

We know, as Alexander Hamilton explained in Federalist No. 65, impeachment should stem from “abuse or violation of some public trust.” I will say it again: “abuse or violation of some public trust.” Informed by this history, Congress has consistently interpreted the phrase broadly to mean “serious violations of the public trust”—that was one understanding—and has explained that “the phrase refers to misconduct that damages the state and the operations of governmental institutions, and is not limited to criminal misconduct.” That is an important distinction—“not limited to criminal misconduct.”

There is no requirement for a President to engage in a quid pro quo. Any kind of quid pro quo arrangement is not required for impeachment, although it is certainly an impeachable offense to engage in that kind of conduct. Rather, our Constitution merely requires “abuse or violation of some public trust,” as Hamilton spoke to.

Since Special Counsel Mueller issued his report on Russian interference in the 2016 election and, more recently, as testimony has emerged about President Trump’s conduct toward Ukraine, I have attempted to assess how President Trump’s actions fit in our historical and current understanding of what “high Crimes and Misdemeanors” means.

This is an undertaking that must be done in a considered manner and after reviewing all of the relevant information that is available. But I am increasingly convinced that Speaker Pelosi was correct in calling for a formal impeachment inquiry into President Trump’s conduct. A failure by Congress to pursue impeachment in the face of grave offenses by the President would be insulting to our Constitution and insulting to our values.

Let’s talk about the Ukraine example for a moment. Over the past several weeks, our Nation has been confronted by credible and detailed press reports, as well as exhaustive testimony, in some cases lasting 8 hours, 9 hours, 10 hours at a time, just for one witness, and this testimony has come from both career diplomats and State Department officials indicating that the

President has been employing his personal attorney to manage a shadow diplomacy agenda focused on personal vendettas and unfounded conspiracy theories in Ukraine.

In a telephone call with President Zelensky of Ukraine, President Trump—immediately after the Ukrainian President raised the issue of purchasing Javelins to defend his country from Russian aggression—asked the Ukrainian President to “do us a favor though” by working with his lawyer, Rudy Giuliani, and launching an investigation into a discredited conspiracy theory regarding a DNC server in Ukraine. To say that theory is discredited is an understatement. It has been debunked, so said a former Homeland Security Advisor to President Trump, among others.

President Trump also asked President Zelensky “to look into” Joe Biden’s son and explained that “a lot of people want to find out” about Biden—a political rival who, of course, is running for President.

After a memorandum of the phone call was released to the public, the House Intelligence Committee released a text message from the top U.S. diplomat in Ukraine, who indicated that he thought it was “crazy [for the President] to withhold security assistance for help with a political campaign.”

Other officials have since come forward, some even resigning because of their serious concerns over the White House’s handling of Ukraine policy. Michael McKinley, a former senior adviser to the U.S. Secretary of State, testified that he resigned for two reasons: “the failure, in my view, of the State Department to offer support to Foreign Service employees caught up in the impeachment inquiry on Ukraine, and, second, by what appears to be the utilization of our ambassadors overseas to advance a domestic political objective.” That is what Mr. McKinley, who just left the State Department, said.

Our Founders had the foresight to ensure that the power of the President was not unlimited and that Congress could, if necessary, hold the Executive accountable for abuses of power through the impeachment process. Surely, not every instance of Presidential wrongdoing merits impeachment. Using the vast powers of impeachment in a cavalier fashion would be an insult to our Constitution.

This inquiry is not simply about President Trump’s abuse of power. This inquiry is about our democracy and the values that the Founders agreed should guide our Nation.

Impeachment is not what anyone in this town would prefer. It is what our Constitution demands—demands—when an Executive abuses his or her power in a manner that “damages the state and the operations of government institutions.” That is from an earlier impeachment in the 1860s.

As Hamilton said so long ago—but so prescient—when there is an “abuse or

violation of some public trust,” we are summoned—summoned—by our constitutional duty to act.

To fail to act would be a dereliction of that duty, thereby inviting this executive and future executives to abuse that public trust with impunity. We should never do that.

H.R. 3055

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, very briefly, I wanted to highlight a story that was in today’s Wall Street Journal, entitled “As Court Case Imperils Affordable Care Act, Some States Prepare Contingency Plans.” That is the headline. The subheadline is this: “Lawmakers explore ways to preserve coverage, benefits if the health law is struck down.”

This is the opening paragraph that I will read—it is not very long, but I want to read it—from the story today:

A federal appeals court decision that could strike down the Affordable Care Act as soon as this month has rattled officials in several states who are pursuing legislation to preserve some coverage in the absence of any Trump administration contingency plan.

Lawmakers in states including Louisiana, Nevada, New Mexico and California have passed bills or are reviewing action aimed at dealing with the fallout if the ACA is overturned.

That is from the very beginning of the article. I will not go further, other than to say that this is a grave matter. If a Federal appeals court were to rule in favor of the moving party on appeal—or I should say the moving party at the beginning of the suit—and affirm the district court, what would happen if that were the case? The patient protection in the Affordable Care Act would be wiped out, and it would cause not just chaos but would take away protections from people like those who have protections for a pre-existing condition and would also take healthcare coverage away from millions, if not tens of millions.

This is a critically important matter, and it deserves and warrants the attention of Members of the Senate and the House as well.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, thank you very much for the opportunity to speak to my colleagues on the Senate floor this evening.

I really come to talk about something that shouldn’t be momentous, shouldn’t be unusual, and should be routine around here. Unfortunately, as you and I have experienced, it is not routine. What is not routine is the U.S. Senate, the U.S. Congress getting its job done. Part of that job is the appropriations process, and it ought to be something we do every year on a routine basis.

Every city council, every county commission, and every school board in the State of Kansas every year passes a budget and determines the spending for that school board or that city council

or for that county commission. Yet, when we come to Washington, DC, over the years, it has become problematic and it has become difficult for us to do one of the basic things of a functioning government: to determine the amount of money to be spent, in broad terms, and then to fill in the spaces with what we should do for individual Agencies and Departments within that budget agreement.

We are poised for a vote tomorrow, a motion on cloture. What that means to folks in Kansas is this: Should we begin the process of debating, amending, and passing appropriations bills? I am here to urge my colleagues, both Republicans and Democrats, to vote yes on cloture, to bring us to the point in which we can have the debate.

I wouldn’t have thought when I came to the U.S. Senate that one of my primary tasks, at least as I saw it, would be to try to help this place function and have an appropriations process that is thoughtful, that establishes priorities, that allows every Member of the Senate to have input. That is something we ought to be able to accomplish without a lot of work, and I hope that we demonstrate that we can do that in the vote tomorrow.

The appropriations process has involved an Appropriations Committee of which you, Mr. President, and I serve on. Many of the bills have been considered and voted on. There will be four bills as a package in this motion to invoke cloture that will be presented to the full Senate tomorrow.

For the subcommittee that I chair—Commerce, Justice, Science—that appropriations bill will be a part of that cloture package. Agriculture, something hugely important to my constituents in Kansas and across the country, Interior, Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development—those four bills have passed unanimously out of the Senate Appropriations Committee in September. Every Republican on the committee and every Democrat on the committee voted in favor of them.

I know in my own circumstances, on the Commerce, Justice, Science bill, I worked closely—perhaps a better way to say it is that the ranking member of our subcommittee, the Senator from New Hampshire, Mrs. SHAHEEN, and I worked closely together—to try to find a path by which we could avoid those issues that would prevent us from finding an agreement that allowed our bill to move forward. I am pretty certain that occurred in the other three subcommittees.

Presented tomorrow is an opportunity for the Senate to take up 4 appropriations bills—4 out of 12—and those 4 are ones that were unanimously agreed to by the Appropriations Committee. I commend Chairman SHELBY and Vice Chairman LEAHY for their efforts in the full committee to bring us together to get us in a position where we have those four bills now, soon, I hope, to be pending in front of the Senate.

Why does this matter? There is a lot of work that has gone into trying to determine what those appropriations bills should say and should contain. Certainly, how much money we spend is important, but if you sidetrack the appropriations process, you eliminate the prioritization. We need to make decisions every year on behalf of the American people. Is there something that we should spend no money on? Last year it received money but not this year. It is not enough priority for us to spend enough money on this year. Are there things we are spending money on today, this year, that are about right, and are there a few things we should spend more money on?

That is a process that involves hearings. It involves witnesses. It involves testimony. It involves other Members, the U.S. Senators, and 100 of us have the opportunity to provide input as to how much money should be spent in those various areas of the appropriations bill. Are there things that are higher priorities, programs that work better than others?

We ought to care about this from a fiscal point of view—how much money we spend. Are we on a path to get us toward greater fiscal sanity, getting our books to balance? But at the same time, in the process of doing that, are we making decisions that determine that something is more important than something else because we know we shouldn't and can't spend money on everything?

That is what the appropriations process does. Maybe we didn't get it exactly right, but allowing the bills to come to the Senate floor allows 99 of my colleagues to join me in the ability to offer amendments to change those priorities. So every Member of the Senate, on behalf of their constituents back home in their home States, ought to care about an appropriations bill being on the Senate floor.

Perhaps, this is the point when I should say that if we fail to do this, what this normally will mean is that we have what we call a CR, or a continuing resolution, meaning that we are going to fund the Federal Government next year at the same levels and in the same way as we did this year.

That lacks any kind of common sense or a basis for making a good decision. Not everything is equal. Just because we spent something last year in this amount doesn't mean it is the right amount next year. If we have been doing continuing resolutions one year after another, what that means is decisions we made about spending 3 or 4 years ago remain the priorities for next year's spending.

We ought to avoid the continuing resolution. We ought to do our work. Tomorrow's vote puts us on a path to do that. Again, we are only on that path if the Members of the Senate decide that this is something we are going to proceed to accomplish.

Fiscal order, prioritization of spending—I also think that Congress over

the years has deferred too often to Federal Agencies and Departments. I tell my constituents that I know the American people are not satisfied with the nature of Congress as an institution and perhaps not satisfied with even their own Senator or U.S. Congressman or Congresswoman, but we are the closest thing that you have to the ability to make your will known and cause and effect in Washington, DC.

Someone can visit with me and someone can visit with every U.S. Senator and have a consequence here. It is through this process, if you allow us all to participate in the legislative process, that we can take our constituents' will and bring it to Washington, DC, on their behalf.

In the absence of that, it just means the Departments, the Cabinets, the Cabinet Secretaries, the Agency heads, the Bureau chiefs, and the people who work within the bureaucracy have more say if we don't do appropriations bills than elected officials representing Kansans and the people of 49 other States.

This is a way we can bring the people of the United States into decisions made in Washington, DC. When we defer, when we do a continuing resolution, it means it is more likely that no person within the bureaucracy has any reason to pay any attention to our interests. A constituent brings me a problem and says: Something is going on at the Department of Interior, and this is what we are seeing, and this is how it affects us. Could you help solve that problem? Can you get somebody's attention at the Department of Interior? Could you get somebody's attention at the Department of Commerce?

If we don't do appropriations bills, our ability to influence people at the Department of Commerce—the power of the purse strings—disappears. It means that we have less ability not only to determine how money is to be spent but to be able to tell an Agency head or a Cabinet Secretary: This makes no sense. What you are doing to folks back home is very damaging to them. Let us explain to you.

If human nature, being what it is, says that if you are the person or if you are the organization—in this case, the U.S. Senate—that determines how much money an Agency, Department, or Cabinet Secretary gets within their realm of authority, you are going to be much more likely to listen to a Member of Congress and help us solve problems on behalf of our constituents.

The appropriations process matters greatly. I think we are poised for the opportunity to demonstrate that this place can work, it can represent the American people, and we can allow all of our colleagues to have input in the appropriations process, which has been ongoing since last year.

I hope the conclusion tomorrow by my colleagues is that this is a worthy endeavor. The U.S. Senate ought to return to the days in which we did 12 appropriations bills on an annual basis

and allowed the American people their input in the appropriations process.

PROTOCOL TO THE NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY OF 1949 ON THE ACCESSION OF NORTH MACEDONIA

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I come to the floor to express my support for ratifying the Protocol to the North Atlantic Treaty of 1949 on the Accession of North Macedonia. In light of the Kremlin's ongoing aggression against the United States, against Ukraine, and against many of our democratic allies, today's vote sends an important signal that we are serious about standing up to Moscow. A strong NATO is critical to the security of the United States, and supporting NATO's expansion is one of the most important things this body can do to protect our Nation.

This historic vote would not be happening without the Prespa Agreement between Greece and North Macedonia, which resolved the two countries' name dispute and came into force in February. I want to acknowledge the hard work of these countries, as well as the tireless efforts of American diplomats, to make Prespa a reality.

North Macedonia has already made notable contributions to the security of the U.S. and of NATO. North Macedonia has deployed more than 4,000 troops to Iraq in support of U.S. efforts there, and in 2018, North Macedonia boosted its contribution to Afghanistan by 20 percent.

It actively supports the international counter-ISIS coalition and has also supported missions in Kosovo. This history of partnership with the U.S. on important security issues speaks strongly in favor of North Macedonia's inclusion in the Alliance.

NATO is strongest when all of its members contribute, and I am glad that North Macedonia is committed to hitting the target of spending 2 percent of its GDP on defense by 2024. The government has already made great progress towards that target, and we must hold them to that promise.

I also want to stress the importance of all NATO members spending 2 percent of GDP on defense. Our allies have increased their defense spending since 2014 in response to a clear and growing threat from the Kremlin. We must work to make sure that trend continues, and we must do it as partners, not as bullies.

We must also remember that belonging to NATO is about more than military capabilities. NATO was established as a club of democracies that abide by a certain set of principles. When the Clinton administration was considering new members, former Secretary of Defense William Perry laid out some criteria for inclusion in this group: individual liberty for citizens, democratic elections, the rule of law, economic and market-based reforms, resolution of territorial disputes with neighbors, and civilian control of the military.

North Macedonia has made progress on rule of law and democracy, but more work remains to perfect the system. NATO member states should not consider this process complete and must continue supporting North Macedonia's work to fully implement its reform commitments.

Finally, admitting North Macedonia into NATO is an important step towards fully integrating the Balkans into the international institutions that contribute to peace and stability in Europe. I hope that today's vote will provide momentum for North Macedonia to open EU accession talks as well. There is unfinished work for peace in the Balkans, and the United States must remain committed to the region to resolve these long-running challenges.

The Kremlin, of course, does not want to see stability in the Balkans. It does not want to see the spread of democracy and rule of law. It does not want countries like North Macedonia to experience the peace and prosperity that integration with the West brings. That is why Russia tried to stop the Prespa Agreement with disinformation and political manipulation, and why it has vocally opposed North Macedonia's NATO accession.

With today's vote, we can make clear that no country outside the Alliance gets a veto over who gets to join NATO, especially not Russia. We can show our support for a country that has partnered with us on important security missions and is making tough but necessary reforms. We can promote stability in a critical region of the world and reduce Kremlin influence there. Most importantly, we can protect our homeland by expanding an alliance that has proven invaluable to national security.

While it is a positive step that we are voting to ratify North Macedonia's NATO accession protocol, it is also an opportune moment to take a step back and consider the Senate's treaty power more broadly.

Article 2 of the Constitution endows the President and the Senate with shared power over treaties. The President, it states, "shall have power, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, to make treaties, provided two thirds of the Senators present concur." While the Constitution does not expressly dictate a procedure for terminating treaty relationships, Senators have long asserted that the shared treaty power extends to withdrawal and therefore also requires Senate approval.

Regardless of whether the executive branch agrees with this position, what is completely unacceptable is that Senators are first learning about treaty withdrawals and threats to withdraw online or in the newspaper instead of through proactive outreach by and meaningful dialogue with the executive branch.

The stakes could not be higher. Among the three treaties President

Trump has pulled out of just this year is the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty—INF Treaty—a cornerstone of the nuclear nonproliferation regime with Russia. The Senate approved this; treaty in 1988 by a vote of 93–5.

Now, there are rumors swirling that the President will imminently pull out of the Open Skies Treaty, a multilateral arms control agreement that has been a critical element of U.S. and European security. The Senate approved that treaty in 1993 without any recorded opposition.

As with so many aspects of President Trump's foreign policy, withdrawal from Open Skies would be another gift to Vladimir Putin. Just last year, the United States conducted an extraordinary flight authorized under Open Skies and intended to reaffirm U.S. commitment to Ukraine and other partner nations. Further, when the Ukraine crisis first emerged, the United States used images collected by U.S. surveillance missions under the Open Skies Treaty to publically demonstrate that Russian forces had invaded Ukrainian territory. Withdrawing from the Open Skies Treaty would be perceived as casting us further doubt on the status of the U.S. commitment to Ukraine's security and would advance the Russian narrative that the United States is an unreliable partner in the region.

These withdrawals not only demonstrate a reckless approach to foreign policy—an approach that gratifies the Trump administration's short-term goals at the expense of our country's long-term interests—they also erode the Senate's prerogative on treaties. Given the constitutional mandate of shared responsibility for treaties between the Senate and President, along with a heightened standard for Senate advice and consent, it is inconceivable to think that unilateral treaty termination, absent any engagement whatsoever with the Senate, could be constitutionally sound, yet that is what this President is doing and what this Senate must reject.

It is in this context that we must face an unfortunate truth relevant to the continuing health of the NATO alliance, which is the constant threat that President Trump may suddenly pull the United States out of NATO altogether. It is a dangerous option the President has apparently raised with subordinates. If recent history is any guide, the fact that a U.S. withdrawal would be reckless, dangerous, and, as the former Supreme Allied Commander of NATO has said, "a geopolitical mistake of epic proportion," does not mean that the President will not pursue it.

With that in mind, it is unfortunate that Senator MCCONNELL refused to allow amendments to the North Macedonia Protocol. Had he allowed a more open process, I would have offered an amendment that would have conditioned Senate advice and consent on

the protocol to a requirement that the President not withdraw from NATO without Senate approval. While this step may not have been necessary previously, we must regretfully move in that direction to respond to President Trump and to protect against his ability and willingness to jeopardize U.S. national security through hasty and unilateral treaty withdrawals.

So, while I strongly urge my colleagues to join me in voting to ratify North Macedonia's NATO accession protocol, I must express my concern that the Senate has not yet taken any steps to prevent President Trump from pulling the United States out of NATO or other treaties absent any Senate input or approval.

Mr. CASEY. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kentucky.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the previously scheduled vote commence now.

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 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 treaties Calendar No. 5, Treaty Document No. 116–1, Protocol to the North Atlantic Treaty of 1949 on the Accession of the Republic of North Macedonia.

Mitch McConnell, David Perdue, John Cornyn, John Thune, John Hoeven, John Boozman, Thom Tillis, Steve Daines, Roger F. Wicker, Pat Roberts, John Barrasso, Richard Burr, Shelley Moore Capito, Roy Blunt, Mike Rounds, Mike Crapo, James E. Risch.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the Protocol to the North Atlantic Treaty of 1949 on the Accession of the Republic of North Macedonia shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON), the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. KENNEDY), the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI), and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS), the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. HASSAN), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ), the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW), the Senator from Massachusetts

(Ms. WARREN), and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) are necessarily absent.

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 84, nays 2, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 326 Ex.]

YEAS—84

Alexander	Ernst	Perdue
Baldwin	Feinstein	Peters
Barrasso	Fischer	Portman
Blackburn	Gardner	Reed
Blumenthal	Gillibrand	Risch
Blunt	Graham	Roberts
Boozman	Grassley	Romney
Braun	Hawley	Rosen
Brown	Heinrich	Rounds
Burr	Hirono	Rubio
Cantwell	Hoeben	Sasse
Capito	Hyde-Smith	Schumer
Cardin	Inhofe	Scott (FL)
Carper	Johnson	Scott (SC)
Casey	Jones	Shaheen
Cassidy	Kaine	Shelby
Collins	King	Sinema
Coons	Lankford	Smith
Cornyn	Leahy	Sullivan
Cortez Masto	Manchin	Tester
Cotton	Markey	Thune
Cramer	McConnell	Tillis
Crapo	McSally	Udall
Cruz	Menendez	Van Hollen
Daines	Merkley	Warner
Duckworth	Moran	Wicker
Durbin	Murphy	Wyden
Enzi	Murray	Young

NAYS—2

Lee

Paul

NOT VOTING—14

Bennet	Kennedy	Stabenow
Booker	Klobuchar	Toomey
Harris	Murkowski	Warren
Hassan	Sanders	Whitehouse
Isakson	Schatz	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 84, the nays are 2.

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

The Senator from North Dakota.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that following leader remarks, on Tuesday, October 22, the time until 12 noon be equally divided between the two leaders or their designees. I further ask that all postcloture time on Treaties Calendar No. 5, Treaty Document No. 116-1, expire at 12 noon tomorrow and that the Senate vote on the ratification of the treaty.

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. HOEVEN. 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. Without objection, it is so ordered.

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

VOTE EXPLANATION

• Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, unfortunately I was unable to attend the rollcall vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the Protocol to the North Atlantic Treaty of 1949 on the Accession of the Republic of North Macedonia. Had I been able to attend, I would have voted in support of cloture.●

OCEAN PLASTIC POLLUTION

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, oceans, lakes, and rivers across our planet are filled with debris that litters shorelines and threatens public health, navigation safety, wildlife, and the environment. This debris causes serious damage to the health of ocean ecosystems and marine life and, due to ocean currents, often travels great distances and poses threats to nations that are not responsible for the mismanagement of such waste.

One of the most common forms of marine debris is plastic, which is abundant in our everyday lives, often in the form of single-use packaging. Countless seabirds, sea turtles, seals, and other marine animals are killed each year after ingesting plastic or getting entangled in it. And most commonly used plastics never fully degrade but, rather, break down into smaller and smaller pieces, known as microplastics, which pose unique problems of their own.

The negative health, environmental, and economic impacts of marine pollution, both to countries that discharge waste and to those on whose shorelines such waste washes up, are steadily mounting. Billions of pounds of plastic and other debris can be found in our oceans and waterways.

In the Senate version of the fiscal year 2020 Department of State and Foreign Operations appropriations bill, which was reported unanimously by the Appropriations Committee on September 26, the committee recommended funding to respond to this global threat. In this bill, the committee directs the Department of State and the U.S. Agency for International Development to redouble their diplomatic and programmatic support for regional and global efforts to address this urgent problem, including through grants, technical assistance, and new multilateral mechanisms, and provides \$10 million to support such efforts.

While the funding provided is minuscule compared to what is needed, the committee's intent is clear. The United States must increase its leadership and visibility on this issue and become more engaged in efforts to prevent and mitigate the impacts of marine debris. The committee recognizes that the United States cannot address this problem alone. Nothing connects countries of the world more than oceans and waterways, and strong international cooperation is necessary to guarantee their conservation for generations to

come. It is imperative that the United States increase its engagement both bilaterally and multilaterally to tackle this challenge.

It is not an understatement to say that what I am speaking about—the protection of the oceans, lakes, and rivers of our planet—is essential to our existence. I hope other Senators will join me, Senator WHITEHOUSE, and others who have taken up this cause in calling for additional resources to address ocean plastic pollution.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING AMELIA ISLAND KAYAK EXCURSIONS

• Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, as chairman of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, each week it is my honor to recognize a small business that exemplifies family values and dedication to its community. I am proud to recognize Amelia Island Kayak Excursions of Fernandina Beach, FL, as the Senate Small Business of the Week.

Established in 2013, Amelia Island Kayak Excursions is the product of the Bullington family's love of kayaking in the Amelia Island inlands. Six years ago, Mark Bullington and his two children, Amber and Aaron, decided to turn their hobby into their livelihood. Their love of Florida and commitment to responsible stewardship of the Earth led the Bullingtons to share their passion with visitors and their community.

Showcasing Florida's beauty, Amelia Island Kayak Excursions offers both kayak and boat expeditions throughout wildlife-rich Egan's Creek, Lofton's Creek, and more of Florida's coastal environment. Tours range from 2 to 5 hours, and overnight tours are offered for experienced kayakers. Additionally, Amelia Island Kayak Excursions offers private boat tours for small groups to observe the diverse local wildlife.

Since its founding, the tour guides of Amelia Island Kayak Excursions have continued to learn more about Florida's unique environment and community. Over the span of his career, Mark has logged more than 4,500 miles kayaking and canoeing, gaining extensive knowledge about the scenic ecosystem in the process. Amber not only leads tours but is also involved with the local business community through the Nassau County Chamber of Commerce and, in 2018, was recognized as the chamber's Ambassador of the Year. Aaron is certified through the University of Florida as a Florida Master Naturalist, a certification which lends itself easily to his role as tour guide.

As a well-established tour service, Amelia Island Kayak Excursions has become an essential part of the economic framework of Fernandina Beach. This business's influential role has not gone unnoticed. In 2017, Amelia Island

Kayak Excursions was recognized by the Nassau County Chamber of Commerce as the Small Business of the Year and received the Bold City Best Water Sports Award. In addition to its accomplishments, Amelia Island Kayak Excursions is dedicated to giving back to the community through engagement with local charities and corresponding fundraisers. To educate the next generation about Florida's wildlife, the Bullingtons have partnered with an after school program by gifting students a free kayak trip if they meet their academic goals.

Amelia Island Kayak Excursions is a great example of a community-oriented small business. I am proud to honor and congratulate Amelia Island Kayak Excursions for its hard work and dedication to the Floridian landscape. I wish the entire team at Amelia Island Kayak Excursions the best of luck and success in all of their future endeavors.●

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE RECEIVED DURING ADJOURNMENT

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Under the authority of the order of the Senate of January 3, 2019, the Secretary of the Senate, on October 18, 2019, during the adjournment of the Senate, received a message from the House of Representatives announcing that the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. RASKIN) had signed the following enrolled bill:

S. 1196. An act 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".

Under the authority of the order of the Senate of January 3, 2019, the enrolled bill was signed on October 18, 2019, during the adjournment of the Senate, by the President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY).

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 3:03 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, 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. 1815. An act to require the Security and Exchange Commission, when developing rules and regulations about disclosures to retail investors, to conduct investor testing, including a survey and interviews of retail investors, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3624. An act to amend the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to require the disclosure of the total number of domestic and foreign employees of certain public companies, and for other purposes.

The message further announced that the House has agreed to the following resolution:

H. Res. 635. Resolution relative to the death of the Honorable Elijah E. Cummings, a Representative from the State of Maryland.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 1815. An act to require the Securities and Exchange Commission, when developing rules and regulations about disclosures to retail investors, to conduct investor testing, including a survey and interviews of retail investors, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

H.R. 3624. An act to amend the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to require the disclosure of the total number of domestic and foreign employees of certain public companies, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bill was read the second time, and placed on the calendar:

S. 2644. A bill to impose sanctions with respect to Turkey, 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-2838. A communication from the Administrator, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the cost of response and recovery efforts for FEMA-3417-EM in the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico having exceeded the \$5,000,000 limit for a single emergency declaration; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2839. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Take-off Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments; Amendment No. 3870" (RIN2120-AA65) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 4, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2840. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Take-off Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments; Amendment No. 3872" (RIN2120-AA65) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 4, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2841. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Take-off Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments; Amendment No. 3871" (RIN2120-AA65) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 4, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2842. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Take-off Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments; Amendment No. 3869" (RIN2120-AA65) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 4, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2843. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendment of Class E Airspace and Establishment of Class E Airspace; Huntsville, AL" ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2019-0530)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 19, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2844. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendment of Class E Airspace; Haleyville, AL and Hamilton, AL" ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2019-0502)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 19, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2845. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendment of Class E Airspace; Fairmont, MN" ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2019-0471)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 19, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2846. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendment of Class E Airspace; Mattoon/Charleston, IL; and Revocation of Class E Airspace; Monticello, IL" ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2019-0529)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 19, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2847. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendment of Class C Airspace; Lafayette, LA" ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2019-0676)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 4, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2848. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendment of Area Navigation (RNAV) Routes Q-121 and Q-156; Miles City, MT" ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2019-0267)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 4, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2849. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airspace Designations; Incorporation by Reference

Amendments” ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2019-0627)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 4, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2850. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Amendment of Class E Airspace; Mount Pleasant, IA” ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2019-0472)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 4, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2851. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Amendment of Class E Airspace; St. James, MN” ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2019-0550)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 4, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2852. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Safety Zone; Lake of the Ozarks, Lake Ozark, MO” ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2019-0769)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 23, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2853. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Safety Zone for Hurricane Dorian; Coast Guard Maryland-National Capital Region Captain of the Port Zone” ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2019-0775)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 23, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2854. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Safety Zone; Unionport (Bruckner Expressway) Bridge, Westchester Creek, Bronx, NY” ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2018-1060)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 23, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2855. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Safety Zones; Sector Upper Mississippi River Annual and Recurring Safety Zones Update” ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2018-1009)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 23, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2856. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Safety Zone; Cape Fear River, Wilmington, NC” ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2019-0302)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 23, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2857. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Safety Zone; Fireworks Display, Indian River Bay, DE” ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2019-0509)) received in the Office of the

President of the Senate on September 23, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2858. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Safety Zone; New Jersey Intracoastal Waterway, Atlantic City, NJ” ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2019-0719)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 23, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2859. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Safety Zone; Incline Village Wedding Fireworks Display, Crystal Bay, Incline” ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2019-0678)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 23, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2860. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Safety Zone; 2019 Monte Labor Day Fireworks Display, Carnelian Bay, Carnelian Bay, CA” ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2019-0730)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 23, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2861. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Safety Zone; Missouri River, mile marker 117 to 116.5 Chamois, MO” ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2019-0760)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 23, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2862. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Safety Zone; Kanawha River, Charleston, WV” ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2019-0734)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 23, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2863. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Safety Zone; Newtown Creek, New York, NY” ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2019-0725)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 23, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2864. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Safety Zone; R/V POLARCUS ALIMA, Cook Inlet, Homer, Alaska” ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2019-0774)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 23, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2865. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Safety Zone; Saint Simons Sound, GA” ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2019-0794)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 1, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2866. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant

to law, the report of a rule entitled “Safety Zone; Neches River, Beaumont, TX” ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2019-0614)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 1, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2867. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Safety Zone; San Juan Harbor, San Juan, PR” ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2019-0686)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 1, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2868. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Safety Zone; Delaware River, Philadelphia, PA” ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2019-0784)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 1, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2869. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Safety Zone; Delaware Bay and River, PA” ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2019-0782)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 1, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2870. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Special Local Regulation; Tennessee River, Florence, AL” ((RIN1625-AA08) (Docket No. USCG-2019-0768)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 23, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2871. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Special Local Regulation; North Atlantic Ocean, Ocean City, MD” ((RIN1625-AA08) (Docket No. USCG-2019-0634)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 1, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2872. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Special Local Regulation; Battle of the Bridges, Intracoastal Waterway; Venice, FL” ((RIN1625-AA08) (Docket No. USCG-2019-0508)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 1, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2873. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Safety Zone; Wilmington River, Savannah, GA” ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2019-0756)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 1, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2874. A communication from the Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Northeastern United States;

Summer Flounder Fishery; Quota Transfer from NC to MA" (RIN0648-GAR-A005) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 24, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2875. A communication from the Acting Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Final Rule; 2019 Closure of the Closed Area I Scallop Access Area to General Category Individual Fishing Quota Scallop Vessels" (RIN0648-XX004) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 24, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2876. A communication from the Acting Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Final Rule; 2019 Closure of the Northern Gulf of Maine Scallop Management Area to the Limited Access General Category Fishery" (RIN0648-XG998) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 24, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2877. A communication from the Acting Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Atlantic Mackerel, Squid, and Butterfish Fishery; 2019 Illex Squid Quota Harvested" (RIN0648-XX007) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 24, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2878. A communication from the Acting Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Northeast Multispecies Fishery; Common Pool Measures for Fishing Year 2019" (RIN0648-XG900) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 24, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2879. A communication from the Acting Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Summer Flounder Fishery; Quota Transfer from NC to VA" (RIN0648-GAR-A004) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 24, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2880. A communication from the Acting Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Western and Central Pacific Fisheries for Highly Migratory Species; 2019 Bigeye Tuna Longline Fishery Closure" (RIN0648-XP002) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 24, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2881. A communication from the Acting Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Atlantic Highly Migratory Species; Atlantic Bluefin Tuna Fisheries; Closure of the General Category June through August 2019

Fishery" (RIN0648-XT013) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 24, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2882. A communication from the Acting Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery; 2019-2020 Biennial Specifications and Management Measures; Inseason Adjustments for March and April 2019" (RIN0648-BI94) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 24, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2883. A communication from the Acting Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Notice of Inseason Adjustment to 2019 International Pacific Halibut Commission Fishery Regulations" (RIN0648-WCR-A001) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 24, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2884. A communication from the Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery; 2019-2020 Biennial Specifications and Management Measures; Inseason Adjustments for June 2019" (RIN0648-BJ11) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 24, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2885. A communication from the Acting Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries off the West Coast States; the Highly Migratory Species Fishery; Closure" (RIN0648-WCR-A002) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 24, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2886. A communication from the Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Atlantic Highly Migratory Species; Atlantic Bluefin Tuna Fisheries; Temporary Rule; Inseason Quota Transfer (Reserve Category to Harpoon Category)" (RIN0648-XT010) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 24, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2887. A communication from the Acting Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Atlantic Highly Migratory Species; Atlantic Bluefin Tuna Fisheries; Temporary Rule; Closure of the Harpoon Category Fishery for 2019" (RIN0648-XT011) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 24, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2888. A communication from the Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Atlantic Highly Migratory Species; Atlantic Bluefin Tuna Fisheries; Temporary Rule; Closure of Atlantic Bluefin Tuna Angling Category Northern Area Trophy Fishery" (RIN0648-XT001) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 24, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2889. A communication from the Acting Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Atlantic Highly Migratory Species; Atlantic Bluefin Tuna Fisheries; Temporary Rule; Inseason General Category Retention Limit Adjustment (Remainder of June through August 2019 Subquota Period)" (RIN0648-XT007) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 24, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2890. A communication from the Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Atlantic Highly Migratory Species; Atlantic Bluefin Tuna Fisheries; Temporary Rule; Inseason Quota Transfer (Reserve Category to Harpoon Category)" (RIN0648-XT008) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 24, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2891. A communication from the Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Atlantic Highly Migratory Species; Atlantic Bluefin Tuna Fisheries; Angling Category Retention Limit Adjustment" (RIN0648-XH007) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 24, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2892. A communication from the Acting Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Atlantic Highly Migratory Species; Temporary Rule; Inseason General Category Retention Limit Adjustment (June through August 2019 Subquota Period)" (RIN0648-HMS-A001) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 24, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2893. A communication from the Acting Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Atlantic Highly Migratory Species; Atlantic Bluefin Tuna Fisheries; Closure of the Angling Category Gulf of Mexico Trophy Fishery" (RIN0648-XG950) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 24, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2894. A communication from the Acting Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Atlantic Highly Migratory Species; Temporary Rule; Swordfish General Commercial Permit Retention Limit Inseason Adjustment for Northwest Atlantic, Gulf of Mexico, and U.S. Caribbean Regions from July 1 through December 31, 2019" (RIN0648-XT002) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 24, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2895. A communication from the Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Atlantic Highly Migratory Species; Commercial Aggregated Large Coastal Shark and Hammerhead Shark Management Groups in the Atlantic; Retention Limit Adjustment" (RIN0648-XT012) received in the Office of the

President of the Senate on September 24, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2896. A communication from the Acting Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Atlantic Highly Migratory Species; Commercial Aggregated Large Coastal Shark and Hammerhead Shark Management Groups Retention Limit Adjustment” (RIN0648-XT003) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 24, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2897. A communication from the Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Ocean Perch in the Western Aleutian District of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands” (RIN0648-XY003) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 24, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2898. A communication from the Acting Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Ocean Perch in the West Yakutat District of the Gulf of Alaska” (RIN0648-XH070) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 24, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2899. A communication from the Acting Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Dusky Rockfish in the West Yakutat District of the Gulf of Alaska” (RIN0648-XH071) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 24, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2900. A communication from the Acting Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Other Rockfish in the Aleutian Islands Subarea of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area” (RIN0648-XY004) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 24, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2901. A communication from the Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Ocean Perch in the Central Aleutian District of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands” (RIN0648-XY009) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 24, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2902. A communication from the Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Reapportionment of the 2019 Gulf of Alaska Halibut Prohibited Species Catch Limits for Trawl Gear Categories” (RIN0648-XH099) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 24, 2019; to the

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2903. A communication from the Acting Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Blackspotted/Rougheye Rockfish in the Western and Central Aleutian Districts of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area” (RIN0648-XY005) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 24, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2904. A communication from the Acting Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pollock in the West Yakutat District of the Gulf of Alaska” (RIN0648-XY002) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 24, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2905. A communication from the Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Sablefish in the Bering Sea Subarea of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area” (RIN0648-XH079) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 24, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2906. A communication from the Acting Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Flatfish Exchange in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands” (RIN0648-XH046) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 24, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2907. A communication from the Acting Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Reallocation of Pollock in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands” (RIN0648-XH059) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 24, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2908. A communication from the Acting Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Kamchatka Flounder in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands” (RIN0648-XH066) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 24, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2909. A communication from the Acting Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Commercial Harvest Closure for the Snowy Grouper in the South Atlantic” (RIN0648-XS006) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 24, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2910. A communication from the Acting Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, De-

partment of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “2019 Gulf Recreational Private and For-Hire Seasons for Red Snapper” (RIN0648-XG837) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 24, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2911. A communication from the Acting Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Greenland Turbot in the Aleutian Islands Subarea of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area” (RIN0648-XG984) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 24, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2912. A communication from the Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Commercial Harvest Closure for the Golden Tilefish Commercial Hook-and-line Component in the South Atlantic” (RIN0648-XS003) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 24, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2913. A communication from the Acting Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Commercial Harvest Closure for the Blueline Tilefish in the South Atlantic” (RIN0648-XS005) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 24, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2914. A communication from the Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “2019 Recreational Harvest Closure for the Golden Tilefish in the South Atlantic” (RIN0648-XS001) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 24, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2915. A communication from the Acting Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “2018-2019 Commercial Harvest Closure for the Yellowtail Snapper in the South Atlantic” (RIN0648-XH054) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 24, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2916. A communication from the Acting Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “2019 Commercial Harvest Closure for the Other Jacks Complex in the South Atlantic” (RIN0648-XS002) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 24, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2917. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Coastal Migratory Pelagic Resources of the Gulf of Mexico and Atlantic Region; Commercial Trip Limit Reduction for Spanish Mackerel in the Atlantic Southern Zone” (RIN0648-XG732) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 24,

2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2918. A communication from the Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “2019 Gulf of Mexico Commercial Greater Amberjack Season Closure and Quota Reduction” (RIN0648-XG771) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 24, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2919. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod by Vessels Using Pot Gear in the Western Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska” (RIN0648-XG720) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 25, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2920. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod by Pot Catcher/Processors in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area” (RIN0648-XG699) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 25, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2921. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod by Vessels Using Pot Gear in the Central Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska” (RIN0648-XG733) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 25, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2922. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod by Trawl Catcher Vessels in the Central Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska” (RIN0648-XG721) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 25, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2923. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Sablefish in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area” (RIN0648-XG688) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 25, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2924. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Gulf of Alaska; Final 2019 and 2020 Harvest Specifications for Groundfish; Correcting Amendment” (RIN0648-XG471) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 3, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2925. A communication from the Acting Director of the Office of Sustainable Fish-

eries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pollock in Statistical Area 610 in the Gulf of Alaska” (RIN0648-XG013) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 9, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2926. A communication from the Acting Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Sablefish in the Western Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska” (RIN0648-XY035) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 9, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2927. A communication from the Acting Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Several Groundfish Species in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area” (RIN0648-XY034) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 9, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2928. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod by Catcher Vessels Using Hook-and-Line Gear in the Western Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska” (RIN0648-XG714) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 25, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2929. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod by Catcher Vessels Less Than 60 Feet (18.3 Meters) Length Overall Using Hook-and-line or Pot Gear in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area” (RIN0648-XG698) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 25, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2930. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod by Catcher Vessels Greater than or Equal to 60 feet Length Overall Using Pot Gear in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area” (RIN0648-XG701) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 25, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2931. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod by Non-American Fisheries Act Crab Vessels Operating as Catcher Vessels Using Pot Gear in the Western Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska” (RIN0648-XG731) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 25,

2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2932. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Inseason Adjustment to the 2019 Gulf of Alaska Pollock Total Allowable Catch Amounts” (RIN0648-XG685) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 25, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2933. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Temporary Rule to Establish Management Measures for Red Grouper in the Gulf of Mexico” (RIN0648-BI63) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 3, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2934. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “International Fisheries; Western and Central Pacific Fisheries for Highly Migratory Species; Fishing Limits in Purse Seine and Longline Fisheries; Fishing Restrictions in Purse Seine Fisheries” (RIN0648-BI78) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 3, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2935. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Final Rule to Implement Abbreviated Framework Amendment 2 to the Fishery Management Plan for the Snapper-Grouper Fishery of the South Atlantic Region” (RIN0648-BI56) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 3, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2936. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Atlantic Mackerel, Squid, and Butterfish Fisheries; Specifications” (RIN0648-XG657) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 3, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2937. A communication from the Acting Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Atlantic Highly Migratory Species; Atlantic Commercial Shark Fisheries; Temporary Rule; Inseason Quota Transfer for Blacktip Shark, Aggregated Large Coastal Sharks, and Hammerhead Shark Management Groups in the Gulf of Mexico Region” (RIN0648-XT016) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 9, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2938. A communication from the Acting Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Atlantic Highly Migratory Species; Atlantic

Bluefin Tuna Fisheries; Temporary Rule; Inseason General Category Quota Transfer and Closure (September 2019 Subquota Period)" (RIN0648-XT018) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 9, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2939. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries Off West Coast States; Coastal Pelagic Species Fisheries; Annual Specifications" (RIN0648-XG972) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 3, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2940. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Fisheries; Revised 2019 Summer Flounder Specifications" (RIN0648-XG898) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 3, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2941. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Northeast Multispecies Fishery; Adjustment of Georges Bank and Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic Yellowtail Flounder Annual Catch Limits" (RIN0648-XG833) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 3, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2942. A communication from the Acting Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Small-Mesh Multispecies Fishery, Inseason Adjustment to the Northern Red Hake Possession Limit" (RIN0648-XX010) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 9, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2943. A communication from the Acting Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries Off the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Flatfish Exchange in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands" (RIN0648-XY033) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 9, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. GRAHAM, from the Committee on the Judiciary, with amendments:

S. 2132. A bill to promote security and provide justice for United States victims of international terrorism.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first

and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Ms. CORTEZ MASTO (for herself and Mr. ROBERTS):

S. 2648. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to improve the benchmarking process for the Medicare Shared Savings Program; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MORAN (for himself, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. INHOFE, and Mr. MANCHIN):

S. 2649. A bill to amend the Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council Act of 1978 to improve the examination of depository institutions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself and Mr. BROWN):

S. 2650. A bill to amend part D of title XVIII of the Social Security Act to deliver a meaningful benefit and lower prescription drug prices under the Medicare program; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. SINEMA (for herself and Mr. BOOZMAN):

S. 2651. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide inscriptions for spouses and children on certain headstones and markers furnished by the Secretary, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. BLUMENTHAL:

S. 2652. A bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to provide that only citizens or nationals of the United States may operate trains within the United States that originate in Mexico; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. MERKLEY (for himself, Mr. MARKEY, and Ms. HIRONO):

S. 2653. A bill to prohibit funding for heads of state meetings and multilateral summits at any Trump Organization-owned property; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Ms. HARRIS, Mr. BOOKER, and Mrs. GILLIBRAND):

S. 2654. A bill to prohibit the obligation or expenditure of Federal funds for certain agreements relating to the 46th G7 Summit, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. CORNYN (for himself, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. RISCH, and Mrs. CAPITO):

S. Res. 366. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of Red Ribbon Week during the period of October 23 through October 31, 2019; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. PORTMAN (for himself and Mr. BROWN):

S. Res. 367. A resolution condemning the horrific attack in Dayton, Ohio, and expressing support and prayers for all those impacted by that tragedy; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. MCCONNELL (for himself and Mr. SCHUMER):

S. Res. 368. A resolution to authorize the production of records by the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. BLUNT (for himself and Ms. KLOBUCHAR):

S. Con. Res. 27. A concurrent resolution providing for the use of the catafalque situ-

ated in the Exhibition Hall of the Capitol Visitor Center in connection with memorial services to be conducted in the House wing of the Capitol for the Honorable Elijah E. Cummings, late a Representative from the State of Maryland; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 27

At the request of Mr. MANCHIN, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 27, a bill to amend the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 to transfer certain funds to the 1974 United Mine Workers of America Pension Plan, and for other purposes.

S. 34

At the request of Mr. CRUZ, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 34, a bill to require a report on the continuing participation of Cambodia in the Generalized System of Preferences.

S. 211

At the request of Mr. HOEVEN, the name of the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 211, a bill to amend the Victims of Crime Act of 1984 to secure urgent resources vital to Indian victims of crime, and for other purposes.

S. 229

At the request of Mr. UDALL, the name of the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 229, a bill to provide advance appropriations authority for certain accounts of the Bureau of Indian Affairs and Bureau of Indian Education of the Department of the Interior and the Indian Health Service of the Department of Health and Human Services, and for other purposes.

S. 460

At the request of Mr. WARNER, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BRAUN) was added as a cosponsor 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. 560

At the request of Ms. BALDWIN, the names of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. SMITH), the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) and the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) were added as cosponsors of S. 560, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act, the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, and the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to require that group and individual health insurance coverage and group health plans provide coverage for treatment of a congenital anomaly or birth defect.

S. 947

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 947, a bill to amend the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act to improve compensation for workers involved in

uranium mining, and for other purposes.

S. 1032

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the names of the Senator from Mississippi (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH) and the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) were added as cosponsors of S. 1032, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify the definition of income for purposes of determining the tax-exempt status of certain corporations.

S. 1180

At the request of Mr. UDALL, the name of the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1180, a bill to extend the full Federal medical assistance percentage to urban Indian organizations.

S. 1253

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Ms. ERNST) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1253, a bill to apply requirements relating to delivery sales of cigarettes to delivery sales of electronic nicotine delivery systems, and for other purposes.

S. 1300

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the names of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER), the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER), the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON) and the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1300, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint a coin in commemoration of the opening of the National Law Enforcement Museum in the District of Columbia, and for other purposes.

S. 1392

At the request of Mr. SULLIVAN, the names of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) and the Senator from Alabama (Mr. JONES) were added as cosponsors of S. 1392, a bill to direct the Comptroller General of the United States to conduct an assessment of the responsibilities, workload, and vacancy rates of suicide prevention coordinators of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

S. 1399

At the request of Mr. MERKLEY, the names of the Senator from Alabama (Mr. JONES) and the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) were added as cosponsors of S. 1399, a bill to amend title VIII of the Public Health Services Act to revise and extend nursing workforce development programs.

S. 1421

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) 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. 1590

At the request of Mr. MERKLEY, the names of the Senator from California

(Ms. HARRIS), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) and the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) were added as cosponsors of S. 1590, a bill to amend the State Department Basic Authorities Act of 1956 to authorize rewards for thwarting wildlife trafficking linked to transnational organized crime, and for other purposes.

S. 1657

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the names of the Senator from Mississippi (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH) and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) were added as cosponsors of S. 1657, a bill to provide assistance to combat the escalating burden of Lyme disease and other tick and vector-borne diseases and disorders.

S. 1728

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the names of the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO), the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) and the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1728, a bill to require the United States Postal Service to sell the Alzheimer's semipostal stamp for 6 additional years.

S. 1757

At the request of Ms. ERNST, the names of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) and the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH) were added as cosponsors of S. 1757, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the United States Army Rangers Veterans of World War II in recognition of their extraordinary service during World War II.

S. 1822

At the request of Mr. WICKER, the names of the Senator from Florida (Mr. SCOTT) and the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) were added as cosponsors of S. 1822, a bill to require the Federal Communications Commission to issue rules relating to the collection of data with respect to the availability of broadband services, and for other purposes.

S. 1827

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1827, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exclude corporations operating prisons from the definition of taxable REIT subsidiary.

S. 1838

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the names of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY), the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN) and the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS) were added as cosponsors of S. 1838, a bill to amend the Hong Kong Policy Act of 1992, and for other purposes.

S. 1908

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1908, a bill to amend the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to improve the efficiency of summer meals.

S. 1918

At the request of Mr. BOOZMAN, the name of the Senator from Alabama (Mr. JONES) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1918, a bill to amend the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to require alternative options for summer food service program delivery.

S. 2015

At the request of Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BRAUN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2015, a bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to direct the Secretary of Education to develop a plain language disclosure form for borrowers of Federal student loans, and for other purposes.

S. 2042

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2042, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the National Purple Heart Hall of Honor.

S. 2080

At the request of Ms. BALDWIN, the names of the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) were added as cosponsors of S. 2080, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to increase the number of permanent faculty in palliative care at accredited allopathic and osteopathic medical schools, nursing schools, social work schools, and other programs, including physician assistant education programs, to promote education and research in palliative care and hospice, and to support the development of faculty careers in academic palliative medicine.

S. 2085

At the request of Ms. ROSEN, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2085, a bill to authorize the Secretary of Education to award grants to eligible entities to carry out educational programs about the Holocaust, and for other purposes.

S. 2108

At the request of Mr. DAINES, the name of the Senator from Utah (Mr. ROMNEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2108, a bill to amend section 6903 of title 31, United States Code, to provide for additional population tiers, and for other purposes.

S. 2168

At the request of Mr. MURPHY, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2168, a bill to establish a student loan forgiveness plan for certain borrowers who are employed at a qualified farm or ranch.

S. 2203

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2203, a bill to extend the transfer of Electronic Travel Authorization System fees from the Travel Promotion Fund to the Corporation for

Travel Promotion (Brand USA) through fiscal year 2027, and for other purposes.

S. 2260

At the request of Mr. SULLIVAN, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2260, a bill to provide for the improvement of domestic infrastructure in order to prevent marine debris, and for other purposes.

S. 2303

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2303, a bill to allow United States citizens and legal residents to travel between the United States and Cuba.

S. 2434

At the request of Mr. PETERS, the names of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) and the Senator from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2434, a bill to establish the National Criminal Justice Commission.

S. 2491

At the request of Mr. UDALL, the names of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) and the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. SMITH) were added as cosponsors of S. 2491, a bill to terminate certain rules issued by the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Commerce relating to endangered and threatened species, and for other purposes.

S. 2496

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2496, a bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to eliminate the Medicare and disability insurance benefits waiting periods for disabled individuals.

S. 2539

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BRAUN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2539, a bill to modify and reauthorize the Tibetan Policy Act of 2002, and for other purposes.

S. 2570

At the request of Ms. SINEMA, the names of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN) and the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) were added as cosponsors of S. 2570, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to Greg LeMond in recognition of his service to the United States as an athlete, activist, role model, and community leader.

S. 2602

At the request of Mr. BURR, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2602, a bill to exclude vehicles to be used solely for competition from certain provisions of the Clean Air Act, and for other purposes.

S. 2624

At the request of Mr. PAUL, the name of the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2624, a bill to prohibit arms sales to Turkey.

S. 2641

At the request of Mr. RISCH, the names of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) and the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH) were added as cosponsors of S. 2641, a bill to promote United States national security and prevent the resurgence of ISIS, and for other purposes.

S.J. RES. 21

At the request of Mr. BRAUN, his name was withdrawn as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 21, a joint resolution proposing amendments to the Constitution of the United States relative to the line item veto, a limitation on the number of terms that a Member of Congress may serve, and requiring a vote of two-thirds of the membership of both Houses of Congress on any legislation raising or imposing new taxes or fees.

S.J. RES. 56

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the names of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) and the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) were added as cosponsors of S.J. Res. 56, a joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Department of Education relating to "Borrower Defense Institutional Accountability".

S. CON. RES. 9

At the request of Mr. ROBERTS, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Con. Res. 9, a concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that tax-exempt fraternal benefit societies have historically provided and continue to provide critical benefits to the people and communities of the United States.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself and Mr. BROWN):

S. 2650. A bill to amend part D of title XVIII of the Social Security Act to deliver a meaningful benefit and lower prescription drug prices under the Medicare program; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. DURBIN. 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. 2650

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 "Medicare Prescription Drug Savings and Choice Act of 2019".

SEC. 2. ESTABLISHMENT OF MEDICARE OPERATED PRESCRIPTION DRUG PLAN OPTION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subpart 2 of part D of title XVIII of the Social Security Act is amended by inserting after section 1860D-11 (42 U.S.C. 1395w-111) the following new section:

"MEDICARE OPERATED PRESCRIPTION DRUG PLAN OPTION

"SEC. 1860D-11A. (a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of this part, for each year (beginning with 2021), in addition to any plans offered under section 1860D-11, the Secretary shall offer one or more Medicare operated prescription drug plans (as defined in subsection (d)) with a service area that consists of the entire United States and shall enter into negotiations in accordance with subsection (c) with pharmaceutical manufacturers to reduce the purchase cost of covered part D drugs for eligible part D individuals who enroll in such a plan.

"(b) ENROLLMENT.—Notwithstanding subparagraphs (C) and (D) of section 1860D-1(b)(1), a Medicare operated prescription drug plan offered under this section shall serve as the default prescription drug plan for all part D enrollees unless another prescription drug plan is selected.

"(c) NEGOTIATIONS.—Notwithstanding section 1860D-11(i), for purposes of offering a Medicare operated prescription drug plan under this section, the Secretary shall negotiate with pharmaceutical manufacturers with respect to the purchase price of covered part D drugs in a Medicare operated prescription drug plan and shall encourage the use of more affordable therapeutic equivalents to the extent such practices do not override medical necessity as determined by the prescribing physician. To the extent practicable and consistent with the previous sentence, the Secretary shall implement negotiation and incentive strategies similar to those used by other Federal purchasers of prescription drugs to reduce the purchase cost of covered Part D drugs, and other strategies, as described in subsection (f), which may include the use of a pricing scale based on an international price index.

"(d) MEDICARE OPERATED PRESCRIPTION DRUG PLAN DEFINED.—For purposes of this part, the term 'Medicare operated prescription drug plan' means a comprehensive prescription drug plan that offers qualified prescription drug coverage and access to negotiated prices described in section 1860D-2(a)(1)(A). Such a plan may offer supplemental prescription drug coverage in the same manner as other qualified prescription drug coverage offered by other prescription drug plans.

"(e) MONTHLY BENEFICIARY PREMIUM.—

"(1) QUALIFIED PRESCRIPTION DRUG COVERAGE.—The monthly beneficiary premium for qualified prescription drug coverage and access to negotiated prices described in section 1860D-2(a)(1)(A) to be charged under a Medicare operated prescription drug plan shall be uniform nationally. Such premium for months in 2021 and each succeeding year shall be based on the average monthly per capita actuarial cost of offering the Medicare operated prescription drug plan for the year involved, including administrative expenses.

"(2) SUPPLEMENTAL PRESCRIPTION DRUG COVERAGE.—Insofar as a Medicare operated prescription drug plan offers supplemental prescription drug coverage, the Secretary may adjust the amount of the premium charged under paragraph (1).

"(f) USE OF NEGOTIATION AND BENEFIT DESIGN INCENTIVES.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—With respect to the operation of a Medicare operated prescription drug plan and in negotiating with respect to the purchase price of covered part D drugs in such plan, the Secretary shall reward value, increase appropriate use of drugs, and ensure patient safety and access to medications.

"(2) ROLE OF AHRQ.—The Director of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality,

in coordination with the Administrator of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, shall be responsible for assessing the clinical benefit of covered part D drugs and making recommendations to the Secretary regarding the negotiated prices of covered drugs and any appropriate tiering or incentive strategies under the plan. In conducting such assessments and making such recommendations, the Director shall carry out the following activities:

“(A) Consider the comparable international price of such drugs based upon the median retail list price of such drug (which shall be, as practicable, the volume-weighted price for comparable units and dosage forms) among a category of at least the following peer reference countries: Canada, the United Kingdom, France, Japan, Australia, and Germany.

“(B) Consider safety concerns and post-market data, including those identified by the Food and Drug Administration and from national health registries.

“(C) Use available data and evaluations, including from research supported by the National Institutes of Health, with priority given to randomized controlled trials, to examine clinical effectiveness, comparative effectiveness, safety, and enhanced compliance with a drug regimen.

“(D) Use the same classes of drugs developed by United States Pharmacopeia for this part.

“(E) Consider evaluations made by—

“(i) the Director under section 1013 of the Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement, and Modernization Act of 2003;

“(ii) other Federal entities, such as the Secretary of Veterans Affairs; and

“(iii) other private and public entities, which may include the Drug Effectiveness Review Project and Medicaid programs.

“(F) Consider recommendations made by the advisory committee pursuant to paragraph (3)(F).

“(G) Recommend to the Secretary those drugs in a class that provide a greater clinical benefit, including fewer safety concerns or less risk of side-effects, than another drug in the same class.

“(3) USE OF ADVISORY COMMITTEE.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish and appoint an advisory committee (in this paragraph referred to as the ‘advisory committee’)—

“(i) to review petitions from drug manufacturers, health care provider organizations, patient groups, and other entities regarding negotiated prices; and

“(ii) to recommend any changes in order to further negotiations with respect to such prices.

“(B) COMPOSITION.—Subject to subparagraph (C), the advisory committee shall be composed of 9 members and shall include representatives of physicians, pharmacists, consumers, and others with expertise in evaluating prescription drugs. The Secretary shall select members based on their knowledge of pharmaceuticals and the Medicare population. Members shall be deemed to be special Government employees for purposes of applying the conflict of interest provisions under section 208 of title 18, United States Code, and no waiver of such provisions for such a member shall be permitted.

“(C) BANNED INDIVIDUALS.—

“(i) DRUG COMPANY LOBBYISTS.—No former registered drug manufacturer lobbyist—

“(I) may be appointed to the advisory committee; or

“(II) may be employed by the advisory committee during the 6-year period beginning on the date on which the registered lobbyist terminates its registration in accordance with section 4(d) of the Lobbying Dis-

closure Act of 1995 (2 U.S.C. 1603(d)) or the agent terminates its status, as applicable.

“(ii) SENIOR EXECUTIVES OF LAW-BREAKING COMPANIES.—No former senior executive of a covered entity (as defined in clause (iii))—

“(I) may be appointed to the Advisory Committee; or

“(II) may be employed by the Advisory Committee during the 6-year period beginning on the later of—

“(aa) the date of the settlement described in item (aa) of clause (iii)(II); or

“(bb) the date on which the enforcement action described in item (bb) of such clause has concluded.

“(iii) COVERED ENTITY.—The term ‘covered entity’ means any entity that is—

“(I) a drug manufacturer; and

“(II)(aa) operating under Federal settlement including a Federal consent decree; or

“(bb) the subject of an enforcement action in a court of the United States or by an agency.

“(D) CONSULTATION.—The advisory committee shall consult, as necessary, with physicians who are specialists in treating the disease for which a drug is being considered.

“(E) REQUEST FOR STUDIES.—The advisory committee may request the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality or an academic or research institution to study and make a report on a petition described in subparagraph (A)(i) in order to assess cost-effectiveness, clinical effectiveness, comparative effectiveness, safety, and compliance with a drug regimen.

“(F) RECOMMENDATIONS.—The advisory committee shall make recommendations to the Director of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality regarding the appropriate price at which to begin negotiations on a part D drug pursuant to this section.

“(G) LIMITATIONS ON REVIEW OF MANUFACTURER PETITIONS.—The advisory committee shall not review a petition of a drug manufacturer under subparagraph (A)(i) with respect to a covered part D drug unless the petition is accompanied by the following:

“(i) Raw data from clinical trials on the safety and effectiveness of the drug.

“(ii) Any data from clinical trials conducted using active controls on the drug or drugs that are the current standard of care.

“(iii) Any available data on comparative effectiveness of the drug.

“(iv) Any other information the Secretary requires for the advisory committee to complete its review.

“(g) INFORMING BENEFICIARIES.—The Secretary shall take steps to inform part D eligible individuals not previously enrolled in a Medicare operated drug plan (including such individuals who are newly eligible to enroll under this part) regarding the enrollment of such individual in a Medicare operated drug plan in accordance with this section, including providing information in the annual handbook and adding information to the official public Medicare website related to prescription drug coverage available through this part.

“(h) APPLICATION OF ALL OTHER REQUIREMENTS FOR PRESCRIPTION DRUG PLANS.—Except as specifically provided in this section, any Medicare operated drug plan shall meet the same requirements as apply to any other prescription drug plan, including the requirements of section 1860D-4(b)(1) relating to assuring pharmacy access.”.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) Section 1860D-3(a) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-103(a)) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(4) AVAILABILITY OF THE MEDICARE OPERATED PRESCRIPTION DRUG PLAN.—A Medicare operated prescription drug plan (as defined in section 1860D-11A(d)) shall be offered na-

tionally in accordance with section 1860D-11A.”.

(2)(A) Section 1860D-3 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-103) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(c) PROVISIONS ONLY APPLICABLE IN 2006 THROUGH 2020.—The provisions of this section shall only apply with respect to 2006 through 2020.”.

(B) Section 1860D-11(g) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-111(g)) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(8) NO AUTHORITY FOR FALLBACK PLANS AFTER 2020.—A fallback prescription drug plan shall not be available after December 31, 2020.”.

(3) Section 1860D-13(c)(3) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-113(c)(3)) is amended—

(A) in the heading, by inserting “AND MEDICARE OPERATED PRESCRIPTION DRUG PLANS” after “FALLBACK PLANS”; and

(B) by inserting “or a Medicare operated prescription drug plan” after “a fallback prescription drug plan”.

(4) Section 1860D-16(b)(1) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-116(b)(1)) is amended—

(A) in subparagraph (C), by striking “and” after the semicolon at the end;

(B) in subparagraph (D), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(C) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(E) payments for expenses incurred with respect to the operation of Medicare operated prescription drug plans under section 1860D-11A.”.

(5) Section 1860D-41(a) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-151(a)) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(19) MEDICARE OPERATED PRESCRIPTION DRUG PLAN.—The term ‘Medicare operated prescription drug plan’ has the meaning given such term in section 1860D-11A(d).”.

(c) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be interpreted to supersede any other negotiation authority granted to the Secretary under Federal law with respect to prescription drug prices.

SEC. 3. IMPROVED APPEALS PROCESS UNDER THE MEDICARE OPERATED PRESCRIPTION DRUG PLAN.

Section 1860D-4(h) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1305w-104(h)) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(4) APPEALS PROCESS FOR MEDICARE OPERATED PRESCRIPTION DRUG PLAN.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall develop a well-defined process for appeals for denials of benefits under this part under the Medicare operated prescription drug plan (as defined in section 1860D-11A(d)). Such process shall be efficient, impose minimal administrative burdens, and ensure the timely procurement of medications. Medical necessity shall be based on professional medical judgment, the medical condition of the beneficiary, and other medical evidence.

“(B) CONSULTATION IN DEVELOPMENT OF PROCESS.—In developing the appeals process under subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall consult with consumer and patient groups, as well as other key stakeholders, to ensure the goals described in subparagraph (A) are achieved.”.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 366—SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF RED RIBBON WEEK DURING THE PERIOD OF OCTOBER 23 THROUGH OCTOBER 31, 2019

Mr. CORNYN (for himself, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. RISCH, and Mrs. CAPITO) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions:

S. RES. 366

Whereas the National Family Partnership started the Red Ribbon Campaign in 1988—

(1) to preserve the memory of Enrique “Kiki” Camarena, a special agent of the Drug Enforcement Administration who—

(A) served the Drug Enforcement Administration for 11 years; and

(B) was murdered in the line of duty in 1985 while engaged in the battle against illicit drugs;

(2) to commemorate the service of Special Agent Camarena to the Drug Enforcement Administration and the people of the United States; and

(3) to further the cause for which Special Agent Camarena gave his life;

Whereas the Red Ribbon Campaign is the most longstanding drug prevention program in the United States, bringing drug awareness to millions of people in the United States each year;

Whereas Red Ribbon Week is celebrated every year during the period of October 23 through October 31 by—

(1) State Governors and attorneys general;

(2) the National Family Partnership;

(3) parent-teacher associations;

(4) Boys and Girls Clubs of America;

(5) the Young Marines;

(6) the Drug Enforcement Administration; and

(7) hundreds of other organizations throughout the United States;

Whereas the objective of Red Ribbon Week is to promote the creation of drug-free communities through drug prevention efforts, education programs, parental involvement, and community-wide support;

Whereas, according to the 2018 National Drug Threat Assessment, drug poisoning deaths are the leading cause of injury death in the United States, outnumbering deaths by firearms, motor vehicle crashes, suicide, and homicide;

Whereas approximately 69,000 people died from drug overdoses in the United States in 2018;

Whereas reducing the demand for controlled substances would—

(1) curtail lethal addictions and overdoses; and

(2) reduce the violence associated with drug trafficking;

Whereas, although public awareness of illicit drug use is increasing, emerging drug threats and growing epidemics continue to demand attention;

Whereas a majority of teenagers abusing prescription drugs get those drugs from family, friends, and the home medicine cabinet;

Whereas the Drug Enforcement Administration hosts a National Take Back Day twice a year, on the last Saturdays of October and April, for the public to safely dispose of unused or expired prescription drugs that can lead to accidental poisoning, overdose, or abuse;

Whereas the number of people reporting heroin use during the past 12 months doubled between 2002 and 2018, from 404,000 to 808,000;

Whereas, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the number of deaths attributable to methamphetamine has risen every year since 2008 to a high of approximately 12,815 in 2018;

Whereas cocaine availability and use in the United States continued to rise between 2016 and 2018, with total deaths attributable to cocaine exceeding 14,600 in 2018, the highest recorded total in the 21st century;

Whereas fentanyl and the analogues of fentanyl have been devastating communities and families at an unprecedented rate, claiming more than 32,000 lives in 2018;

Whereas the presence of fentanyl poses hazards to police officers and law enforcement agents; and

Whereas parents, young people, schools, businesses, law enforcement agencies, religious institutions and faith-based organizations, service organizations, senior citizens, medical and military personnel, sports teams, and individuals throughout the United States will demonstrate their commitment to healthy, productive, and drug-free lifestyles by wearing and displaying red ribbons during the week-long celebration of Red Ribbon Week: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the goals and ideals of Red Ribbon Week during the period of October 23 through October 31, 2019;

(2) encourages the people of the United States to wear and display red ribbons during Red Ribbon Week to symbolize their commitment to healthy, drug-free lifestyles;

(3) encourages children, teens, and other individuals to choose to live drug-free lives; and

(4) encourages the people of the United States—

(A) to promote the creation of drug-free communities; and

(B) to participate in drug prevention activities to show support for healthy, productive, and drug-free lifestyles.

SENATE RESOLUTION 367—CONDEMNING THE HORRIFIC ATTACK IN DAYTON, OHIO, AND EXPRESSING SUPPORT AND PRAYERS FOR ALL THOSE IMPACTED BY THAT TRAGEDY

Mr. PORTMAN (for himself and Mr. BROWN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 367

Whereas, on August 4, 2019, a mass shooting took place in Dayton, Ohio;

Whereas the people of the United States mourn the 9 innocent lives lost in that unthinkable tragedy: Megan Betts, Monica Brickhouse, Nicholas Cumer, Derrick Fudge, Thomas McNichols, Lois Oglesby, Saeed Saleh, Logan Turner, and Beatrice Warren-Curtis;

Whereas the people of the United States express gratitude for the heroic actions of the men and women of the Dayton Police Department who courageously responded to the shooting and saved countless lives;

Whereas the people of the United States express appreciation and gratitude for the first responders who responded quickly to the shooting and the professionals and volunteers who cared for the injured;

Whereas the people of the United States continue to pray for the individuals who were wounded in the attack and continue to recover;

Whereas the people of the United States commit to supporting communities and local businesses that have been devastated by gun

violence to help the communities and businesses recover and rebuild;

Whereas the entire Dayton community united in support of the victims and their families; and

Whereas the shooting in Dayton, Ohio, occurred approximately 13 hours after a mass shooting in El Paso, Texas, and the people of the United States mourn the 22 innocent lives lost in that tragedy: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) condemns the senseless attack that took place in Dayton, Ohio, on Sunday, August 4, 2019;

(2) honors the memory of the victims who were killed;

(3) expresses hope for a full and speedy recovery and pledges continued support for the individuals injured in the attack;

(4) offers heartfelt condolences and deepest sympathies to the Dayton community and the families, friends, and loved ones affected by the tragedy;

(5) commits to seeking solutions to reduce gun violence, mass shootings, and acts of domestic terrorism in the United States; and

(6) honors the selfless and dedicated service of—

(A) the medical professionals and other individuals who cared for the victims in the community of Montgomery County, Ohio;

(B) the emergency response teams and law enforcement officials who responded to the call of duty; and

(C) the law enforcement officials who continue to investigate the attack.

SENATE RESOLUTION 368—TO AUTHORIZE THE PRODUCTION OF RECORDS BY THE PERMANENT SUBCOMMITTEE ON INVESTIGATIONS OF THE COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Mr. MCCONNELL (for himself and Mr. SCHUMER) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 368

Whereas, the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs conducted an investigation into China's impact on the U.S. education system;

Whereas, the Subcommittee has received a request from the U.S. Department of Education for access to records of the Subcommittee's investigation;

Whereas, by the privileges of the Senate of the United States and Rule XI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, no evidence under the control or in the possession of the Senate can, by administrative or judicial process, be taken from such control or possession but by permission of the Senate;

Whereas, when it appears that evidence under the control or in the possession of the Senate is needed for the promotion of justice, the Senate will take such action as will promote the ends of justice consistent with the privileges of the Senate: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member of the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, acting jointly, are authorized to provide to the U.S. Department of Education and other regulatory agencies, law enforcement officials, and entities or individuals duly authorized by Federal or State governments, records of the Subcommittee's investigation into China's impact on the U.S. education system.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, on behalf of myself and the distinguished Democratic leader, Mr. SCHUMER, I send to the desk a resolution on documentary production by the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, and ask for its immediate consideration.

Mr. President, the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs recently conducted an investigation into China's impact on the U.S. education system. The Subcommittee has now received a request from the U.S. Department of Education seeking access to records that the Subcommittee obtained during the investigation.

In keeping with the Senate's practice under its rules, this resolution would authorize the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member of the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, acting jointly, to provide records, obtained by the Subcommittee in the course of its investigation, in response to this request and requests from other Federal or State government entities and officials with a legitimate need for the records.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 27—PROVIDING FOR THE USE OF THE CATAFALQUE SITUATED IN THE EXHIBITION HALL OF THE CAPITOL VISITOR CENTER IN CONNECTION WITH MEMORIAL SERVICES TO BE CONDUCTED IN THE HOUSE WING OF THE CAPITOL FOR THE HONORABLE ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS, LATE A REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE STATE OF MARYLAND

Mr. BLUNT (for himself and Ms. KLOBUCHAR) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. CON. RES. 27

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That the Architect of the Capitol is authorized and directed to transfer the catafalque which is situated in the Exhibition Hall of the Capitol Visitor Center to the House Wing of the Capitol so that such catafalque may be used in connection with services to be conducted there for the Honorable Elijah E. Cummings, late a Representative from the State of Maryland.

AUTHORIZING THE PRODUCTION OF RECORDS BY THE PERMANENT SUBCOMMITTEE ON INVESTIGATIONS OF THE COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 368, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 368) to authorize the production of records by the Permanent Sub-

committee on Investigations of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. HOEVEN. I ask unanimous consent 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. 368) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.
(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

GRANT REPORTING EFFICIENCY AND AGREEMENTS TRANSPARENCY ACT OF 2019

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 200, H.R. 150.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 150) to modernize Federal grant reporting, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) **SHORT TITLE.**—This Act may be cited as the "Grant Reporting Efficiency and Agreements Transparency Act of 2019" or the "GREAT Act".

(b) **TABLE OF CONTENTS.**—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

Sec. 2. Purposes.

Sec. 3. Definitions.

Sec. 4. Data standards for grant reporting.

Sec. 5. Single Audit Act.

Sec. 6. Consolidation of assistance-related information; publication of public information as open data.

Sec. 7. Evaluation of nonproprietary identifiers.

Sec. 8. Rule of construction.

Sec. 9. No additional funds authorized.

SEC. 2. PURPOSES.

The purposes of this Act are to—

(1) modernize reporting by recipients of Federal grants and cooperative agreements by creating and imposing data standards for the information that those recipients are required by law to report to the Federal Government;

(2) implement the recommendation by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget contained in the report submitted under section 5(b)(6) of the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 (31 U.S.C. 6101 note) relating to the development of a "comprehensive taxonomy of standard definitions for core data elements required for managing Federal financial assistance awards";

(3) reduce burden and compliance costs of recipients of Federal grants and cooperative agreements by enabling technology solutions, existing or yet to be developed, for use in both the public and private sectors to better manage the data that recipients already provide to the Federal Government; and

(4) strengthen oversight and management of Federal grants and cooperative agreements by agencies by consolidating the collection and display of and access to open data that has been standardized and, where appropriate, increasing transparency to the public.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act, the terms "agency", "Director", "Federal award", and "Secretary" have the meanings given those terms in section 6401 of title 31, United States Code, as added by section 4(a) of this Act.

SEC. 4. DATA STANDARDS FOR GRANT REPORTING.

(a) **AMENDMENT.**—Subtitle V of title 31, United States Code, is amended by inserting after chapter 63 the following:

"CHAPTER 64—DATA STANDARDS FOR GRANT REPORTING

"Sec.

"6401. Definitions.

"6402. Data standards for grant reporting.

"6403. Guidance applying data standards for grant reporting.

"6404. Agency requirements.

"§ 6401. Definitions

"In this chapter:

"(1) **AGENCY.**—The term 'agency' has the meaning given the term in section 552(f) of title 5.

"(2) **CORE DATA ELEMENTS.**—The term 'core data elements' means data elements relating to financial management, administration, or management that—

"(A) are not program-specific in nature or program-specific outcome measures, as defined in section 1115(h) of this title; and

"(B) are required by agencies for all or the vast majority of recipients of Federal awards for purposes of reporting.

"(3) **DIRECTOR.**—The term 'Director' means the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

"(4) **EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT.**—The term 'Executive department' has the meaning given the term in section 101 of title 5.

"(5) **FEDERAL AWARD.**—The term 'Federal award'—

"(A) means the transfer of anything of value for a public purpose of support or stimulation authorized by a law of the United States, including financial assistance and Government facilities, services, and property;

"(B) includes a grant, a subgrant, a cooperative agreement, or any other transaction; and

"(C) does not include a transaction or agreement—

"(i) that provides for conventional public information services or procurement of property or services for the direct benefit or use of the Government; or

"(ii) that provides only—

"(I) direct Government cash assistance to an individual;

"(II) a subsidy;

"(III) a loan;

"(IV) a loan guarantee; or

"(V) insurance.

"(6) **SECRETARY.**—The term 'Secretary' means the head of the standard-setting agency.

"(7) **STANDARD-SETTING AGENCY.**—The term 'standard-setting agency' means the Executive department designated under section 6402(a)(1).

"(8) **STATE.**—The term 'State' means each State of the United States, the District of Columbia, each commonwealth, territory, or possession of the United States, and each federally recognized Indian Tribe.

"§ 6402. Data standards for grant reporting

"(a) **IN GENERAL.**—

"(1) **DESIGNATION OF STANDARD-SETTING AGENCY.**—The Director shall designate the Executive department that administers the greatest number of programs under which Federal awards are issued in a calendar year as the standard-setting agency.

“(2) **ESTABLISHMENT OF STANDARDS.**—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this chapter, the Secretary and the Director shall establish Governmentwide data standards for information reported by recipients of Federal awards.

“(3) **DATA ELEMENTS.**—The data standards established under paragraph (2) shall include, at a minimum—

“(A) standard definitions for data elements required for managing Federal awards; and

“(B) unique identifiers for Federal awards and recipients of Federal awards that can be consistently applied Governmentwide.

“(b) **SCOPE.**—The data standards established under subsection (a)—

“(1) shall include core data elements;

“(2) may cover information required by law to be reported to any agency by recipients of Federal awards, including audit-related information reported under chapter 75 of this title; and

“(3) may not be used by the Director or any agency to require the collection of any data not otherwise required under Federal law.

“(c) **REQUIREMENTS.**—The data standards established under subsection (a) shall, to the extent reasonable and practicable—

“(1) render information reported by recipients of Federal awards fully searchable and machine-readable;

“(2) be nonproprietary;

“(3) incorporate standards developed and maintained by voluntary consensus standards bodies;

“(4) be consistent with and implement applicable accounting and reporting principles; and

“(5) incorporate the data standards established under the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 (31 U.S.C. 6101 note).

“(d) **CONSULTATION.**—In establishing the data standards under subsection (a), the Secretary and the Director shall consult with—

“(1) the Secretary of the Treasury to ensure that the data standards established under subsection (a) incorporate the data standards established under the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 (31 U.S.C. 6101 note);

“(2) the head of each agency that issues Federal awards;

“(3) recipients of Federal awards and organizations representing recipients of Federal awards;

“(4) private sector experts;

“(5) members of the public, including privacy experts, privacy advocates, auditors, and industry stakeholders; and

“(6) State and local governments.

“§6403. Guidance applying data standards for grant reporting

“(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 3 years after the date of enactment of this chapter—

“(1) the Secretary and the Director shall jointly issue guidance to all agencies directing the agencies to apply the data standards established under section 6402(a) to all applicable reporting by recipients of Federal awards; and

“(2) the Director shall prescribe guidance applying the data standards established under section 6402(a) to audit-related information reported under chapter 75 of this title.

“(b) **GUIDANCE.**—The guidance issued under subsection (a) shall—

“(1) to the extent reasonable and practicable—

“(A) minimize the disruption of existing reporting practices of, and not increase the reporting burden on, agencies or recipients of Federal awards; and

“(B) explore opportunities to implement modern technologies in reporting relating to Federal awards;

“(2) allow the Director to permit exceptions for classes of Federal awards, including exceptions for Federal awards granted to Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations consistent with

the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5301 et seq.), if the Director publishes a list of those exceptions and submits the list to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Oversight and Reform of the House of Representatives; and

“(3) take into consideration the consultation required under section 6402(d).

“(c) **UPDATING GUIDANCE.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not less frequently than once every 10 years, the Director shall update the guidance issued under subsection (a).

“(2) **PROCEDURES.**—In updating guidance under paragraph (1), the Director shall, to the maximum extent practicable, follow the procedures for the development of the data standards and guidance prescribed under this section and section 6402.

“§6404. Agency requirements

“Not later than 1 year after the date on which guidance is issued or updated under subsection (b) or (c), respectively, of section 6403, the head of each agency shall—

“(1) ensure that all of the Federal awards that the agency issues use data standards for all future information collection requests; and

“(2) amend existing information collection requests under chapter 35 of title 44 (commonly known as the ‘Paperwork Reduction Act’) to comply with the data standards established under section 6402 of this chapter, in accordance with the guidance issued by the Secretary and the Director under section 6403 of this chapter.”

(b) **TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.**—The table of chapters for subtitle V of title 31, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to chapter 63 the following:

“64. Data standards for grant reporting 6401”.

SEC. 5. SINGLE AUDIT ACT.

(a) **AMENDMENTS.**—

(1) **AUDIT REQUIREMENTS.**—Section 7502(h) of title 31, United States Code, is amended, in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by inserting “in an electronic form in accordance with the data standards established under chapter 64 and” after “the reporting package,”.

(2) **REGULATIONS.**—Section 7505 of title 31, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(d) Such guidance shall require audit-related information reported under this chapter to be reported in an electronic form in accordance with the data standards established under chapter 64.”.

(b) **GUIDANCE.**—Not later than 3 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director shall issue guidance requiring audit-related information reported under chapter 75 of title 31, United States Code, to be reported in an electronic form consistent with the data standards established under chapter 64 of that title, as added by section 4(a) of this Act.

SEC. 6. CONSOLIDATION OF ASSISTANCE-RELATED INFORMATION; PUBLICATION OF PUBLIC INFORMATION AS OPEN DATA.

(a) **COLLECTION OF INFORMATION.**—Not later than 5 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary and the Director shall, using the data standards established under chapter 64 of title 31, United States Code, as added by section 4(a) of this Act, enable the collection, public display, and maintenance of Federal award information as a Governmentwide data set, subject to reasonable restrictions established by the Director to ensure protection of personally identifiable information and otherwise sensitive information.

(b) **PUBLICATION OF INFORMATION.**—The Secretary and the Director shall require the publication of data reported by recipients of Federal awards that is collected from all agencies on a single public portal, which may be an existing

Governmentwide website, as determined appropriate by the Director.

(c) **FOIA.**—Nothing in this section shall require the disclosure to the public of information that would be exempt from disclosure under section 552 of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as the “Freedom of Information Act”).

SEC. 7. EVALUATION OF NONPROPRIETARY IDENTIFIERS.

(a) **DETERMINATION REQUIRED.**—The Director and the Secretary shall determine whether to use nonproprietary identifiers described in section 6402(a)(3)(B) of title 31, United States Code, as added by section 4(a) of this Act.

(b) **FACTORS TO BE CONSIDERED.**—In making the determination under subsection (a), the Director and the Secretary shall consider factors such as accessibility and cost to recipients of Federal awards, agencies that issue Federal awards, private sector experts, and members of the public, including privacy experts, privacy advocates, transparency experts, and transparency advocates.

(c) **PUBLICATION AND REPORT ON DETERMINATION.**—Not later than the earlier of 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act or the date on which the Director and the Secretary establish data standards under section 6402(a)(2) of title 31, United States Code, as added by section 4(a) of this Act, the Director and the Secretary shall publish and submit to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Oversight and Reform of the House of Representatives a report explaining the reasoning for the determination made under subsection (a).

SEC. 8. RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.

Nothing in this Act, or the amendments made by this Act, shall be construed to require the collection of data that is not otherwise required under any Federal law, rule, or regulation.

SEC. 9. NO ADDITIONAL FUNDS AUTHORIZED.

No additional funds are authorized to carry out the requirements of this Act and the amendments made by this Act. Such requirements shall be carried out using amounts otherwise authorized.

Mr. HOEVEN. I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported substitute amendment be agreed to; that the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time and passed; and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The committee-reported amendment, in the nature of a substitute, was agreed to.

The amendment was ordered to be engrossed and the bill to be read a third time.

The bill was read the third time.

The bill (H.R. 150), as amended, was passed.

ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2019

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m., Tuesday, October 22; 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 Treaties Calendar No. 5, Treaty Document No. 116-1, under the previous order; and, finally, that the Senate recess from 12:30 p.m. until 2:15 p.m. to allow for the caucus meetings.

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

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M.
TOMORROW

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:19 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, October 22, 2019, at 10 a.m.