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## House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Friday, November 8, 2019, at 1 p.m.

## Senate

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 2019

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

### PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Eternal God, thank You for not leaving us alone in a challenging world. You remain our refuge in every storm. We call You when troubles come, and You rescue us even from self-inflicted wounds. You clean up our debris, restoring us to Your sweet fellowship.

As our lawmakers commit this day to You, help them navigate through its turbulence. May Your Spirit impinge on their minds, guiding them by the light of Your truth. Lord, be the resource they need to be faithful stewards of Your unfolding providence.

We pray in Your gracious 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. CRAMER). The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I would like to speak for 1 minute as in morning business.

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

### PRESCRIPTION DRUG COSTS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Oh boy, I have had to scratch my head upon hearing some criticism of the Finance Committee's Prescription Drug Pricing Reduction Act from supposedly fiscally conservative, pro-taxpayer organizations, to mention a couple, like FreedomWorks and Americans for Tax Reform.

The Grassley-Wyden bipartisan bill ought to have a lot of support. It would save taxpayers more than \$100 billion. You would think fiscally conservative organizations would want to back that. Of course, some of these fiscally conservative organizations receive substantial funding from Big Pharma.

I can't think of a better opportunity to enact bipartisan entitlement reform that would significantly lower the debt and help rein in entitlement spending bill. This bill happens to be judged by the Congressional Budget Office, a non-partisan group working for the Congress as a whole, saying that it would save a little over \$100 billion.

Reining in entitlement spending is a goal that I campaigned on, and nearly every one of my Republican colleagues have campaigned on that same platform. Now is the chance to carry out those campaign promises, in other words, to stand on the platform you ran on.

In an era of gridlock and partisanship, do supporters of less government spending and balanced budgets really think their goal could be achieved without bipartisanship? Nothing gets done in the U.S. Senate that isn't somewhat bipartisan. The good news is that my legislation is bipartisan, and

support for the bill is growing every day.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

### RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

### LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, yesterday, the Senate confirmed David Tapp of Kentucky to serve on the U.S. Court of Federal Claims. Today, we will turn to more of President Trump's impressive nominees for the Federal Judiciary.

Last week, Senate Republicans had hoped to proceed to the urgent priority of funding our national defense, but for the second time in 2 months, Senate Democrats filibustered defense funding. They blocked the Senate from funding our Armed Forces.

Over the summer, the Speaker of the House and my colleague the Democratic leader both signed onto a bipartisan, bicameral budget deal that Democrats hammered out with President Trump's team in order to avoid

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



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exactly—exactly—the kind of partisan stalemate that we are now experiencing and avoid a 12-bill omnibus. The agreement laid out specific top-line numbers and ruled out poison pills—the agreement we all reached just a couple of months ago.

With respect to Presidential transfer authorities, the agreement that we all agreed to 2 months ago specifically stated that “current transfer funding levels and authorities shall be maintained.” The President’s transfers authorities as they relate to border funding, or anything else, were to remain exactly as they existed in current law. This is the deal we signed off on just 2 months ago. The deal just simply preserves the status quo that was established by bipartisan legislation last fiscal year. The same transfer authorities, by the way, would also be preserved if Democrats tank the appropriations process and we end up with a continuing resolution. That was the deal. Democrats were onboard. I entered the terms into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD and both the Speaker and the Senate Democratic leader posted the terms of the deal in their press release, but now our Democratic counterparts have gone back on their word.

Contrary to the agreement, Democrats are now insisting on poison pills and, thus, blocking the resources and certainty our men and women in uniform need.

While Senate Democrats block defense funding, House Democrats continue to hold up USMCA and the 176,000 new American jobs it would create. All their time and energy seems to go to House Democrats’ 3-year-old impeachment journey and the unfair, precedent-breaking process by which the House has conducted its inquiry so far.

Last week, House Democrats passed their first votes on impeachment and codified their irregular process. They passed a resolution that fails—fails—to provide President Trump the same rights and due process that past Presidents of both parties have received.

Here is what the Democrats’ resolution effectively says: No due process now, maybe some later, but only if we feel like it. I repeat: No due process now, maybe some later, but only if we feel like it.

Well, while we wait for our Democratic counterparts to come back to the table and allow this body to complete urgent bipartisan legislation, we are going to continue confirming more of President Trump’s impressive nominees and giving the American people the government they actually voted for.

#### FIRST AMENDMENT

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, now, on another matter, I have come to the floor frequently in recent months to warn about dangerous anti-speech, anti-First Amendment headwinds blowing out of Washington, DC. I have warned about proposals from our

Democratic colleagues that seemed tailor-made to chill the free exchange of ideas and make it more difficult for Americans to engage in political speech.

Just a few days ago, on October 23, I explained how the threat of heavy regulatory burden has already “frightened media platforms into rejecting political ads altogether. It’s a textbook example of policy designed to reduce the amount of free speech in this country.”

Then, 7 days later, here is what happened. Twitter announced that their platform will ban all political ads. The online platform is banning advertisements for candidates for office and political campaigns.

What is more, they say they are also banning issue ads, which do not even reference a specific campaign but merely seek to give one perspective on a subject.

Twitter’s leadership has tried to produce a rationale for banishing paid political speech. The argument boils down to the same misunderstandings that have been used to undermine free speech for decades.

Here is what Twitter’s CEO said: “We believe political message reach should be earned, not bought.” This kind of surface-level argument may sound good at first, but it quickly gives way to an arbitrary process of picking winners and losers in the competition of ideas. Here is what I mean: Twitter’s new rules would seem to forbid either a small liberal nonprofit or a small conservative nonprofit from putting money behind an issue ad to amplify their perspective. But what about the press? Will media corporations large and small remain free to buy paid advertising to promote editorials and opinion writers? Will cable news networks and national newspapers remain free to advertise their political speech?

It would seem that Twitter will either have to ban opinion journalists and the press from advertising their own work or else create an enormous double standard that would just amplify the already privileged speakers who already possess multimillion-dollar platforms. It would just help clear the field for those elites by denying the same tools to fledgling speakers who are not already famous.

Consider this: Back in July, the CEO of Twitter praised two Democratic Presidential candidates in a Twitter post of his own. This gentleman has 4.3 million followers. It seems fair to conclude that these subscribers have not followed him solely due to the stand-alone merits of his commentary but in part because they are interested to hear from a powerful person who runs a hugely influential company. And, of course, Twitter has worked hard and spent money for years to grow its business and make itself famous—efforts that have raised the profile of its CEO. There is nothing wrong with that, but it illustrates the impossibility of any top-down standard to determine who has earned an audience.

How many millions of dollars go into publicity campaigns for Hollywood actors or musicians or media personalities? How many millions of dollars in advertising and corporate strategy have made CNN, FOX, MSNBC, and the New York Times into what they are today? When these people and these institutions speak out on politics, are they using megaphones they have earned or megaphones that have been bought? Obviously, such distinctions are impossible to draw. This is exactly why the act of free speech is not separate from the resources that make speech possible. Let me say that again. This is exactly why the act of free speech is not separate from the resources that make speech possible.

Twitter’s announced policy would not level the playing field. It would only reinforce echo chambers. It would prevent a local candidate on a shoestring budget from using a small amount of money to promote a tweet so more of his neighbors can learn about his campaign. It would seemingly reserve a special privilege for major media corporations, while denying nonprofits the same opportunity. Such a policy would not bolster our democracy. It would degrade democracy. It would amplify the advantage of media companies, celebrities, and certain other established elites, while denying an important tool to the Americans who disagree with them.

My personal view is that the American people do not need elites to predetermine which political speakers are legitimate and which are not. I believe that holds true whether the elites live in Washington or Silicon Valley or anywhere else.

Obviously Twitter can set whatever policy it wants. It is a private sector company. But companies respond to incentives. It is easy to see the influence of Washington and leading Democrats behind this announcement—pretty easy. My Democratic colleagues have threatened to impose huge regulatory liability on platforms that run political ads. And now a prominent platform has preemptively decided that allowing certain kinds of political speech is more trouble than it is worth. It does not serve our democracy for Democratic leaders to chill or suppress the free exchange of ideas through Federal policy. It does not serve our democracy for private sector leaders to take away a crucial tool that helps less prominent speakers make their case to the American people.

#### MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—H.R. 4842

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The leader is correct.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 4842) to authorize the Secretary of State to provide funds for a United States pavilion at Expo 2020 Dubai, and for other purposes.

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

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

#### 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

#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Lee Philip Rudofsky, of Arkansas, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Arkansas.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

S. 1699

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, last Friday was an exciting day. I was home in Sioux Falls, SD, to mark a huge milestone for the city and for South Dakota—the unveiling of Sioux Falls' first 5G small cells. By the end of this month, Sioux Falls will have a working, albeit limited, 5G network—one of the first cities in the entire country to have one.

Most people take internet access for granted these days. We assume that anywhere we go, we will be able to access our GPS, check Facebook, or send a text message. But the truth is that there are still areas in the United States where it can be difficult to get reliable internet access. Some of those areas are in South Dakota. That is why expanding access to broadband internet in rural communities has been a priority of mine since I came to the Senate. While it can be nice to turn off our phones and take a break, in this day and age, Americans need reliable internet access.

More and more of the business of daily life is being conducted over the internet, from scheduling appointments to figuring out the shortest way from point A to point B. The internet has already become an integral part of commerce. Small businesses and farms in areas without dependable access miss out on a lot of opportunities that most businesses take for granted.

Both as chairman and as a member of the Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee, I have had the chance to draw attention to the state of broadband access in rural communities. I have conducted numerous hearings with testimony from rural broadband providers, farmers, Tribal representatives, and Federal officials both in Washington and in my home State of South Dakota.

Over the past several years, we have seen the number of Americans lacking access to broadband decrease significantly, but there is more work that needs to be done. With the advent of 5G technology, we now have to expand our efforts to make deploying 5G technology to rural communities a priority.

Most of us think today's internet is pretty fast. We get traffic updates that are basically in real time. We receive emails seconds after they have been sent. We stream our favorite shows at home or on the go. But 5G will make 4G look like dialup. It will deliver lightning-fast speeds up to 100 times faster than what today's technology delivers. That is hard to imagine. After all, as I said, today's technology seems pretty fast, but 5G will enable near-instant responsiveness from our phones and other devices.

However, 5G is about a lot more than streaming more shows on more devices or receiving emails instantly. In addition to being up to 100 times faster than current speeds, 5G will be vastly more responsive than 4G technology, and we will be able to connect 100 times the number of devices that can be connected with 4G. Because of this, 5G will enable massive breakthroughs in healthcare, transportation, agriculture, and other key industries.

5G will bring new opportunities and benefits to rural communities in particular. 5G will pave the way for the widespread adoption of precision agriculture, which uses tools like robotics and remote monitoring to help farmers manage their fields and boost their crop yields. The U.S. Department of Agriculture estimates that precision agriculture will reduce farmers' operational costs by up to \$25 per acre and increase farmers' yields by up to 70 percent by the year 2050. 5G will also make it easier for residents of rural communities to access business and educational opportunities and long-distance healthcare.

The technology for 5G is already here, and it is actually being implemented, as Friday's event in Sioux Falls demonstrates.

There is more work to be done before 5G is a reality across the United

States. In order to deploy 5G, wireless providers need access to sufficient spectrum, and they need to be able to deploy the infrastructure needed to support the technology in a reasonable and timely manner.

Last year, the President signed into law my bipartisan MOBILE NOW Act. It was legislation that I introduced to help secure adequate spectrum for 5G technology. Earlier this year, Senator SCHATZ and I reintroduced the STREAMLINE Small Cell Deployment Act to address the other part of the 5G equation, and that is infrastructure. 5G technology will require not just traditional cell phone towers but small antennas called small cells that can often be attached to existing infrastructure, like utility poles or buildings.

While the Federal Communications Commission, under Chairman Pai, has modernized its regulations on small cell siting, there is more work to be done, and that is where my bill, the STREAMLINE Act, comes in. The STREAMLINE Act will expedite the deployment of small cells while respecting the role of State and local governments in making deployment decisions.

Importantly, it will make it more affordable to bring 5G to rural areas by addressing the costs of small cell deployment. 5G has tremendous promise for rural areas, but it will only deliver on that promise if we ensure that 5G cells are actually deployed in these areas. I am proud that we have made a good start in South Dakota. Sioux Falls' mayor, Paul TenHaken, has worked aggressively to remove barriers to telecommunications investment in Sioux Falls.

Nationally, we urgently need to take action to remove the final barriers to large-scale 5G deployment. While we have made good progress in securing low- and high-band spectrum, China and South Korea are far ahead of us in opening up midband spectrum to 5G. If we don't want China or South Korea to win the race to 5G and seize the economic benefits that 5G will bring, we need to substantially increase the amount of midband spectrum available to U.S. companies, and we need to do it quickly.

We also need to take action on legislation such as my STREAMLINE Act to pave the way for the widespread deployment of 5G infrastructure. America can lead the world in the 5G revolution. The technology is here. We just need to take the final steps to bring 5G into our communities.

I look forward to continuing to work to support the nationwide deployment of 5G with all of the benefits it can bring to the American people.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

IMPEACHMENT INQUIRY

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, the House of Representatives continues to interview key witnesses as part of its impeachment inquiry. Each witness has reportedly added details and context to the central focus of the inquiry; that the President allegedly pressured a foreign leader to interfere in domestic politics and used the power of his office for personal political gain.

The House must follow the facts where they lead and continue the investigation until all the facts come out. When and if there is a potential trial in the Senate, it will be our job to impartially look at all the evidence and come to our own independent judgment.

I remind my colleagues of this fact because in recent days a few of my colleagues seem to be jumping to conclusions. We all know about our colleagues in the House Republican caucus who have made a show of storming classified hearings, even though many of them could participate in those hearings, who have shifted their defenses of the President on a nearly daily basis, who only weeks ago made the idea of no quid pro quo the linchpin of their argument in support of the President but now admit that the President might have engaged in a quid pro quo, but there is nothing wrong with that.

In the House, the shifting sands of argument to embrace, to almost kneel at the feet of the President is appalling. They contradict themselves. They turn themselves into pretzels before all of the facts come out because they just blindly want to say that the President is right. That is not how the Constitution asks us to conduct ourselves as legislators.

In the Senate, we are beginning to get that germ of coming to conclusions before we hear all the facts, before a trial occurs. That nasty germ is spreading. Senior Members said yesterday that they will refuse to read any transcript from the House investigation because they have written the whole process off as a bunch of BS. If they were using taxpayer dollars, much needed foreign aid—an important part of our foreign policy tool—to gain an advantage on a political rival, if that is true, that is BS? Our Senate Judiciary chairman knows better, but his blind loyalties, his abject following of whatever President Trump wants, it seems, make him say things like that.

Yesterday, Leader McCONNELL stepped over the line, in my judgment, when he said that if an impeachment vote were held today, the President would be acquitted. Instead of speculating about the hypothetical trial or writing off the entire process before it has even concluded, how about we all wait for the facts to come out? That is our job.

Facts can be stubborn things. Just yesterday we learned that a key figure provided supplementary testimony that he told a top Ukraine official that U.S. military assistance was conditioned on an announcement by Ukraine that it was opening the investigations President Trump requested. Instead of leaping to the President's defense to declare no quid pro quo as many House Republicans did—a claim now contradicted by several witnesses—everyone should wait for the facts to come out. Fairness demands that of us.

Before I move on to another topic, there is another troubling development in this area—efforts by the White House and a Member of this Chamber to disclose the identity of the whistleblower. Let me repeat that. The White House and even a Member of this Chamber are openly advocating that Federal whistleblower protections be violated, that laws be broken, and the health and safety of the whistleblower and their family be put at risk. Shame, shame—it is just outrageous.

We are in an extraordinary moment of history when Republicans over only a few weeks have shifted from saying that no laws were broken to saying that laws were broken but it is not impeachable to outright advocating that laws be broken. This is wrong. This is against democracy. This is against the grain of this country that we have been so proud of for 200-some-odd years. Whistleblowers who stand up for the Constitution should not be targeted by the President or powerful Members of the legislative branch, for sure. And even if you don't agree with that, you have to agree that it is the law and you shouldn't break it. We are a nation of laws. President Trump should hear that. So should the junior Senator from Kentucky—please.

On a good note, I was pleased to hear that several of my Republican colleagues stood up yesterday and did the right thing. They defended the whistleblower's legal protections, including a Member of the Republican Senate leadership. Later today, I hope these Senators—and, indeed, all Senators—join Democrats in approving a resolution offered by my colleague Senator HIRONO that supports the whistleblower protections. Senator HIRONO will be asking unanimous consent to pass it, and we should, for the sake of the safety of this whistleblower, whether you like what he or she did or you don't, for the sake of rule of law, and for the sake of what balance of power is all about.

JUDICIAL NOMINATIONS

Mr. President, later today President Trump will give remarks from the White House on the Judiciary, presumably to give himself one big pat on the back for the Federal bench. He is good at that. He likes doing that. He does that almost more than governing.

As a Senator, I have now worked with four separate administrations, Democrat and Republican, on the appointment of Federal judges. I can say

with perfect confidence that over the last 3 years, President Trump has nominated and Senate Republicans have approved the most unqualified and radical nominees in my time in this body.

The list of unqualified nominees is so long that for the sake of time, let's only consider nominees for the past 3 weeks. Justin Walker, confirmed last week to the Western District of Kentucky, has never tried a case and was deemed “unqualified” to serve as a judge by the American Bar Association. Sarah Pitlyk, under consideration for a seat in the Eastern District of Missouri, has never tried a case, examined a witness, or picked a jury. Lawrence VanDyke is up after that. The ABA found that their interviewees with experience with Mr. VanDyke said he was “arrogant, lazy, an ideologue, and lacking knowledge of the day-to-day practice including procedural rules.”

How the heck do we put these people on the bench? Forget ideology for a moment. I understand that the President is not going to nominate people who might ideologically agree with me, but these people are abjectly unqualified based on their persons—who they are, how they behave in the courtroom, their knowledge, their experience. This is a lifetime appointment and one of the most important appointments we have, and when the ABA finds that a nominee was “arrogant, lazy, an ideologue, and lacking in knowledge of the day-to-day practice including procedural rules” and we go ahead and nominate him, what is the matter here?

Even more damaging, President Trump has nominated judges who are way out on the very extremes of jurisprudence. They are rightwing ideologues with views cut against the majority of Americans on nearly every issue. The judges he is nominating disagree with the vast majority of Americans on issue after issue after issue. Whether it is women's health and the right of a woman to make her own medical decisions, whether it is legal protections for LGBTQ Americans, whether it is the right of workers and collective bargaining, whether it is fair access to the ballot box and voting rights, whether it is the most common-sense gun laws and environmental protections, these nominees have views way to the right of even the average Republican, let alone the average American.

President Trump has nominated several judges who have been so extreme and overtly racist that my Republican colleagues who are loathe to oppose President Trump on anything have actually opposed him so that those few nominees didn't get on the bench. The nominations of these hard-right people are way over—hurting the average American, siding with big special interests over working Americans over and over again, finding every excuse to side with the rich and the powerful over the working class people. This is what President Trump calls an accomplishment?

I understand why the President and Leader MCCONNELL try to celebrate judicial nominees. They hardly have a legislative accomplishment to name. The truth is, when it comes to judicial picks, the President and Senate Republicans should be downright ashamed of their record.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 2603

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, when I first came to the Senate, I was asked to serve on the Senate Judiciary Committee, and I considered it quite an honor. It is an extraordinary committee with a rich history of involvement in some of the most important issues of our time, and that has been the case for generations.

Recently, when it was reformed, I was asked on which subcommittee I wanted to serve. I chose the Immigration Subcommittee. I took it for two reasons. First, I am a lucky American. My mother was an immigrant to this country. She was brought here at the age of 2 from Lithuania. Her mother, who brought her, didn't speak English, but my mom was a pretty smart little girl. She spoke English and Lithuanian, and she was the translator for the family. They even called her into a courtroom as a little girl to translate for a person who was being charged so that they understood the law. My mother was an extraordinary woman. She had an eighth grade education, but was one of the smartest people I have ever known. I guess that is a son talking, but you might expect it.

I often thought I was lucky that she lived long enough to see me sworn into the U.S. Senate. This immigrant girl, who became an American citizen, saw her son become the 47th Senator from the State of Illinois. That is my story. That is my family's story. That is America's story. That is who we are.

We are a Nation of immigrants. But for those blessed to be able to trace back their roots to indigenous people and Native Americans, all of us have come to this country—either ourselves personally, our parents, or grandparents.

Immigration means a lot to me because I think the diversity of this country is its strength. The fact that people were willing to sacrifice so much to come to the United States of America tells me something about them. Many of them risked everything. They left everything behind—left behind their families, their places of worship, their language, their culture, their food—and came to a place they had never seen before because they heard what America was all about—a land of opportunity. So I wanted to be on that subcommittee.

The second reason I wanted to be on the subcommittee is that the immigration laws of the United States are a disaster. They are terribly broken. They do not serve our Nation, either in terms of security or bringing the diver-

sity we need for our future. I have known this for a long time.

It was 6 or 7 years ago that we put together a group of Senators, four Democrats, four Republicans. John McCain was leading the Republicans with LINDSEY GRAHAM, MARCO RUBIO, Jeff Flake. On the Democratic side was Senator SCHUMER, who just spoke on the floor; Senator MENENDEZ of New Jersey; Senator BENNET of Colorado; and I. We sat down for months, night after night, looking at every section of the immigration law—this broken law—to say: How will we change this? How can we reach political compromises and serve the best needs of this Nation? And we came up with it.

We came up with this comprehensive bill and brought it to the floor of the Senate, and it passed with 68 votes. We finally found a bipartisan answer—just exactly what the American people sent us to do.

We sent our work product over to the House of Representatives, and they refused to even consider it. They wouldn't bring our bill up for a vote. They wouldn't debate it, wouldn't offer an amendment, an alternative substitute—nothing. And here we sit with this broken immigration system.

I want to describe to my colleagues—or at least those listening in the Senate—one of the issues that came up recently. Here is what it comes down to. There are people who come to the United States to work. Many of them come on what is known as an H-1B visa. It is a specialty visa, and it says that in this situation, this company cannot find an American to fill the job and wants to bring a talented person from another company on a temporary visa to work. Thousands come under this program each year. Many of them come from the country of India. They are trained engineers, by and large, but they are also doctors, and they are professionals who are needed in communities all across our country.

Well, we have run into a problem because once they are here and have been here for some time, many of them want to stay. That in and of itself is a good thing, as far as I am concerned. If they are productive employees making a business profitable, creating new jobs in the process, I want them to stay. Some of them were actually educated in the United States and are using that education, working here, but now they want to be permanent residents in this country.

There is a difficulty in the problem because we limit the number of people who can apply for what is known as green cards—employment-based visas—each year. The limitation is 140,000. It may sound like a lot, but believe me, there are hundreds of thousands more who are seeking these visas.

We have a problem particularly when it comes to those of Indian descent. The problem is the fact that so many of them have come to fill these temporary work jobs and are applying for green cards that there are many more

applications for green cards than there are actual cards to be issued. There are only 140,000 total each year for the entire world. There are over 500,000 Indians who have come to this country and are asking for green card status. The law also says that no more than 7 percent can come from any 1 country of the 140,000. If you do the simple math of about 10,000 each year and with there being over 500,000 Indians waiting, imagine what that means. It means that many of them will never live long enough to qualify for a green card. So this has become very controversial. Many of them are desperate, and they should be, for their plights are now so uncertain.

It is complicated by the fact that if you come here in an employment-based situation—on a temporary visa, an H-1B—you can bring your family with you, meaning your spouse and your children. Yet, if you stay here for a period of time and if your children reach the age of 21, they can no longer stay based on their parent's visa. Frankly, they are subject to deportation, and some are deported.

The other night, I met a large group of these Indians in the State of Illinois who came to me pleading for help. I want to help them. I hope they understand and those who are listening understand as well that when it comes to immigration, I am in favor of border security and of orderly immigration, but I am in favor of immigration and the diversity it brings to this country and the talent it brings to this country.

I have a bill before us, known as the RELIEF Act. It would lift that cap of 140,000 so we could absorb more people each year into our country who have been here already or who have been working here already and whose families have been established here already but who just want a chance to, ultimately, apply for citizenship. That is what my bill would do.

It would do two other things, and I want to bring these points up for those who are considering my unanimous consent request that I am about to make. I want them to understand how personal and important this is to the people I am talking about.

One of the provisions I mentioned relates to the fact that if you bring children to the United States while you are working on those temporary visas, those children are protected until they reach the age of 21, but they are then subject to deportation. I cannot tell you the emotional scenes I have witnessed in the last few weeks as these parents have introduced me to their children and have said to me: Senator, I am in this long line waiting for a green card. My 12-year-old daughter could end up being 21 years old and deported while I am still waiting. I want to take care of her. I want her to have a chance to go to school, and I want her to have a bright future. Yet her fate is tied to the fact that there are not enough green cards for me to stay in this country.

One of the provisions in the RELIEF Act that I urge my colleagues to consider when I make this unanimous consent request is that if you apply for a green card as a parent, the age of your children at that moment is basically frozen for legal purposes. Those children cannot age out while you are waiting in line if you applied while they were still minors. This will protect these children from deportation. This is one of the most important and humane things we can do.

The second thing is, if we are going to establish any standards or quotas for those who are allowed in this country to have employment-based visas and green cards, we shouldn't count the spouses and dependent children. Let's just count those who are, frankly, going to work as engineers and doctors in our communities.

The net result of the RELIEF Act is to create a realistic way to lift the cap in order to allow more to come in each year who are qualified, who have already been vetted, and who have gone through the background checks. It is not to penalize the minor children who might age out while their parents are waiting. We should make sure the spouses and dependent children aren't counted toward any ultimate quota.

The RELIEF Act would lift country caps that limit the number of green cards that go to immigrants from any particular country. These country caps have contributed to this terrible backlog that we currently have. Yet lifting these caps alone will not clear the green card backlog. Without more green cards, which is what I am calling for, the current backlog of 800,000 people total—I mentioned 500,000 were from India—who are waiting for employment-based green cards will actually increase if we don't lift the cap by 300,000 in the next 10 years.

The RELIEF Act is not novel or controversial. You will remember that earlier I talked about a comprehensive immigration bill. What I am proposing today is included in it. It is a bipartisan proposal, and it is one that, I think, we should return to in order to solve the problem.

The RELIEF Act has been endorsed by many national business, immigrant, and labor organizations, including the New American Economy, the National Education Association, the American Immigration Lawyers Association, United We Dream, Asian Americans Advancing Justice, South Asian Americans Leading Together, United Chinese Americans, the National Iranian American Council, the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, the American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association, which, incidentally, is the largest Greek-American organization, and the Ancient Order of Hibernians, which is the largest Irish-American organization.

In light of the failure of our immigration subcommittee's taking any action to solve this problem, I will ask for unanimous consent to move this bill forward.

To those who are considering whether they will accept or reject it, meet with these people in your State. Sit down with them, and hear of the plights they face today. They are trying to follow the law, and the law is not responsive.

Mr. President, as in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be discharged from further consideration of S. 2603 and that the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration. I further ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SASSE). Is there objection?

The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, in reserving the right to object, I come to the floor to, first, compliment Senator DURBIN on his remarkable story and his family's story about legal immigration to this country. It is something I support. I think we should all consider it a compliment when people want to leave the countries of their births to come to the United States, for they know what we know—that it is a great place in which to live and thrive.

I have a concern with the unanimous consent request before us, the RELIEF Act. Senator DURBIN and I have worked on a couple of immigration issues on which we have bridged the gap but have not quite gotten there.

First off, it could lay the groundwork for a significant increase in legal immigration, but I am also concerned with the mechanics we find ourselves in right now. As I understand it, the RELIEF Act has six cosponsors—all Democrats. Yet there is another bill that is moving through the Senate right now that was offered by Senator LEE. It has been offered in other Congresses, but it is actually making headway. It has 35 cosponsors, and 15 of them are Democrats. They include Senator HARRIS, of California, and Senator DUCKWORTH, the junior Senator of Illinois. I believe this is a very narrowly focused effort to address a lot of the concerns that Senator DURBIN has.

I do not believe Senator DURBIN has the support of the Senate to take this through regular order at this point, let alone through unanimous consent. I hope Senator DURBIN and others will recognize that we do have a shortage of high-skilled workers in this country and that we do need to fix a number of problems, but I don't think they can be fixed with the RELIEF Act.

I encourage Senator DURBIN to work with Senator LEE and with the 34 other Senate Members on a bipartisan basis to address this so we can bring the Fairness for High-Skilled Immigrants Act to the floor and send it to the House for its consideration.

Because of the lack of consensus on many of the provisions in the RELIEF Act, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, the Senator from North Carolina and I both serve on the Senate Judiciary Committee. What I have asked for is a hearing before the Immigration Subcommittee so Senator LEE can bring his bill forward and so I can bring my bill forward so we can try to work out the differences between us. That is usually how the Senate operates. Unfortunately, last week, on the floor, Senator LEE announced that he was opposed to having any hearing on his bill. He didn't want there to be a hearing and a markup. I think it is unfortunate. It really will not lead us to having a bipartisan agreement that might actually solve this problem.

I also think there is a fundamental flaw in Senator LEE's approach. He would take care of the issues facing those from India at the expense of the issues of the immigrants from virtually every other country, for they would be denied the opportunity to apply for green cards while we would be taking care of the backlog from this one nation. I don't think that is the way to approach this.

As the Senator from North Carolina said, if we truly believe more legal immigration of those with talents would be good for America, this is our chance to do it. At this point, I am disappointed. I have told these families who come to see me regularly that I will continue to fight for them—to give them a chance to protect their children and to have a future in America.

I hope Senator LEE will reconsider and allow for a hearing to take place so we can move this bill forward and not just exchange unanimous consent requests on the floor.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 2059

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I come to talk about another issue of immigration that concerns me in North Carolina, and I think it is something about which every American should be concerned. It is the sanctuary policies that have been implemented in counties and cities and, at least in one case, statewide.

“Sanctuary city” sounds like a great concept as the United States is a sanctuary to which so many people seek to immigrate. Yet the policy of the sanctuary city actually breaks down the relationship between Federal authorities and local authorities. I think this is dangerous and could potentially—and not only potentially—have serious consequences in communities. I will use a few examples.

Over the past year in North Carolina, we have had over 500 people who have been released who had been arrested by local authorities. Many of them had been arrested for having committed serious crimes. They had been charged with murder, rape, indecent liberties

with a child, heroin trafficking—a very, very long list—in cities just 25 minutes from where I live, down in Charlotte, in Mecklenburg County. They arrest people but not simply because they are illegally present. In fact, you can find virtually no instance in which a local authority would arrest somebody just because one is illegally present. The people who are in these jails have been charged with crimes, and in many cases they have been serious crimes.

Two weeks ago in Mecklenburg County, the Mecklenburg County sheriff had made the decision to release four people—one who had been charged with murder, two who had been charged with indecent liberties with a minor, and one who had been charged with heroin trafficking. They had been illegally present but had not been in jail because they had simply crossed the border or had had their visas expire. They had been in jail because they had committed serious crimes.

When Immigration and Customs Enforcement hears about these folks who have been detained, they issue what they call detainer orders. A detainer order is a request to hold a person in jail for at least 48 hours so ICE can go to the jail, interview him, and determine whether they want to transfer him into ICE's custody and potentially deport him.

This is a very dangerous policy that has actually, ultimately, resulted in other people being harmed. Think about those people being released who have been charged with rape or murder or heroin trafficking. They go back into the community and cause harm to someone else.

What I have decided we need to do is to at least provide a private right of civil action to a victim of that unwise decision. If that charged murderer or heroin trafficker goes out and assaults someone or murders someone—in some cases, someone who has a DWI is charged with vehicular homicide and goes back out and while under the influence harms someone else in, say, an automobile accident—I think the person who gets harmed or, sadly, his survivor should be able to bring a case against that governmental entity that has the sanctuary policy.

For those who think sanctuary policies are safe and that only safe people are being released, this shouldn't be an issue to them—right?—because no harm is going to occur. Yet, if harm occurs, I believe the victim should have a right to seek restitution.

Our bill is fairly simple. It is called the Justice for Victims of Sanctuary Cities Act. It is a bill that reads, if you as a governmental entity refuse to cooperate with ICE and then release someone who does harm to someone else, that person has the right to sue that governmental entity.

Our governments in the United States—the local governments and State governments—have the right to say they are immune, that they can't

be sued. They have that right, and I respect that right. Yet, if they refuse to allow themselves to build their cases in court and say that what they did was appropriate and safe, then it should come at the consequence of the Federal funding for which they would otherwise be qualified to receive.

Again, if sanctuary cities are safe and if all we are doing is releasing people who are not threats to the community, this should be a nonissue for any sanctuary jurisdiction. It would only be an issue if there is a victim as a result of the jurisdiction's political decisions.

That is why we have introduced the Justice for Victims of Sanctuary Cities Act. In fact, we listened to some of the sanctuary jurisdictions, and they said: Well, we could get into legal trouble if we hold them for 48 hours, and for that reason we release them after a judge has ordered their release.

We have another bill that addresses that problem so that liability will go away. We are hearing what they have to say and trying to address it in additional legislation.

But I think this is a bill that makes sense, and I think it is something that law enforcement, county commissions, and city councils should take a look at.

I think they should work with ICE. Here is the last reason why I think working with ICE is very important: ICE has a legal responsibility to pursue these people if they are released by the local government.

Here is what happens. You release somebody who is charged with murder or vehicular homicide or heroin trafficking or rape. You release them in the community, and ICE has to go pursue them in the community.

So instead of allowing ICE to go into a jail and have a safe transfer from one jail into the ICE detainee system, they have to actually create a task force. They have got to go into a community, and they have to apprehend them. They have a statutory responsibility to do that.

Ironically, in some of those instances, the very law enforcement agency that released them now has to go into the field and back them up if it is a dangerous situation when they are trying to apprehend this person whom ICE has a legal responsibility to apprehend.

I think this is a commonsense bill. Hopefully, it is one that will give sanctuary cities some pause before they release somebody charged with murder or rape or heroin trafficking—a potentially dangerous person—back into the community, whom the Federal authorities have to pursue no matter what.

Mr. President, as in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Judiciary be discharged from further consideration of S. 2059 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

I ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and that the motion to recon-

sider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. DURBIN. Reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, there is more to the story. What he just described to you seems pretty obvious: A dangerous person, subject to deportation, why release them into the community? That is a perfectly valid point, one that we ought to be discussing and debating. But there is more to the story, and here is what it comes down to: Why did the major city police chiefs across the United States oppose what the Senator from North Carolina has just suggested? Because they know that if the Federal Government and its immigration authorities are going to use local police to enforce immigration laws, it is going to change their ability to keep communities and neighborhoods safe.

Now, why would I say that? Let me give you an example. It was just about 4 months ago when ICE officials pulled over a young woman and said to her: Are you here in the United States legally? She said: I am; I am protected by a program call DACA.

They said: We want to go to your home.

They went to her home, and her grandmother was there. They asked her grandmother for proof of her citizenship. Her grandmother had overstayed her visitor's visa. They deported her grandmother.

So the local police are fearful that if they are now going to be recruited to enforce immigration laws, they will not get cooperation in the community when it comes to fighting crime.

Let me give you an example that is timely. On Halloween night, in a section of Chicago, the little kids were out with their parents in a Hispanic neighborhood, walking along, and a little girl, 7 years old, named Giselle Zamago was shot twice. She barely survived. They got her to the hospital, and they saved her life. She is making a miraculous recovery.

What is important about this story and relevant to what the Senator from North Carolina asks is the fact that now community members have come forward to the police to help them find the shooter. They have arrested a 15-year-old gang member. This gang member was aiming at a 32-year-old gang rival standing next to the little girl, and he wasn't worth a damn when it came to shooting a gun. This poor little girl was shot.

What the police in Chicago are telling me is that we need the community to be willing to talk to the police and not be afraid somebody is going to follow someone home and check whether their grandmother is here legally in the United States.

That is why the whole question of sanctuary cities is boiling up and why

the police chiefs in major cities have basically said: This is too simplistic. Let's sit down and do this carefully, not as the Senator from North Carolina has proposed.

The last point I want to make is this. If you visit the Senate Chamber this week in Washington and want to see deliberation on legislation, you are out of luck. There are no bills—no substantive legislative bills—scheduled to be considered on the floor of the U.S. Senate this week, but it is not an unusual week. We hardly ever take up legislation in the committees and bring it to the floor for debate in the Senate.

So the real question I have is why the Senator from North Carolina—who is in the Republican majority, who serves on the Senate Judiciary Committee, who could ask for a markup of his bill if he wished—has decided instead to bypass the whole process and just say: I want to take this bill straight to the Senate with no debate. He is in the majority. We could bring this bill to the floor for debate and for amendment. We could bring it before the committee for a markup, but he chose not to do that.

Sadly, it is a commentary on what has happened to the Senate floor. It has become a legislative graveyard. We just don't do what the Senate used to do—debate amendments, deliberate, agree on things, and compromise. It doesn't happen anymore under Senator MCCONNELL. It is unfortunate. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, maybe just to add another chapter to that story, first, we did have a hearing on this bill about 2 weeks ago in Judiciary. That is the first step before you move to a markup.

I will be asking for a markup on this bill because I think it is a bill that is a commonsense bill. It is a bill that actually has a safe-harbor provision for people in the community who may be illegally present who want to work with law enforcement. We are listening to the concerns that law enforcement have expressed. We have addressed them, like so many times we have addressed these sorts of matters before.

So we will have a markup on the bill, we will have a vote out of committee, and I hope that we have a vote on this floor, because at the end of the day, some of the examples that Senator DURBIN noted are sad and should be avoided, but the real sad examples are the people who are dying, being raped, and being poisoned by people who were detained and could have been transferred into ICE custody and deported to make our communities safer, including the communities of illegally present people, who are less safe as a result of the current sanctuary policies.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I am going to yield to the Senator from

Iowa who has waited patiently on a separate issue that he and I are working on together and allow him to speak first if he wishes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

#### PRESCRIPTION DRUG COSTS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I thank Senator DURBIN. He and I are working on something that successfully passed the Senate last year and was not agreed to by the House of Representatives. So we are back to bring some transparency to pricing of drugs, and that is what I want to speak about now.

I am here to share a secret with the American people. It is about prescription drug pricing. As chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, it is no secret that one of my biggest priorities is to rein in the soaring costs of prescription medicine. It is no secret that Americans are having a hard time paying for medicine. It is no secret that Big Pharma doesn't want us to change the status quo.

In fact, Big Pharma is spending big money to stop Congress and the Trump administration from legislating a cure of these high prices. That is the secret. They want to keep drug pricing a secret from the American people. So what does that mean? It means that Big Pharma wants to keep secrecy baked in when it benefits Big Pharma.

Right now, the very murky drug pricing supply chain is a mystery to consumers. There seems to be no rhyme or reason to what consumers will owe at the pharmacy counter when they pick up their prescriptions. American taxpayers, American seniors, and this U.S. Senator are fed up with the lack of consumer information when it comes to pharmaceuticals. That is why I am working to inject some Midwestern common sense into prescription drug pricing.

As you can see, I am working with my friend Senator DURBIN. We have teamed up before on issues that naysayers said couldn't get done.

You might recall that President Trump signed our FIRST STEP Act into law last year. The landmark reforms are protecting public safety, saving taxpayer dollars, and bringing fairness to the criminal justice system.

Today, we are teaming up once again to fix an injustice with prescription drug advertising.

Big Pharma spends billions of dollars a year advertising to the U.S. consumers. The FDA regulates what these direct-to-consumer ads must tell consumers. For example, advertisers must include in their ads potential side effects. You hear it all the time on TV—things about nausea, diarrhea, depression, weight gain, or even death if you might buy one of their drugs.

But let me tell you what seems to scare Big Pharma to death—price transparency. They do not want to tell consumers how much a drug costs when they saturate the airwaves with advertising that shows happy families

enjoying the grandkids, celebrating birthdays, and going on vacations.

Senator DURBIN and I believe that Americans have a right to know about the price of drugs, like they need to know the side effects of drugs or the value of drugs. Consumers should then know what the advertised drug costs.

It happens that the Trump administration agrees with Senator DURBIN and this Senator on that point, but, of course, Big Pharma sued to stop the Department of Health and Human Services' regulations from taking effect.

It is up to Congress, then, to change the law. That is what Senator DURBIN and I are here to talk about today.

Almost exactly 1 year ago, I said here on the floor of the Senate that it is time for Big Pharma to talk turkey on this subject. Yet here we are again, 1 year later, and Big Pharma has ridden the taxpayers' gravy train for another 12 months, and part of that gravy train is keeping the price of drugs off of the television screens when they advertise all of the value of the drugs and the dangers and the side effects of those drugs.

As Americans get ready to count their blessings around the Thanksgiving table a couple weeks from now, I hope they can count on all 100 Members of the Senate to approve the Durbin-Grassley bill.

There is no good reason to oppose it unless you would rather keep secrets for Big Pharma.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, let me thank my colleague from Iowa.

Senator GRASSLEY and I are friends, colleagues, and we work together on a lot of issues. We come to this body with different political philosophies, but occasionally our ideas converge, and this is one of them.

We know that the pharmaceutical industry spends \$6 billion a year on television advertising. If you have never seen a drug ad on TV, I know one thing for sure: You don't own a TV. You can't get away from them. Every time you turn around, there is another ad. And what are they telling you in the ads? Don't take this drug if you are allergic to this drug.

How are you supposed to know that?

You may die if you take this drug. They tell you everything under the Sun, except a very fundamental fact, as Senator GRASSLEY has pointed out: How much does this cost?

Xarelto—I know it takes a long time for the drug Xarelto to finally reach the point where the average consumer, the average American, can even spell it, let alone pronounce it, so they can go ask their doctor for it. And do you know how much Xarelto costs—this blood thinner—each month? It is about \$520 a month. But it is not the most heavily advertised drug on television.

At least a few months ago, the most heavily advertised drug was HUMIRA.

Psoriatic arthritis? Remember that ad that showed the person with the little red spot on her elbow, and they said if you take HUMIRA this may help relieve psoriasis, the patchy skin and such?

Now, there are serious cases of psoriasis—don't get me wrong—but the notion that we would take Humira to clear up psoriasis belies reality. Here is the reality. Humira costs \$5,500 a month. Now, I am not going to win any bathing suit contests nor have perfectly clear skin, but it is beyond anybody's mind that we would spend \$5,500 a month to get rid of the little patch on your elbow.

Why won't they tell us what it costs? Because they know it is a stunning number, \$5,500 a month. So what Senator GRASSLEY and I did a year ago was to say to the pharmaceutical companies: Go ahead and run your ads, but in the ad, disclose how much your drug costs.

I think it is going to create pressure on these pharmaceutical companies when they decide to raise Humira to \$6,500 a month. The American consumers are going to know in fact what is going on. We passed it. We passed our bill in the Senate. We sent it over to the conference committee, and it died over in the House of Representatives. But things have changed in the House. There is a new Democratic majority there. I think we have got a better chance of passing it.

Later on today, I am going to ask for unanimous consent on this very simple bill directed to consumer advertising to say to pharmaceutical companies: Disclose in your ad how much your drug costs. That is it. Just disclose it. We have come up with the price that they have to declare each year as their standard price for the drug. Disclose that price to the American people. We think that folks will slow down deciding to buy Humira at \$5,500 a month to deal with a little red patch on their elbow. It is beyond belief.

So later on, I will make this unanimous consent, and I ask for unanimous consent now—since I appear to be the only one on the Senate floor now—to speak on a different topic for a moment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection.

#### IMMIGRATION

Mr. President, it was 19 years ago I introduced a bill called the DREAM Act. And the DREAM Act said if you came to the United States under the age of 18, if you grew up in this country, went to school, no problems with the law, you ought to be given a chance at some point later in life to earn your way to legal status and citizenship.

That was the bill. It was introduced, as I mentioned, about 19 years ago. It has never become the law of the land, but at one point, I went to one of my Senate cosponsors that happened to be running for President, named Barack Obama, and said to him: Can you do anything as President to help in this

situation? So many of these young people who are undocumented, they are living in the only country they have known, and they have no future because of their immigration status.

He created the DACA program, and under the DACA program, if you qualified as I just described, you would come forward and pay \$500 or \$600 for a filing fee, go through a criminal background check, and if you were approved, you would be allowed to stay in the United States for 2 years at a time under this DACA protection, renewable every 2 years. And you would be able to stay without fear of deportation and be allowed to legally work in this country.

President Obama agreed to do it, and when he did, 800,000 young people came forward and received DACA protection. For the longest time, President Trump would give speeches talking about these wonderful young people who deserved to have a chance to have a future in the United States. Then in September of 2017, he changed his mind. When he changed his mind, unfortunately, he eliminated the DACA program.

Now, it is being contested in court, and next week, 6 days from now, across the street, in the Supreme Court, they are going to argue whether the President had the power to end this program. As you might imagine, there are almost 800,000 young people who are listening carefully to those arguments and waiting for the decision of the Supreme Court. They currently have temporary protection because of the pending lawsuit. But if they lose in the Supreme Court, they will be subject to deportation. That would be a sad outcome, and in many cases, it would be a tragic outcome.

I am hoping that my colleagues in the Senate will follow this carefully. This is one thing we ought to agree on. Senator LINDSEY GRAHAM, conservative Republican from South Carolina, is my cosponsor of the DREAM Act, and he has joined with me in saying that we ought to make legal status available to these young people through the DREAM Act. I hope that ends up being the case.

I would like to close by telling a story on the floor here about this young man. His name is Ernestor De La Rosa. This is the 118th story I have told on the floor of the Senate about Dreamers, people protected by DACA. He is, as I said, the 118th example I can give to my colleagues in the Senate and those following this debate as to why we need to have DACA or the DREAM Act as the law of the land.

Let me tell the story. Ernestor was brought to the United States from Mexico when he was a child. He grew up in the Midwest in Dodge City, KS, and came to the United States legally. He applied for a green card while he was still in legal status. He wanted to become a lawful permanent resident, but the line for green cards was too long. You might remember an earlier statement I made in debate today. The

line was so long that Ernestor's visa expired before he received his green card. Under the laws of America, he was undocumented.

It is not well-known that millions of undocumented immigrants came to the United States legally in the first place, but they are unable to become permanent legal residents because our immigration system is broken.

Here is what Ernestor says about it: "We all hear comments about 'Get back in line and do it legally.' Well, we tried. But the system right now is so complex that it takes up to 20 years to attain legal status."

When he first arrived, Ernestor, from Mexico, did not speak or read English, but he worked hard and became an honor student in his school. He earned an associate's degree from Dodge City Community College and a bachelor's degree from Fort Hays State University and a master's in public administration from Wichita State University.

Because of his immigration status, Ernestor was not eligible for any Federal financial aid as a student. How did he get through school? He worked two jobs. Here is what he says about that experience: "Often kids my age enjoy the college lifestyle, hanging out with friends and partying. But I wasn't able to do that. I was so disciplined, I said to myself I cannot fail a class, because I am going to have to pay out of my pocket take it again."

What is Ernestor doing today? He is the assistant city manager of Dodge City, KS. He manages a budget of more than \$55 million and directly oversees 20 employees. He is responsible for his city's legislative affairs, working with Federal, State, and local representatives on issues such as housing, transportation, and energy.

Here is what he says about his job: "I love this profession because I am able to make a difference in my community and advocate to meet the needs of our residents. It is rewarding and fulfilling to serve this great city."

Imagine that. Ernestor came to Dodge City unable to speak or read English. Now, he is the assistant city manager. This is his story, but it is also America's story. Without DACA, which protected him, gave him a right to this job, none of this would have been possible.

Ernestor's dream is to become an American citizen and to advance from assistant city manager to city manager, so he can continue to make a difference in people's lives, but that can only happen if we do something here on the floor of the United States Senate.

The U.S. House of Representatives passed a measure called the American Dream and Promise Act that would provide for Dreamers, as mentioned earlier, and would provide for this young man. Senator McCONNELL refuses to allow us to debate this bill on the floor of the United States Senate. It is unfortunate.

Next week, guys like Ernestor and hundreds of thousands of Dreamers are

going to be focused right across the street on the Supreme Court. They are counting on the Supreme Court to do the right thing and reject President Trump's repeal of DACA.

They are counting on us who serve in the Senate to solve this crisis that the President has created and give this young man and thousands like him a chance. It would be an American tragedy to deport this young man after all he has achieved and send him back to Mexico, where he hasn't lived since he was a little boy.

Will the majority leader give him a chance? I hope so. The Senate should give the American Dream and Promise Act a vote.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

#### GLOBAL HOSTAGE ACT

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, this week marks the 40th anniversary of the Iran hostage crisis, when 66 Americans were seized by an armed mob fueled by the anti-American ravings of Iran's revolution clerics. Fifty-two of those Americans were held captive for 444 days, during which time they were paraded on television and used as pawns by Iran's theocratic dictators.

Those Americans would finally come home safely, thanks to a pressure campaign of financial sanctions and trade embargoes by the United States and their partners, but not everyone came home safely from Iran. Before the crisis ended, five American airmen and three marines lay dead, killed in an ill-fated rescue mission necessitated by Iran's lawless deeds.

This week's anniversary is a useful reminder of the true nature of the regime in Tehran. Behind Iran's smooth talking, Western-educated diplomats are a band of radical clerics that act more like a criminal gang than the rulers of a sovereign nation.

Consider how the regime commemorated the 40th anniversary of their crime—not with apologies, like a civilized nation might. No, with anti-American rallies where uniformed soldiers—uniformed soldiers, not clerics, not activists—uniformed soldiers led chants of "Death to America" and "Death to Israel."

In other words, Iran is unreformed and unrepentant. It still takes and holds hostages to this very day—businessmen, professors, engineers, fathers, and mothers, all just bargaining chips to the Ayatollahs. That is why I have a bill to impose new and substantial costs on these kidnapers. The Global Hostage Act would require the President to sanction foreign officials who take Americans as their hostages.

The goal of our bill is clear: If you take Americans hostage, we will make your life miserable. You will not be able to travel here. You will not be able to bank here. You will not be able to send your kids to fancy schools here. You will be treated like the pariah you are, which is precisely what the Ayatollahs remain 40 years after they took their first American hostages.

Mr. President, I ask consent that the following remarks be entered in a separate part of the journal.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection.

#### NOMINATION OF LEE PHILIP RUDOFSKY

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, I would like to say a few words about Lee Philip Rudofsky, the President's nominee to the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Arkansas.

In a few minutes, this body will vote to move ahead with this nomination. Lee has a long and impressive resume, from Harvard Law School to the White House Office of Legal Counsel, to Kirkland & Ellis, and beyond. His early career and qualifications speak for themselves. Lee is no stranger to serving Arkansans. He was our State's very first solicitor general. Lee left a good job at Wal-Mart to take that position and face the many challenges that come with it. He also moved 3 hours from his loving wife and three young kids to work around the clock for the people of Arkansas.

That hard work paid off for all of us. According to esteemed members of Arkansas' legal community from both parties, Lee "established Arkansas Solicitor General's Office as one of the finest legal practices in the State of Arkansas."

He has subsequently become a respected professor and recruiter at one of our State's two law schools, and Lee is also a leader at his local synagogue and a member of the local chapter of the American Inns of Court.

After the Senate votes to confirm him later this week, Lee will draw from this deep well of experience as he continues to serve the people of Arkansas with devotion and distinction. He will bring to the bench his intelligence, character, and, above all, commitment to the rule of law and the administration of equal justice under the law.

I was honored to introduce Lee before the Judiciary Committee earlier this year. I am now honored, again, to speak on his behalf today. Lee is an exceptional selection for the Federal bench. I am happy to call him friend, and soon I look forward to calling him a judge.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to start the votes 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 bill clerk read as follows:

#### CLOTURE MOTION

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

Richard C. Shelby, Mike Crapo, John Cornyn, Roy Blunt, Thom Tillis, Shelley Moore Capito, Roger F. Wicker, Lisa Murkowski, Mike Rounds, Pat Roberts, John Boozman, Mike Rounds, Rick Scott, John Barrasso, Kevin Cramer, Richard Burr, Mitch McConnell.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Lee Philip Rudofsky, of Arkansas, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Arkansas, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR) and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON).

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 Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) are necessarily absent.

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 51, nays 41, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 346 Ex.]

#### YEAS—51

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

#### NAYS—41

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

NOT VOTING—8

Bennet	Harris	Sanders
Booker	Isakson	Warren
Burr	Klobuchar	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 51, the nays are 41. The motion is agreed to.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The senior legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

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

Mitch McConnell, John Boozman, John Cornyn, Mike Crapo, Pat Roberts, Mike Rounds, Thom Tillis, Roger F. Wicker, Cindy Hyde-Smith, Kevin Cramer, John Hoeven, Rob Portman, Dan Sullivan, Chuck Grassley, Richard Burr, John Thune, Roy Blunt.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Jennifer Philpott Wilson, of Pennsylvania, to be United States District Judge for the Middle District of Pennsylvania, shall be brought to a close?

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent; the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR) and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON).

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 Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) are necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 89, nays 3, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 347 Ex.]

YEAS—89

Alexander	Cornyn	Hawley
Baldwin	Cortez Masto	Heinrich
Barrasso	Cotton	Hoeven
Blackburn	Cramer	Hyde-Smith
Blumenthal	Crapo	Inhofe
Blunt	Cruz	Johnson
Boozman	Daines	Jones
Braun	Duckworth	Kaine
Brown	Durbin	Kennedy
Cantwell	Enzi	King
Capito	Ernst	Lankford
Cardin	Feinstein	Leahy
Carper	Fischer	Lee
Casey	Gardner	Manchin
Cassidy	Graham	McConnell
Collins	Grassley	McSally
Coons	Hassan	Menendez

Merkley	Rosen	Sullivan
Moran	Rounds	Tester
Murkowski	Rubio	Thune
Murphy	Sasse	Tillis
Murray	Schatz	Toomey
Paul	Schumer	Udall
Perdue	Scott (FL)	Van Hollen
Peters	Scott (SC)	Warner
Portman	Shaheen	Whitehouse
Reed	Shelby	Wicker
Risch	Sinema	Wyden
Roberts	Smith	Young
Romney	Stabenow	

NAYS—3

Gillibrand	Hirono	Markey
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NOT VOTING—8

Bennet	Harris	Sanders
Booker	Isakson	Warren
Burr	Klobuchar	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 89, the nays are 3. The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Jennifer Philpott Wilson, of Pennsylvania, to be United States District Judge for the Middle District of Pennsylvania.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

TAX REFORM

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I thought it would be appropriate to come to the floor to celebrate the second anniversary of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act.

For years I heard from Texans who thought that the Tax Code was simply too complex, too burdensome, and that the Federal Government simply took too much of the fruits of their labor.

They were absolutely correct. Our Tax Code hadn't been reformed in more than three decades, and Republican and Democratic Presidents have long pointed out how America was at a competitive disadvantage relative to other countries because of our Tax Code.

Then, of course, there is the drag of high tax rates on our domestic economy—especially following the great recession during the Obama administration—which made jump-starting the economy a top priority last Congress.

The good news is that we delivered. The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act lowered the individual tax rates across the board for every bracket. It increased the standard deduction, doubled the child tax credit, and made tax rates for businesses more competitive. Our goal was to make our Tax Code work for the American people, not the other way around.

I know there are a lot of naysayers who said it wouldn't work. Some of them are still saying that. But I think the results speak for themselves.

First, we saw waves of positive headlines announcing that companies big and small were using their tax savings to provide pay raises, pay bonuses, 401(k) match increases, and other benefits to their employees.

I made a point of asking my constituents in Texas about their experience

under the new Tax Code, and here is some of what I heard:

Tejas Office Products is a Hispanic-owned and operated family business in Houston. They were able to hire more workers in Southeast Texas and expand their business as a result of their tax savings from the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act.

There is American Bank in Corpus Christi. They projected that they could lend an additional \$120 million over the next 5 years in the Coastal Bend, which was absolutely critical, especially following the natural disaster known as Hurricane Harvey.

Then there is Happy State Bank, my favorite name for a bank—Happy State Bank—in Amarillo, which increased wages for more than 600 of its 700 employees. It upped their starting minimum wage and increased their dollar-for-dollar retirement plan match from 6 percent to 7 percent, all of which was good news.

Well, it didn't take long for that good news in these anecdotal cases, for example, to translate into a much improved economy across the board, which helps everybody.

We have seen rapid and consistent job growth with more than 4.3 million new jobs since tax reform became law—4.3 million new jobs.

In September, the national unemployment rate fell to a 50-year low, and Texas unemployment remains below the national average at only 3.4 percent.

The thing I hear the most from employers and job creators in Texas is that they can't find enough qualified workers to fill the good jobs that exist. We have one of the tightest labor markets in decades.

Wages are going up as a result of competition for workers. The poverty rate has hit its lowest level since the turn of the century. American families are seeing more of their hard-earned dollars in each paycheck.

Despite evidence to the contrary, we are still hearing from some of the same old critics who say that tax reform was a flop. The Atlantic, for example, published a story last week with the title "The GOP Tax Cuts Didn't Work." The author claims that tax reform didn't live up to the hype and that because our economy didn't grow as much as some of the estimates believed it would, consecutive, positive growth is absolutely worthless.

Well, that doesn't make any sense at all—not to mention the fact that economic growth has outpaced even the forecast of the Congressional Budget Office prior to tax reform.

This author also mentions that the Institute for Supply Management—or ISM—manufacturing index dipped in September. But the ISM manufacturing index is a survey of purchasing managers who may be swayed by sentiment as much as actual activity. We have seen this index at a similar level before, and the economy continued to grow.

In addition, the critic in this article points to declining exports as a factor in this, despite the fact that our trade deficit fell 4.7 percent in September.

The critics still refuse to admit the connection between increased consumer spending and Americans bringing home more in each paycheck. In other words, they are trying to cherry-pick the evidence and ignore any evidence that the American people have benefited from the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act.

In fact, the critics—who I think are more concerned about an agenda than they are the economy or the welfare of the working American family—continue to try to paint a picture of doom and gloom of our Nation's economy to further that political agenda.

It was not that long ago when some were even highlighting that tax refunds were reduced because of tax reform. It is a bogus measurement of tax relief. We know that at the end of the day, the data showed the average refund check was not that different from the previous year. Wouldn't you want your tax refund to be lower because you were simply paying less withholding each month? That is an interest-free loan to the Federal Government.

Well, while we seem to have moved beyond that argument, we are now on to the next one. Our Democratic colleagues point out that some companies are using their savings for stock buybacks and try to portray this as a corporate blood thirst, claiming it hurts workers in the economy. But by repurchasing their own shares, companies are reinvesting in themselves and their shareholders. Many times, this is teachers or police officers or other first responders. Interfering with stock buybacks, as some of our friends across the aisle have recommended, would not only hurt our economy, but would do serious damage to the pension and retirement accounts of many working Texans and other Americans.

The message of these partisan critics is: The government can spend your money better and more wisely than you can. But Washington cannot even manage its own books and uses "smoke-and-mirrors" accounting measures that would make even Bernie Madoff blush. But that is only the start of the concerning proposals that we have heard from the folks on the left. Our colleague from Massachusetts said if she wins the Presidency, she will soak the American taxpayer even more in an attempt to fund her completely unworkable healthcare proposal.

The differences are pretty stark in the approach: pro-growth, job-creating, economy-growing policies or Big Government, even socialist policies. Those seem to be the two most obvious choices. I know what camp I am in, and I know what camp that Texans are in on this topic.

This constant effort to belittle the progress we have made because of tax reform reminds me of when NANCY

PELOSI compared the savings of the American people under tax reform to "crumbs." She called them "crumbs."

One Texan named Mark told me that his take-home pay increased \$302 a month. That may be crumbs to NANCY PELOSI, but Mark said it would cover his cable, his internet, and his auto insurance bills. He doesn't consider that crumbs.

Another gentleman named Gilbert told me that he and his wife are retired and living on pensions. When they saw a decrease in their Federal tax deduction that allows them to bring home an additional \$400 a month, they said at first they thought it was a mistake, until they learned it was true and, good news, \$400 a month more.

A retired Air Force colonel from Brownsville named David told me that the benefit seems like more than "crumbs" to him.

But I have no doubt that here in this hyper-politicized environment of Washington, DC, that pundits and folks on the left will continue to try to criticize tax reform and belittle the progress that we have made, but those Texans who are reaping the benefits of this law every day are proof positive that they are wrong and that the law is working as we intended.

Despite what I hear from folks on the left, this is an incredible time for our economy. We have made taxes simpler, fairer, and lower for hard-working American families. And we will keep working to remove the regulatory burdens that will help unleash the power of the free market. For more than 150 years, we have been the world's largest economy, and because of pro-growth policies like tax reform, that will only continue to get better.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

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

#### VETERANS DAY

Ms. ERNST. Mr. President, having worn our great Nation's colors in Operation Iraqi Freedom, veterans hold a special place in my heart. Some of my favorite moments in Iowa are centered on honoring our veterans and their families with the medals and the recognition they have earned. Oftentimes, these humble heroes don't want to step forward and receive the honor they are due.

Glenn McDole is a great example of this. Glenn served in World War II and faced some very, very dark days, being only 1 of the 11, out of a total of 150, who survived the Palawan massacre. Glenn was captured in 1941, and he came home to Iowa in 1945. It wasn't until the early 1980s that he started speaking about his military experience.

When he returned home from the war, he didn't skip a beat in his service. Glenn quickly joined the Iowa State Patrol and then the Polk County Sheriff's Office. Glenn lived a very full

life of service. Yet his heroic actions in uniform would go unnoticed for so many years.

I am so grateful that his family got in touch with my office, and we were able to track down the more than 13 medals that he should have received for his service. Presenting the medals to his family earlier this year in my office in Des Moines was truly a beautiful moment.

The medals presented to Glenn's family—and the number of other veterans and families across Iowa who have received these well-deserved recognitions—represent duty, honor, and sacrifice. It is the heroic stories of these very veterans, like Glenn, that truly inspire me to keep fighting for our veterans day in and day out.

As someone who commanded men and women overseas during Operation Iraqi Freedom and then served as the battalion commander of the largest battalion in the Iowa Army National Guard, I have a deep connection and appreciation for our veterans.

Just this past weekend, as I was wrapping up my 99-county tour in Iowa, I was able to spend some time with more of those Iowa veterans at my veterans' resource fair. We were sharing stories about those hard times. We were laughing about the good times. We talked about concerns they have with the VA and making sure they are getting the quality of care they have earned. We talked about the work we have done in the Senate to improve their well-being.

In just the past few years, under the Trump administration, we have been able to expand access to services through legislation like the VA MISSION Act, a bipartisan bill that I proudly helped to get signed into law. This important bill included a number of my priorities, like allowing qualified VA health providers to practice telemedicine across State lines and veterans to receive their care through telemedicine, including vital mental healthcare treatment, and doing it from the comfort of their own home.

President Trump just signed another one of my bills into law, the HAVEN Act, which protects the economic security and well-being of veterans and their families who rely on disability benefits and may be experiencing financial hardship.

I continue to press the VA to take a hard look at their hiring practices and to make sure the people treating and providing care to our veterans have a record of quality care, specifically by introducing the bipartisan Ensuring Quality Care for Our Veterans Act.

The legislation ensures that the VA is absolutely held accountable for how they help care for their veterans, and I am continuing to press them on that issue. We must work tirelessly to restore hope in the institutions that have asked so much of our Nation's heroes, plain and simple. Veterans must have reliable, quality mental and physical healthcare. There is no other option.

Folks, as we take a moment to reflect on the work we have done and continue to do in Congress on behalf of these men and women, we should also pause, as we do every year on Veterans Day, to simply honor their service and the sacrifices they have made for our country and for our freedom.

Serving in the military provided me some of the best years, the best friends, the best experiences, and the best memories of my life.

Each year, Veterans Day serves as a stark reminder of the daily sacrifice made by those who have served this country bravely and selflessly.

Veterans in Iowa and across our Nation, you have my support and my deepest gratitude today and every day of the year.

When men and women sacrifice time with their families and give up holidays, comfort, and their livelihoods to protect our Nation and defend the freedoms we often take for granted, we must fulfill our commitment to caring for them when they return home.

To all of my fellow veterans, may God bless you and keep you.

To their families, I thank you so much for standing behind your loved ones in our country's time of need.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, first of all, I want to say how much I appreciate Senator ERNST. When she talks about veterans, she talks about her own experience but also the veterans she has served with and sees every day. This goes to the heart of her great dedication to the people who are currently serving.

Veterans Day is a day that we come to celebrate every year. It is a national holiday, but in so many ways, it is uniquely a local holiday. Events across Missouri and across all of our States are dramatically different based on where you are and the way that community, over time or maybe on a special occasion, has decided this is going to be the way they are uniquely going to celebrate Veterans Day. These ceremonies often include gestures of respect that are repeated over and over again, and that is exactly what you should do with respect. Respect doesn't wear out. We lay wreaths. We play music. We pledge to the flag, I think in many unique ways on Veterans Day, as we think about those who have been willing to defend that flag at all costs. There may be a 21-gun salute. There may be a parade.

There are lots of different ways we celebrate, and every community honors its own neighbors in a different way. If you grew up in that community and you look at the wall with the community members' names or you look at the register at the courthouse with the names of those who gave their lives in one of our wars, you recognize those names. They are the last names of the people you went to school with. They are the last names of the people you

grew up alongside of. They are often the names of families who still live in that community.

I was thinking about this, and I thought about a name that was given to one of my good friends. His middle name was after his uncle who had died in World War II, and he didn't particularly like his middle name. One day, he said to my dad: "I hate that name. I don't like my middle name. I wish it wasn't my middle name." What he didn't know was that my dad was on his uncle's basketball team. My dad quickly pointed that out. He said: "Your uncle was one of the finest young men I ever knew, and he never got to be an older man because he gave his life in World War II." When my friend was born 15 years later, his family wanted to remember the name of that person who served and made the ultimate sacrifice. Those are the kinds of things we think about in communities on Veterans Day.

I will be going to several events—one at Camdenton High School in Camdenton, MO. They will be recognizing 32 veterans at that event. They will also be recognizing the new Junior ROTC Program at the high school. When talking about local character, that is sort of what we are talking about. In Camdenton, they are honoring not only those who served and sacrificed previously but also a new generation that is stepping up and willing to serve among those being recognized on Veterans Day.

I am going to go to a ceremony in Wright County, which is just a little bit down the road, just an hour and 15 minutes away from Camdenton. In that ceremony, they are dedicating a new Wright County Patriots Memorial in Hartville. The memorial honors people from the area who served and died in every conflict from the Civil War to the War on Terror. The organizers have made it clear that this is a day of celebration and honor, not of sorrow. It is a day to celebrate those who served. Some got their names on the wall. Others didn't give their lives in conflict but were willing to put on the uniform and go through the training and in many cases into dangerous situations. Maybe they didn't have to make the ultimate sacrifice, but on Veterans Day, we recognize veterans who were willing to serve. That is exactly what Veterans Day should be.

This will be the 100th anniversary of the first Veterans Day, which was originally called Armistice Day. It was Armistice Day because it commemorated the end of World War I. World War I was called The Great War, and it was called The War to End All Wars. That is not what happened, but that is what people thought, in the hours after World War I, might have happened. It was so horrible, so terrible, and so many lives were lost that they thought it might be the war to end all wars. It ended on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month, 100 years ago.

The United States lost 116,000 people in the relatively short time we were in

that war. We got in the war late. We made a difference in the war, but 116,000 people were lost in that period of time, in that truly grueling battle in World War I. Another 200,000 U.S. troops were wounded in that war.

The first Veterans Day 1 year later was not about what was lost; it was a celebration of what was won. It began with the end of the war. It reaffirmed a commitment to democracy. On that first holiday 100 years ago, President Wilson said that "the reflections of Armistice Day will be filled with solemn pride in the heroism of those who died in the country's service and with gratitude for victory." We remember the heroism of those who were lost and all who were willing to serve, and, as on that first anniversary of the end of World War I, we remember the victory that was achieved. We use this occasion to honor and remember our veterans with pride and gratitude.

I am glad we are continuing to build new memorials, like the one in Wright County. I am glad we continue to honor people who are willing to serve, like the recognition of the new JROTC Program at Camdenton High School.

A lot of things have changed in the 100 years since the end of World War I, but the point is, Veterans Day hasn't changed. This is not something Americans used to do; this is something we continue to do, and, as Senator ERNST said so well, it is something we need to do every day.

Veterans Day is a special day of recognition, but we need to ensure that veterans have what they need while they are serving, and once they become veterans, we need to make sure they have everything they were promised and then some, including every access to healthcare that they were promised.

I think we have successfully expanded not only the kind of healthcare people can get but also the way they can get their healthcare, respect and appreciation, remembrance of what they did and how that might have led to a behavioral health challenge or a health challenge of some other kind, and a country willing to step up for those who were willing to step up for us.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. YOUNG. Mr. President, in August I had the honor of traveling to a tiny town, to a small diner in Auburn, IN. The purpose of my visit was to present a military service medal that was nearly 75 years in the making. Over the last few months, I have had a lot of opportunities to think about those moments in Sandra D's Cafe and what they have meant to me. As we approach Veterans Day, I would like to share a few of those lessons.

I served in the military for 10 years, and I saw firsthand the sacrifices made by our men and women in uniform. As an elected representative, I have had further opportunity to visit veterans who served in conflict zones and families who made incredible sacrifices to

keep us all free. I learned just how much a sacrifice we truly ask of our troops and their families.

In the Marine Corps, we have a motto: “Semper Fidelis.” Rarely do we tell folks what it means. It means “always faithful”—faithful to our Nation and faithful to all those who protect it, faithful to all those who serve in peacetime and are prepared to protect it. It is why I wear this memorial bracelet around my wrist. The folks back home know I wear it. I remind them of it often because it is important. This bracelet honors LCpl Alec Terwiske. He was a fellow U.S. marine from a small town in Dubois, IN, in southern Indiana. On September 3, 2012, he was tragically killed—for all of us—in Afghanistan.

His mom, Sandy, has become a close friend. She asked me to wear this bracelet to honor his memory, and I do so. I do so proudly every day to remember Alec and Sandy and the rest of their family and also to remember all those men and women who love our country and what it stands for so much that they are prepared, if necessary, when called to do so, to put their lives on the line for all of us. It takes a special person to take up arms in defense of our country. It takes a belief and cause much greater than ourselves. That cause is, in fact, what America is all about. It is that very belief that makes me think back to that cafe in Auburn.

Sandra D’s father, Robert Egli, was a World War II veteran who survived the war. He lived a long and happy life back home in Indiana and didn’t say much about his military service. In fact, when I showed up, Sandra didn’t know much about the story. I did a little personal internet research in the car on the way there to deliver her father’s missing Bronze Star, and what I found out was very interesting.

It was World War II, in the Philippines, the Pacific theater. Robert’s unit was involved in a battle that saved the lives of 511 American prisoners of war. His actions and those of the other American GIs with him allowed those Americans to return home, to marry their sweethearts, to start a family, and to pursue the American dream.

Now, think about it. This is the beauty and the magic of the gift that so many of our men and women in uniform have given or are prepared to give. Because of the sacrifice of Robert Egli, there are hundreds of Americans who have had children and grandchildren who are now alive today. As a result of his beautiful act of courage, his selfless act of service on behalf of all of us, his patriotism, his sacrifice, maybe tens of thousands of people across America are alive.

For these reasons and many, many more, we must never stop working to ensure that our veterans receive the respect they deserve. That includes ensuring that our veterans receive the care they are due after they are back, safe and secure, at home.

The Senate has already taken up and passed many pieces of nonpartisan legislation—commonsense legislation which I cosponsored and was proud to see become law that will improve the lives of our veterans.

The VA MISSION Act is perhaps the most notable and ambitious effort where we have all come together to support our veterans. This law has already dramatically improved the way veterans receive their healthcare. We have also taken steps to speed up the appeals process for veterans through the Veterans Appeals Improvement and Modernization Act. No one should ever have to wait years or, perhaps even in the worst instance, pass away, waiting on their benefits. We made significant improvement with respect to that process.

We improved the way our veterans are cared for in nursing homes, and we worked together to provide urgently needed support for veterans who may be contemplating suicide. This year, I have introduced another piece of legislation, working with TAMMY DUCKWORTH, a wounded warrior herself and distinguished Member on the other side of the aisle. We introduced the VETS Safe Travel Act to provide TSA Precheck benefits for those veterans who have been severely wounded on the battlefield. This VETS Safe Travel Act would help 70,000 amputees, 100,000 paralyzed veterans, and 130,000 blind veterans who are currently subjected to a rigorous and demeaning screening process when traveling. Unfortunately, the legislation has, at least so far, been languishing in the House of Representatives, and its delay, of course, means veterans in need will be left waiting. I would really hope that before the House takes another recess week, they can take up and pass this important legislation. I think our veterans have more than earned it.

Working together, we made significant strides for our veterans in recent years, but of course we must always keep striving to do more. It was George Washington, a veteran himself, of course, who once said:

The willingness with which our young people are likely to serve in any war, no matter how justified, shall be directly proportional as to how they perceive the veterans of earlier wars were treated and appreciated by their nation.

Let’s treat them well. Let’s appreciate them fully this Veterans Day and every day. I encourage you to remember your neighbors, the servicemembers in your State, and servicemembers around the country and deployed around the world. I encourage you to think of all those people before and those still with us who are proud to call themselves veterans of our military.

May God bless our veterans. May God continue to bless America.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. President, as you know, this coming Monday, November

11, is Veterans Day. I have heard my colleagues pay tribute to veterans in their own special way, and I wanted to be a part of that group today to offer a mighty thank-you to our men and women who serve.

I stand before you to honor the brave men and women of the U.S. armed services, past and present, who have stood up to protect us and our freedoms that we hold so dear.

Veterans Day, to me, is a day to reflect on the sacrifices made by all of those who served. It is a time to say thank you. It is a time to pause and think about the veterans themselves and their families. It is also a time for younger people, and I am talking elementary-aged students, to really see the pride and the commitment our veterans over time have had. Whether you are going to your hometown parade or going to a cemetery ceremony or just talking about it within your own home, throughout America’s history, our military has been regarded as the greatest in the world, and it sure is. Our military would not be what it is without the men and women of our All-Volunteer Force.

I am a daughter of a World War II veteran. I grew up hearing smidgeons of his stories off and on the battlefield, and I have always been in awe of those who served. He was very proud of his service in World War II. November 20, 1944, my father, SSG Arch A. Moore, Jr., from Moundsville, WV, was serving somewhere on the Belgium-German line when he was shot in the face, and he was left for dead on the battlefield for 2 days. He talked about it was in a beet field. I remember him saying it was in a beet field. I didn’t like beets, and now I knew why I really didn’t like beets. He also talked about how he was equipped with some painkiller that he could put on his leg to sort of ease the pain as he lay there hoping somebody would come and get him. That was the end of his service on the battlefield. He was taken and miraculously had a great recovery after probably a year of recovery over in England.

For his actions on the battlefield, he received the Purple Heart, Bronze Star, Combat Infantryman Badge, and the European Theater of Operations Ribbon with three battle stars. Like my father, so many of the veterans of World War II faced a harsh reality in this conflict. This year marks the 75th anniversary of two of World War II’s most notable battles: D-Day and Battle of the Bulge. Battle of the Bulge is going to be in December next month. Actually, my dad’s platoon went on to fight in the Battle of the Bulge, and only three of his platoon survived.

D-Day is known as the turning point in the war because those brave soldiers pushed their way through German forces to take back Normandy. If anybody wants to see what a sacrifice our country made in World War II, and more for young people to see, I would recommend going to the cemetery in Normandy and seeing those white

markers of a very young American force. While there were many casualties, the United States and our allies prevailed and managed to change the direction of the war at the same time.

As I said, next month we will remember the 75th anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge. Many Americans lost their lives fending off the German offensive, but we were eventually victorious, which paved the way to the end of the war 5 months later.

West Virginia is also home to one of the last remaining Medal of Honor recipients from World War II, and that is our own Hershel “Woody” Williams. He turned 96 last month. He travels the country talking about veterans and love of country. I ran the Marine Marathon 2 weeks ago in honor of all marines, but I thought about Woody as a marine. I say I ran my first marathon—probably my last—but I thought about Woody as he valiantly fought in the battle of Iwo Jima and rightfully earned the military’s most prestigious medals for his actions during the war. Anecdotally, I think he will be leading the parade in New York City on Veterans Day.

With the growing age of this Nation’s World War II veterans, I encourage our youth to take the time to listen to the stories of heroism from our “greatest generation.” Without their valiant actions and dedication to preserving our freedoms, this country would not be what it is today.

We also must honor all of our veterans from all our eras. Whether it is World War II, Korea, Vietnam, Afghanistan, the selfless actions of our U.S. soldiers must not go unrecognized. They put their lives on the line to afford us the opportunity to live in the greatest country on Earth. We can have our own religious freedom, freedom of speech, freedom of the press, but all the freedoms we enjoy are because of the folks who went before us who were dedicated and willing to serve.

On Capitol Hill, as we know, there are many divisive issues, but ensuring that our veterans receive the support they have earned through their dedicated service to our country is something we all agree on. Like the gentleman here today, the Senator from North Dakota, I happen to serve on the Appropriations Committee. I am on the Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies. It has been our priority to make sure veterans programs receive the funding necessary to best assist our men and women who have served the country.

In recent years, Congress has made great strides in trying to improve the VA system, which can always be improved even more, but the legislation we put forward, the VA MISSION Act, I think, will help and has helped. It improved the VA healthcare system by establishing a permanent veterans community care program and expanding our VA caregiving benefits to vet-

erans from all eras. When they say it is 10 miles as the crow flies in mountainous States like West Virginia, if you are driving in West Virginia, that is not going to take you 10 minutes. That could take you an hour, and that is not because of the traffic. Providing community care to our veterans is important because it allows them to receive the care they need without having to travel these long and sometimes arduous routes.

Our work must not stop here. We must continue to work on legislation that will benefit our veteran community. As a Senator, one of my greatest privileges is to make sure our veterans receive the respect and admiration they have earned throughout their service. This is especially true given that West Virginia has one of the largest per capita populations of veterans in this country. The pride West Virginia veterans have is truly remarkable. After service, these men and women are the bedrock of our communities and make significant contributions to making them better.

Rightfully so, Virginians have a great amount of admiration for those who have served, and it is reflected in our communities. We have a lot of statues, a lot of parks, a lot of commemorative highways, a lot of moments of silence in West Virginia to honor our veterans we have lost and those who have gone before us.

I was marching in the Ripley Veterans Day parade last Veterans Day, and I was overwhelmed by the support a small town would show its veterans. Whether someone has served in combat or assisted with the daily operations of the military, their dedication to defending this country must not be unnoticed.

On Monday, I urge everyone to take a moment to thank a veteran. At the same time, this shouldn’t be limited to just Veterans Day. We should thank our veterans each and every day. It is important that we pay them the respect when the opportunity arises. I really feel good when I am getting on a plane and the announcement is made that our military in uniform are allowed to enter the plane. You know how those crowds get up when it is time to get on the plane. Many times, the crowd will part and, in admiration of our military, welcome that little bit of a head start they get to board the plane. Without great sacrifices and dedication to defending this flag, this country would not be what it is.

I say God bless our veterans. God bless our country.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, I rise to recognize and thank our veterans and their families. I commend the good Senator from the State of West Virginia. I appreciate her remarks and her incredible support for our veterans. Frankly, I want to mention my admiration for her having just completed

the Marine Corps Marathon. I think that is absolutely remarkable. I know she is an avid runner, but to complete a marathon is no small achievement. Of course, to do it as part of the Marine Marathon is another great way to honor our marvelous and wonderful veterans. My father was in the Marine Corps, so I have a special affinity, of course, because of that as well. I appreciate all of our amazing, wonderful veterans.

I am really honored to join my colleagues. I know the good Senator from Kansas is next. As he chairs our Ag Committee, he and I have had a lot of opportunity to work on agricultural issues. He is also another member of the Marine Corps, and I know he has served with great distinction.

Again, it is a great honor to be here today and to join my colleagues in honoring our phenomenal veterans.

In June, I had the opportunity to join a Senate delegation in Normandy for the 75th anniversary of D-Day. We had the honor of meeting with some of the veterans who had landed on the beaches of Normandy and were again reminded of the tremendous sacrifices that our Nation’s veterans have made to preserve our way of life and keep our Nation free. It really was an honor to meet with some of those veterans and to be there in Normandy on the 75th anniversary. To see where they had landed and then to talk with them about it was an incredible way to relive history and, of course, to honor their incredible sacrifice.

We also recognize that those who serve do not serve alone. We appreciate, too, the sacrifices of their families and their loved ones, who have supported them and our Nation’s veterans in their service, who have done so throughout the history of our country, and who serve today, along with their veteran family members—their husbands or wives or sons or daughters, whoever they may be—who have donned the uniform to serve this great Nation. We honor their service and the service of all those who are in harm’s way today.

While we set aside a day each year to express our gratitude, every day, we are reminded of the dedication of those who have served to protect our freedom and our liberties. Our veterans cannot be thanked enough. Given their service and sacrifice, the least our Nation can do is to uphold its commitment to provide our veterans with the healthcare, benefits, and recognition they have so richly earned.

In the Senate, we have passed landmark legislation, including the VA MISSION Act, to support our veterans and provide them with the care and services they have earned. The VA MISSION Act strengthens the VA’s ability to provide care for our veterans, and when the VA is unable to do so, it gives our veterans more options by allowing them to seek care in their home communities. This has been a top priority for veterans in my State, in the

rural State of North Dakota. Giving veterans more options closer to home for healthcare and long-term care is and must continue to be an absolute priority.

We are also continuing to work with the VA and long-term care providers to ensure that the providers who want to treat veterans are able to do so without undertaking unnecessary burdens. We are helping veterans access long-term care—nursing home care, home-based care—closer to home and near their loved ones.

In the course of their dedicated service, our military members make sacrifices in many ways. This includes injuries both seen and unseen. We owe our veterans the best possible care in treating these wounds. That is why we have been working to improve and strengthen the VA's mental healthcare and suicide prevention programs. This includes expanding access to alternative treatment options, like hyperbaric oxygen therapy, HBOT, for veterans who have not benefited from traditional therapies for post-traumatic stress disorder, PTSD.

Additionally, I am a cosponsor of the Improve Well-Being for Veterans Act—legislation introduced by Senator BOOZMAN—that would expand and better coordinate services that are aimed at preventing veteran suicide.

As chairman of Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, I recognize that Native Americans serve in our Nation's Armed Forces in higher numbers than does any other ethnic group. That is why I continue to advance legislation, like our bipartisan Tribal HUD-VASH Act, that supports Native American veterans.

Additionally, we are working to provide our veterans with resources and opportunities to help them continue to utilize the skills they learned in the military as they transition back to civilian life. One example is our effort to help veterans receive training to be commercial pilots.

Last week, the Senate passed its fiscal year 2020 Transportation funding bill with provisions from the American Aviator Act. I introduced the bipartisan legislation with Senator BALDWIN so as to expand commercial pilot training opportunities for our veterans. Our country needs commercial pilots, so it only makes sense that we leverage the skills our veterans learned in the military to help them meet this need. It is good for our country, and it is good for our veterans.

These are just a few examples of our efforts to support our veterans.

Our freedom has been secured by the sweat and sacrifice of the courageous men and women who throughout our history have bravely done what has been needed in order to protect our Nation and our way of life. We honor the courage and sacrifice of this Nation's veterans by ensuring they have the resources and support they need and have earned.

To veterans in my home State of North Dakota and to veterans across

the country, we say thank you, not only on Veterans Day but every day.

May God bless these brave Americans and this great country they serve.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, at the end of World War I—the supposed war to end all wars; we all wish that it did—in the 11th hour, in the 11th month on the 11th day, we declared armistice. The war was over. Armistice Day is still recognized, but it is now called Veterans Day.

This coming Monday, on 11/11, as we always do on the 11th day of the 11th month, we will pause as a nation and say thank you to the men and women who serve us in the U.S. military. It is the most moral and the most lethal fighting force the world has ever known, and we are grateful. To the men and women who make up our veterans, those serving Actively, those serving in the Reserves, those serving in our National Guard, and those who have served both at home and abroad, we are grateful for their service.

It has been an absolute privilege to serve our veterans in Oklahoma. There are members of my own family, like my Uncle Robby, who is a marine, and my next-door neighbor, who is in the National Guard. Scattered throughout my family and throughout my own neighborhood, I have a chance to smile and say thank you to folks on a regular basis for what they have done in the past and what they continue to do right now.

Over the past several sessions of Congress, we have worked to help our veterans and to help those who are serving currently. We have passed legislation like the VA MISSION Act, which dramatically increases veterans' care and gives veterans the opportunity to go to different places in order to get care. Now they don't have to drive across my great State to get to a VA center. They can go somewhere closer to home, where it is more convenient for them, rather than go to a VA center. That is a great asset to them and to their families, who have sacrificed over and over again so that their loved ones can serve. They shouldn't have to sacrifice even more now.

This Congress has made major improvements to and has expanded the GI bill. We have improved the onerous disability compensation and appeals process for the VA, which has long been an issue. We have increased the quality of care at the VA, and we have made sure that staff members who work at our VA centers are held to account. By far, the majority of people who serve in our VA centers serve on behalf of our veterans and are passionate and grateful to do that. Yet, for some who cannot get the job done, we shouldn't give our veterans lesser care because of those individuals.

Those are all of the things that have been done just to say thank you. Yet it is interesting to me, the number of

times I have talked to veterans and have said "thank you for your service," and they have responded with something like "it is the least I could do" or "absolutely" or "no thanks necessary" or "it was my honor to do it." This is a group of individuals who knows what it means to serve. We will continue to say thanks to them.

On this Veterans Day, I will pause with a family at a bridge in Oklahoma as the name of the bridge transitions to the Damon Leehan Bridge in remembrance of an Oklahoman who, in 2011, died in Afghanistan while protecting our freedom.

Our veterans don't ask for our thanks, but we can't give them thanks enough for what they and their families have done to keep this great Nation secure.

Thank you to our veterans.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, for generations, America has been a beacon of hope and freedom around the world. When confronted with tyranny and evil, America has always overcome. In every generation, patriots have answered the call to service in defense of our country and in defense of freedom and democracy. Their bravery and willingness to serve is a testament to the American and Montanan spirit.

It is my highest honor to serve as a voice for Montana's veterans in the Halls of Congress. You see, Montana has one of the highest veteran populations per capita in the United States. Montana's veterans are what make living in Big Sky Country all the more special.

I know I speak for most Montanans when I say, while growing up, we learned very early on about the importance of service to our country. For me, that lesson was taught by my father. My dad is a marine who served in the 58th Rifle Company out of Billings, MT. He instilled in me the values of hard work, of sacrifice, of service to others, and of humility. I am grateful for his service to our country, and I am proud to live every day with the values that he taught me when I was so young. Those same values that my dad taught me are held by veterans all across Montana.

I am grateful for Montana's veterans. I am grateful to have several veterans serve on my staff both in Montana and in Washington, DC. I thank Denny in Helena, Robin in Great Falls, Jim in Bozeman, and Christy in Washington, DC. They are all Montanans who are also veterans who serve on my team and serve the people of Montana.

We have an extraordinary legacy of service in Montana. We are home to heroes like Medal of Honor recipient Army SSG Travis Atkins, who was honored by President Trump at the White House this year for his ultimate sacrifice in defense of our country. Right now, in Congress, I am working to rename the Bozeman VA healthcare

facility after this great, fallen, Montana hero. Travis and I attended the same high school in Bozeman.

I make it my top priority to hear from all of our veterans across all corners of our State and to learn about the issues they face, such as access to rural healthcare, or to ensure they receive the recognition they deserve. In fact, just last month, I was in Great Falls to help honor veteran Alfred E. Shryer with the Bronze Star Medal for his service in Vietnam. It was recognition that was long overdue—nearly 50 years in the making.

After all our veterans and their families have given to our Nation, it is due time that our country gives them the care, the treatment, and the recognition they have earned. That is why I am taking action. I have introduced a number of bipartisan solutions to help resolve issues that plague our vets, like my bipartisan bill to protect veterans' pensions from scam artists. I have also led a bipartisan effort to ensure that our Blue Water veterans who were exposed to Agent Orange while they served in Vietnam receive the healthcare they deserve. Those who risk it all—those who put their lives on the line in defense of our freedom—deserve the utmost honor, thanks, and care.

To all of our veterans, thank you for your service. Our country is freer and our country is safer because of you.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, thank you to my colleagues from West Virginia, North Dakota, Oklahoma, and now the great State of Montana.

The distinguished Senator from Montana is sitting at the desk that was occupied by Conrad Burns, a Senator from Montana who was a private in the U.S. Marine Corps.

I thank the Senator from Montana for his remarks and for his service in this body.

I rise today to speak in support of our Nation's veterans, Veterans Day, which is coming up on Monday, and the 244th—244th—birthday Sunday of our Nation's force in readiness, the U.S. Marine Corps.

I am a marine—the senior marine in the Congress—and my dad was a marine serving in Guam, Kenya, Okinawa, and Iwo Jima. Tough duty.

On this holiday, we remember those who have sacrificed for our freedoms, especially the more than 1 million who have given their lives for our country. Every American should remember these heroes.

As a nation, we are also home to more than 18 million living heroes who have served with distinction in our armed services.

On this Veterans Day, I would especially like to single out a great veteran who has also served with honor and respect in this body—Senator JOHNNY ISAKSON.

JOHN HARDY ISAKSON, born December 28, 1944, just 3 short years after the at-

tack on Pearl Harbor, began his service to our country in the Georgia Air National Guard from 1966 to 1972, leaving the service at the rank of staff sergeant.

He then continued to serve as a member in both the Georgia State Senate and House, as well as the U.S. House of Representatives, before his fellow Georgians sent him to the U.S. Senate.

In 2005, he came back full circle to his military roots, joining the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs, and in 2015, he took over the chairmanship.

Let the record reflect that, as chairman, he has worked tirelessly—tirelessly—to reform veterans' healthcare and benefits, as well as to bring oversight and accountability to the Department.

Under his leadership, the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs has passed 57 pieces of legislation that were signed into law—57. You heard that correctly; 57 bills became law.

I think I have had the gavel in four different committees—57? I don't think I have gotten to that yet.

Let me just go through some of the most significant reforms that JOHNNY ISAKSON steered through the Senate that became law: the VA MISSION Act, which puts veterans in charge of their own healthcare; the Department of Veterans Affairs Accountability and Whistleblower Protection Act, which holds the VA accountable to the veterans it serves; the Harvey W. Colmery—happens to be a Kansan—Veterans Educational Assistance Act, which improves veterans' GI bill benefits; the Veterans Appeals Improvement and Modernization Act, which modernizes the VA's appeal process; and one of the most important, the Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention for American Veterans Act, which helps get mental health services to our warfighters who need them the most.

This is only a small portion of his long list of accomplishments, and his committee is not resting on their laurels. As of this morning, they have held 110 hearings, conducted more than 80 oversight visits, and have confirmed 23 Presidential nominations.

In my experience as chairman of a Senate committee—I think three of them, maybe four—you simply can't get this type of work done without help from those across the aisle.

This is just another example of who JOHNNY is as a person and a legislator. He doesn't make promises he can't keep, and he is willing to put partisanship aside in order to get the absolute best care for our Nation's men and women who have served.

In this body, there are those who choose ideology—I understand that—and partisan issues—I understand that as well. But JOHNNY ISAKSON is someone who works with his colleagues to pass legislation benefiting not only our Nation's veterans but every American's pocketbook and daily life.

I have a lot of personal memories when JOHNNY would rope me in to com-

ing to a meeting, a bipartisan meeting, to try to get what we thought was a very important bill done. Sometimes I had some concerns about joining those outfits that he seemed to put together when nobody else could, but I learned pretty quickly that I better go, first, to find out what was going on and then, second, to watch this man carefully craft a bipartisan agreement, working with colleagues, listening to them. When JOHNNY spoke, people usually got to the edge of their chairs and listened. That is how he got it done.

On behalf of the more than 18 million veterans and their families this Veterans Day, we celebrate his leadership and sense of duty to country.

JOHNNY—JOHNNY ISAKSON—thank you for your service. Senators eventually come and go. I do not think we will see the likeness of Senator JOHNNY ISAKSON for years to come.

Semper fi, my dear friend. I love you. We love you.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader.

WHISTLEBLOWERS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, before I get into the substance of my remarks on a very serious subject, I want to thank my dear friend from Kansas for his nice words about JOHNNY ISAKSON.

There is no word short of "beloved" that you would affix before JOHNNY ISAKSON's name in terms of this Chamber, and I think that would probably be true for every single Member—certainly the Senator from Kansas and certainly the Senator from New York.

On July 30, 1778, the Continental Congress passed unanimously the following resolution: "Resolved, that it is the duty of all persons in the service of the United States . . . to give the earliest information to Congress or other proper authority of any misconduct, frauds or misdemeanors committed by any officers or persons in the service of these states."

That was in the Continental Congress before our Nation was even formed—a duty of citizens to protect the American people from those in government who might conduct misconduct, fraud, or misdemeanors.

From the earliest days of our Republic, our government has acknowledged the vital role that whistleblowers play in ensuring good governance and rooting out corruption, malfeasance, and self-dealing.

Two nights ago, appallingly, at a political rally, President Trump and a Member of this Chamber, the junior Senator from Kentucky, publicly and explicitly urged the press to disclose the identity of the Federal whistleblower whose complaint triggered an impeachment inquiry in the House of Representatives.

A few days later, the same junior Senator threatened to reveal the identity of the whistleblower himself.

I cannot stress enough how wrong and dangerous—dangerous—these efforts are.

The United States is a nation of laws. Whistleblower laws have existed since the founding of our Republic to protect patriotic Americans who come forward and stand up for our Constitution. We don't get to determine when these laws apply and when they don't. We don't get to decide if the law applies whether you like what the whistleblower said or whether you don't. These are laws. No person—no person—is above the law.

This whistleblower, whose complaint was deemed credible and urgent by a Trump appointee, is protected by these statutes. There is no legal doubt about that. Every single Member of this body—every single one—should stand up and say that it is wrong to disclose his or her identity. That is what my colleague Senator HIRONO will ask us to do in a moment.

Before she does, I want to thank my colleagues on the other side of the aisle who have spoken up in defense of whistleblower protections. Some of my Republican colleagues have spent their careers defending whistleblowers. We need them today. We need these Republican colleagues, who should be here standing up for the protection of whistleblowers.

The threats we have seen over the last few days are so egregious—so egregious—that they demand bipartisan outrage from one end of this Chamber to the other, whether you are a Democrat, Republican, Independent, liberal, moderate, or conservative.

What is happening here is another erosion of the values of this Republic for political expediency. Exposing the whistleblower's identity would endanger their health and safety and that of their families. It would also be a chilling message to future patriots that they do their duty to report wrongdoing at the risk of exposure, retaliation, and retribution.

Why don't we see a single other Republican stand up in favor of this today? We should.

Let's send a message today that the Senate reaffirms our Nation's longstanding tradition of defending whistleblowers. I urge every single Member of the Senate to support it, and I recognize somebody who has been valiant in this fight to protect the duty enshrined by the Continental Congress and the Constitution, my good friend, the Senator from Hawaii.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. RES. 408

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, if you work for the Federal Government, you work for the people. You have a duty by law to come forward to report misconduct, fraud, misdemeanors, and other crimes going on in government.

This duty has been on the books since 1778. Why? Because people working in government are in a pretty good position to see when something is not right in their workplace.

We want a government that is doing right by us.

It is not easy for whistleblowers to come forward to report wrongdoing in

government. That is why we have laws that protect a whistleblower from intimidation, discrimination, and retaliation, and laws that protect their identity.

On August 12, a whistleblower—and we don't know whether this was a man or a woman, so for ease of reference, I will refer to the whistleblower as "she"—came forward, as the law required, to file a complaint with the Inspector General of the Intelligence Community.

The complaint alleged that the President was "using the power of his office to solicit interference from a foreign country in the 2020 U.S. election."

The inspector general, also as required, determined that the complaint was credible and involved an urgent concern.

The House, on learning of the whistleblower's complaint, began to ask questions. What did the House investigation uncover? That the whistleblower's complaint was right.

Bill Taylor, the top U.S. diplomat in Ukraine; Tim Morrison, the top Russia and Eastern Europe expert on the National Security Council; and others have corroborated the whistleblower's complaint about the President.

Just yesterday, the U.S. Ambassador to the European Union, Gordon Sondland, confirmed that security assistance for Ukraine was dependent on the Ukrainian Government's launching an investigation into the President's political opponents.

Let's face it. What Donald Trump did was wrong. It is wrong for the President of the United States to shake down the Ukrainian President to get dirt on his political rivals in return for almost \$400 million in U.S. military aid to help Ukraine fight Russia. Faced with growing evidence of Donald Trump's wrongdoing, what happens? What happens is a President and his minions attack the whistleblower, suggesting that she was spying and guilty of treason.

Donald Trump has threatened the whistleblower with "Big Consequences"—capital B, capital C—and put her safety at risk with comments such as: "I do not know why a person that defrauds the American public should be protected." Guess what, he wasn't talking about himself.

Donald Trump's devoted rightwing allies have been quick to echo and amplify the President's attacks. The whistleblower's own attorney warned Acting Director of National Intelligence Joseph Maguire that the President's threats are compromising her personal safety. Just last Sunday, Donald Trump said: "There have been stories written about a certain individual, a male, and they say he's the whistleblower . . . if it's him, you guys ought to release the information."

House Minority Leader KEVIN MCCARTHY also insisted that the whistleblower "should come before the committee . . . he needs to answer the questions." While speaking at a Trump

campaign rally, my colleague from Kentucky who has joined me on the floor today, demanded that the media print the name of the whistleblower. Representative JIM JORDAN, one of Donald Trump's fiercest allies, dismissed the whistleblower as biased and called for her identity to be made public.

With his attacks on the whistleblower, Donald Trump has made clear that he will use the full power of his office to bully, intimidate, and threaten anyone who dares to stand up to him or to speak out against him.

Can you imagine what a young career foreign service officer at the State Department might do after seeing the President tell the world that whistleblowers are spies who defraud our government? Do you think that person would risk destroying their career and suffer the wrath of Donald Trump and his fiercest allies and supporters in reporting the President's misconduct?

How about a career employee at the Department of Defense who sees that military aid is being held up to pressure a foreign government to help the President of the United States win reelection? Do you think that Defense Department employee would risk being accused of betraying our country and acting as a spy?

Let's be clear here: The real purpose of these attacks is to scare anyone else who may be thinking of coming forward to stay silent. We see the President, time and time again, through tweets, in interviews, at his rallies, openly attacking anyone who questions or disagrees with him. The chilling effect of what the President is doing cannot be overstated. It totally undercuts our whistleblower laws. These are not normal times. In normal times, we would be protecting whistleblowers. That is what this resolution does.

The resolution I am presenting affirms that if anyone expects public servants to report misconduct, we have a corresponding duty to protect their identity and safeguard them from retaliation, from threats. The whistleblower has done her duty. Now, we need to do ours.

Madam President, as if in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 408 introduced earlier today; that the resolution be agreed to; the preamble be agreed to; and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, reserving the right to object.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 2798

Mr. President, I support whistleblowers, and I do think they have a role to play in keeping government accountable. They should not lose their jobs or be prosecuted because of their willingness to speak, but what we have seen over the last few years is that we have a system that we should continue to refine.

When Edward Snowden exposed the breadth of unconstitutional government spying, that everything you do can be seen and stored by the government without cause, without an individualized order, in secret, in bulk, in defiance of the Fourth Amendment, not one finger was raised by those voices who are so proud now to defend whistleblowers, not one of them stood up for Edward Snowden.

Many, in fact, in Congress condemned him. They wanted to bring him to trial. Senators talked about hanging him from the closest tree, about executing him. People called into question his motives. Hillary Clinton implied that Edward Snowden was a foreign spy. CHUCK SCHUMER, who now has such outrage and defense of the whistleblower statute, lifted not one finger for Edward Snowden. In fact, he called him a coward.

So really I think that the outrage we see here is selective outrage, and it is because they are intent on overturning the election of the people. They are intent on removing Trump from office, no matter what, and they will use whatever means they can to do it.

Interestingly though, despite all of these people calling Edward Snowden a traitor, Congress ended up abolishing the bulk collection program that he exposed. Congress knew that they had done something illegal by collecting all of your metadata, all of your phone call data, without the permission of a judge and that it violated the Fourth Amendment.

They knew that he had probably become the greatest whistleblower of all time; yet where are the voices defending Edward Snowden now? Not one of these people who fake outrage over this whistleblower and President Trump and impeachment—not one of them will stand up for Edward Snowden. They would still put him in jail for life, if they could.

In the end, we did end bulk collection because Edward Snowden bravely came forward and said that the government was lying to us, that James Clapper, now a big President Trump hater, came before the Senate and he lied directly to Senator WYDEN when he said: We are not collecting your data.

Yet where is Edward Snowden in all of this, as these great defenders of the whistleblower statute are here? Not a word for Edward Snowden. Snowden himself said that he didn't have adequate protection to bring his claims internally because he was a government contractor and not an employee and not subject to the whistleblower statute.

Subsequently, Congress fixed that. Now, contractors in the intelligence community can make whistleblower claims. I agree with that. There are also now protections for some other contractors. We should extend and expand the protections, and we should make this protection retroactive to account for people like Snowden.

So the bill I will introduce today will expand the Whistleblower Act, it will

be made retroactive so Edward Snowden can come home to live in his own country. All he did was expose that his government was not obeying the Constitution. If this fake outrage here is really towards whistleblowing, why don't we make it retroactive and defend the most famous whistleblower of all time? That is what my bill would do.

While Snowden's disclosures were in defense of the Fourth Amendment, the Sixth Amendment guarantees an individual the right to face their accuser; yet the House of Representatives has been conducting a secret impeachment inquiry based on secret claims made by a secret whistleblower.

My bill would make clear that the Sixth Amendment is not superseded by statutes and that the President should be afforded the same rights that we all should, to understand the nature of the allegations brought against them and to face their accuser. This is in the Sixth Amendment.

So for all the caterwauling about whistleblower statutes, there is a high law of the land. It is the Constitution. It is the Bill of Rights. The Sixth Amendment says if you are accused of a crime, you get to face your accuser.

In fact, there was a resolution last week placed by 50 members of the Republican Caucus that condemns the process going on in the House. It condemns it because it says specifically, in the resolution signed by 50 Republicans, that the President should get to face his accusers, that he should have counsel and call on witnesses and to understand the basis of the charges against him.

See, here is the thing: The whistleblower should be called because they are making accusations against the President. That is the Sixth Amendment. We don't do away with the Sixth Amendment because we are talking about impeachment or talking about the President. But the whistleblower is also a material witness. The whistleblower is a material witness because he worked for Joe Biden. He worked for Joe Biden when Joe Biden and Hunter Biden were involved in corruption in Ukraine.

This person worked on the Ukraine desk. This person traveled to Ukraine. This person was involved with aid. So when Joe Biden says we are going to deny aid to Ukraine unless you hire a prosecutor that is looking into my son's company that is paying Hunter Biden \$50,000 a month, don't you think we have the right to call these people? Don't you think that Joe Biden should appear? Don't you think that Hunter Biden should appear? Absolutely, the whistleblower should appear because he is an accuser, but also because he is a material witness to the conflict of interest scandal that involves Hunter Biden and Joe Biden.

Fifty Republican Senators signed on to a resolution that says the President should get to face his accusers. My bill, the Whistleblower Act of 2019, would

make that clear, that the Sixth Amendment is not superseded by statutes and that the President should be afforded the right to understand the nature of the allegations brought against him and that the President should get to face his accusers.

Mr. President, as in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Senator modify her request so that, instead, the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of my bill, the Whistleblower Act of 2019, S. 2798, introduced earlier today; I further ask that the bill 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 (Mr. COTTON). Does the Senator so modify her request?

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, reserving my right to object.

My colleague's bill was just dropped literally on my lap just now. I certainly have not had a chance to read through the bill, but the last paragraph of this bill—which by the way I think it is called the Whistleblower Protection Act—anyway, the last section of his bill caught my eye, and I will read it to you.

“Section 5. Ensuring Sixth Amendment protections. Congress reaffirms that in the case of criminal proceedings, prosecutions, and impeachment arising from the disclosures of whistleblowers, that the accused has a right to confront his or her accuser in such proceedings and that right is not superseded by the Whistleblower Protection Act.”

So suddenly the Sixth Amendment right for a defendant to confront the accuser is being applied to the impeachment proceeding. It has never been done before. By doing this, the Senator from Kentucky, in my view, is truly undermining the Whistleblower Protection Act. So to call his bill the Whistleblower Protection Act of 2019 is, in my view, laughable.

By the way, in this particular instance we don't need the whistleblower's testimony. The whistleblower's complaint, the substance of her complaint, has been corroborated numerous times. So all this is to send the message out there that all you people who work for the Federal Government, if you see some kind of wrongdoing misdeed going on, don't come forward because expect retribution, expect the President to come after you, expect the President's minions to come after you.

What is the point of having a whistleblower statute which—you know, which is a duty, it imposes a duty on Federal employees to come forward—and at the same time as we impose this duty, we have the good Senator's resolution saying: Yes, come forward, but we are going to out you, subject you to threats, intimidation, retaliation.

This whistleblower's own attorney has said that her safety is in question, so using the Sixth Amendment and

sort of tie it to impeachment proceedings is—I am just flabbergasted.

Mr. President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard. Is there objection to the original request?

Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, reserving the right to object.

I am disappointed that any Senator would come to the floor and find the Bill of Rights laughable. The Sixth Amendment is an important part of our Constitution, and the right to face your accuser is incredibly important. It is disappointing that an actual U.S. Senator would come to the floor and say that it was laughable to apply the Bill of Rights to the President. I am disappointed that it has come to this.

I will hope that Americans would look at this and say, absolutely, the President deserves the same protections that the rest of us deserve.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

Ms. HIRONO. I think the Senator from Kentucky should listen because I certainly did not find the Sixth Amendment laughable. I found his resolution, calling it the Whistleblower Protection Act, which in fact undermines whistleblower protections, appalling and laughable.

With that, I, once again, object to his request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Pennsylvania.

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

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

TESTIMONY OF LIEUTENANT COLONEL  
ALEXANDER VINDMAN

Mr. CASEY. Thank you, Mr. President.

First, I want to briefly recognize this afternoon the brave public servants who have testified in the House in recent weeks in defense of national security, the rule of law, and our democratic institutions—most recently, LTC Alexander Vindman.

Despite Lieutenant Colonel Vindman's two decades of military service and a Purple Heart for his sacrifice to our country in Iraq, his character has faced brutal attacks from cable news and from some current and former Members of Congress. These comments about him are reprehensible attacks with no basis in fact.

Verbal abuse of Lieutenant Colonel Vindman not only disrespects his integrity and his service but undermines our institutions and ultimately makes our Nation less safe—less safe. So questioning the character, loyalty, or patriotism of Lieutenant Colonel Vindman is an attack on all veterans and is also an attack on our military.

Former U.S. Ambassador to Russia Michael McFaul put it this way in a Washington Post column just last week, and I will quote part of the column:

Such smear tactics are revolting and un-American. Vindman has served our country with honor and distinction, both on and off the battlefield. . . . And he is a patriot—as you would expect from someone with his outstanding resume. . . . The idea that Vindman might have dual loyalties with another nation is preposterous. Vindman was born in the totalitarian Soviet Union, not “the Ukraine.” His family, which is Jewish, fled religious persecution. He is not Soviet or Ukrainian or Ukrainian American: He is simply an American. Using birthplaces or hyphenated adjectives to disparage fellow Americans is always wrong. It is especially so in the case of Lt. Col. Vindman.

That is the op-ed from a distinguished Ambassador.

When I reflect upon Lieutenant Colonel Vindman's service to our country and his integrity, I am reminded of one of the lines—we could use many—from “America the Beautiful”:

Oh, beautiful for patriot dream

That sees beyond the years

That is what he was doing when he testified, just like that was what he was doing when he was serving our Nation in Iraq and when he was wounded in Iraq, and what he has done as a member of our national security team as part of the work he has done in this administration—seeing beyond the years. Part of the dream of a patriot is thinking about the impact of your actions on future generations.

We need to make sure that we are very clear about where we stand on his character, on his commitment to the country, and on his courage in coming forward.

#### TURKEY AND SYRIA

Mr. President, I want to move to the grave question of Syria and what has happened over just the last couple of weeks. I know this is a position held by Senators in both parties, but I oppose President Trump's recent decision to withdraw U.S. Armed Forces from Syria.

Following a phone call with Turkish President Erdogan on October 6, President Trump announced that the United States would be withdrawing U.S. troops from northern Syria. This cleared the way for the Turkish Armed Forces to proceed with an operation—an effort to target Kurdish and Islamic State, or ISIS, fighters in northern Syria. The President's decision is already impacting U.S. national security, as many analysts have predicted.

We have abandoned our Kurdish allies, who have been instrumental in not only retaking territory from ISIS but also in detaining ISIS combatants. We learned last week that they made the most important contribution of critical intelligence, helping U.S. forces locate and eliminate ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi.

That leads me to the role that Russia plays, especially in the aftermath of the decision the President made about our troops in northern Syria. Following an initial U.S.-brokered ceasefire, Turkish and Russian authorities have agreed to a more permanent status, sharing control of Syria's northern border. Turkish and Russian forces are not only occupying Kurdish-

held areas but also further expanding Russia's role in Syria and committing war crimes against Kurdish civilians, according to the United Nations.

Russia has already occupied U.S. military camps in the region, and Turkish President Erdogan's deepening relationship with Vladimir Putin, as evidenced by Turkey's S-400 missile system, only undercuts U.S. influence in Syria, all but guaranteeing that U.S. interests will not be represented in a future Syrian political settlement.

President Trump's decision serves to benefit Vladimir Putin. Prior to the withdrawal, the United States was Russia's only military equal in Syria, but Russia is now the primary—and, according to some analysts, the sole—power broker in Syria.

In the vacuum left by the United States, Putin will be able to return control of the country to Bashar al-Assad. Also, he will be able to exercise increased control over Turkey, a NATO ally, and also return to its Cold War-era dominance—the Russians, that is—in the Middle East.

I am holding an article, which, from a distance, you can't see the headline. It is from the Washington Post, dated October 16 of this year. It says that in Ukraine and Syria, Trump's moves are helping Putin. It was written by Anne Gearan. Anne Gearan is a respected reporter on national security issues and foreign policy. This article—and I will not go through all of it—catalogs how the Trump administration has allowed Russia to assert dominance globally. I mentioned the headline, but here is some of the text of the article. The first few paragraphs of the article by Anne Gearan say as follows:

Whether by chance or by design, the foreign policy crises involving Syria and Ukraine that have enveloped the White House have a common element. In each case, President Trump has taken action that has had the effect of helping the authoritarian leader of Russia.

Russian forces are now operating between the Turkish and Syrian militaries, helping to fulfill Moscow's main aim of shoring up its alliance with Syria and the Russian military port housed there—an outcome Russian President Vladimir Putin has sought for years.

Trump's actions in Syria and Ukraine add to the list of policy moves and public statements that have boosted Russia during his presidency, whether that was their central purpose or not, confounding critics who have warned that he has taken—

She is referring to our President here—

too soft a stance toward a nation led by a strongman hostile to the United States.

Anne Gearan goes on to describe the long list of President Trump's actions that demonstrate the strange deference to Russia, which has ultimately compromised the furtherance of U.S. national security interests in Syria and beyond.

I also want to make reference to another recent news article. The headline at the top of this New York Times article, dated Sunday, October 13 of this

year, reads: “12 Hours. 4 Syrian Hospitals Bombed.” It reads: “12 Hours. 4 Syrian Hospitals Bombed.”

The next page, which is full of more detail and an illustration, gives you their conclusion: “Evidence Reveals One Culprit: Russia.” In pertinent part, here is what this article says: “The Russian Air Force has repeatedly bombed hospitals in Syria in order to crush the last pockets of resistance to President Bashar al-Assad.”

The New York Times published evidence that the Russians bombed four Syrian hospitals in a 12-hour period in May of this year. During the assault, the Kafr Nabl Surgical Hospital in Idlib Province was struck four times in 30 minutes. This is a hospital. Dozens of hospitals and clinics in Idlib have been struck since, and Syrian medical workers live in constant fear of the next strike.

I don’t think I even have to say what I am about to say, but it bears repeating for the record. Such atrocities go beyond the pale of violating the Geneva Conventions and the laws of war. They demonstrate just how ruthless and brutal Putin and his regime have been and the lengths to which they will go to assert Russia’s influence in the Middle East.

Under this administration, we have seen U.S. leadership erode and multilateral institutions deteriorate to the point where the United Nations is powerless in holding Russia accountable for these atrocities. As to holding Mr. Putin accountable, this administration has made us less safe.

Let me move to the Kurds. The Syrian Democratic Forces, led by the Kurdish YPG, have been steadfast U.S. partners in counterterrorism operations, as well as in other ways in the Middle East.

As the United States provided training, intelligence, and aerial support, some 11,000 Kurdish fighters died in the fight against ISIS—11,000 Kurdish fighters. Without their courage, sacrifice, partnership, and protection, the United States would have either lost the fight against ISIS—and the coalition would have lost—or won it at a major cost to the lives of U.S. servicemembers and their families.

The Trump administration has abandoned the Kurds. Since the President radically departed from a longstanding strategy in the fight against ISIS, we have seen mass displacement. We have also seen, of course, Russian incursion and the initial signs of an ISIS resurgence in the region.

According to the United Nations, 160,000 people have been displaced, including 70,000 children. Kurdish authorities state that at least 785 persons affiliated with ISIS have escaped.

I ask a couple of basic questions: How exactly does allowing the conditions for humanitarian catastrophe and the escape of sworn enemies of the United States make America safe? How does unilaterally making decisions without consulting U.S. national security lead-

ers and experts, or also our allies who have joined us in the global coalition to fight ISIS, build credibility for U.S. leadership around the world? How do we expect to protect the interests of our ally Israel from threats along the Syrian border? And, finally, how do we justify such a rapid departure in U.S. policy to promote and protect democracy in the Middle East?

#### DEATH OF ABU BAKR AL-BAGHDADI

Mr. President, let me move to the al-Baghdadi killing.

We know that on October 27, just weeks after the U.S. withdrawal, the President announced that U.S. Special Forces, those brave fighters who are the best in the world, with support from the U.S. intelligence forces, conducted a raid and confirmed the death of ISIS leader al-Baghdadi.

The President’s failure to credit our Kurdish allies, who provided critical intelligence that led to a successful U.S. operation, is further evidence of his total abandonment of the Kurds and the lack of appreciation for the critical role the Kurds have played in promoting U.S. interests in Syria.

Let us also not forget that the President credited Russia’s cooperation in opening Russian-controlled airspace to U.S. aircraft conducting the raid. He credited them before—before—he credited the U.S. Special Forces who laid down their lives for the mission. I think he could have at least, at a minimum, switched the order there, and he should also have credited the Kurds, as I have stated.

While al-Baghdadi’s death is certainly a major victory for our counterterrorism efforts, the fight against ISIS is far from over. I am deeply troubled—and I know a lot of Members of the Senate in both parties are deeply troubled—by the President’s and, frankly, some of my colleagues’ assertions that our withdrawal from Syria was justified.

The U.S. Defense Department estimates that 10,000 to 15,000 ISIS fighters are working to reconstitute themselves as a major terrorist threat after U.S. withdrawal from Syria.

Let us be clear. Killing al-Baghdadi is not the end of ISIS and certainly not the end of the U.S. commitment to eliminating ISIS.

The decision-making process leading up to U.S. withdrawal carried the hallmarks of chaos and recklessness that are so indicative of how this administration operates when it comes to these issues. Two weeks ago, the U.S. Special Envoy to the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, Jim Jeffrey, testified that he was neither consulted nor made aware of the President’s intent to green-light Turkey’s planned offensive but was, rather, briefed afterward.

Special Envoy Jeffrey has decades of experience in the region, and the lack of consultation ahead of this major foreign policy decision shows the lack of deference this administration gives to seasoned career national security officials. Weeks after the withdrawal, Sec-

retary of Defense Esper; Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Milley; Special Envoy Jeffrey; the CENTCOM commander, General McKenzie; and the intel community briefed the Senate regarding the events of the last several weeks. It is unacceptable that it took over 3 weeks for Congress to receive a briefing on such a critical change in U.S. foreign policy.

I will speak for myself, but I left that briefing with genuine concern. There is still, in my judgment, no definitive consensus strategy—weeks after withdrawal—to prevent the resurgence of ISIS and ensure the promotion of U.S. national security interests in the region.

This is why Congress must reclaim its authority to conduct oversight over this administration’s unilateral policymaking, which only makes America less safe. The administration’s failure to consult with Congress on its plans in Syria, its support for Saudi Arabia’s campaign in Yemen, and its incendiary actions toward Iran over the last year alone—all of that raises the need for Congress to debate and to vote on an updated authorization for the use of military force, and I will say authorizations, plural. We likely need more than one.

If the President is truly serious about ending U.S. involvement in “endless wars,” he should work with the Congress to repeal the 2001 AUMF, which is out of date, and pass an updated authorization that addresses the threats we face today. We must not only ensure that Congress asserts its constitutionally enabled warmaking authority but also that we thoroughly consider the consequences before sending brave men and women into harm’s way.

The President’s plan to secure oilfields in northeastern Syria is misguided and obtuse. Experts agree that many of these oilfields are already under Kurdish control, and the Kurds have not asked for U.S. support in protecting them. Leaving behind a “small” U.S. force would likely be an ineffective and insufficient gesture after our radical betrayal of Kurdish allies.

This administration must formulate a coherent strategy for a path forward in Syria that goes beyond oilfields and encompasses civilian protection, humanitarian support, and the prevention of the resurgence of ISIS.

Looking ahead, the U.S. goals must focus on three elements: No. 1, preventing the resurgence of ISIS in Iraq and Syria; No. 2, holding Turkey accountable for its war crimes and human rights violations against the Kurds; and No. 3, accomplishing both by keeping the 64-nation Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS intact.

Our allies are the keys to any hope of success here. However, working with allies and coalition partners is exceedingly more difficult due to the President’s reckless actions of late and his constant denigration of U.S. allies.

Ambassador Jeffrey and former Special Envoy Brett McGurk's efforts to build and maintain the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS are the primary reason we were able to convene allies, build and leverage relationships on the ground, and mobilize resources to reclaim territory from ISIS through Iraq and Syria.

Finally, I reiterate my call on the majority leader to allow for a debate and a vote on an updated authorization for the use of military force—and I would say that again, plural—for Iraq and also for Afghanistan. I also call upon the administration to present a clear path forward for U.S. engagement with Syria and Iran.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD an article from the New York Times International, dated October 13, 2019.

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

[From the New York Times, Oct. 13, 2019]

12 HOURS. 4 SYRIAN HOSPITALS BOMBED. ONE CULPRIT: RUSSIA.

(By Evan Hill and Christiaan Triebert)

The Russian Air Force has repeatedly bombed hospitals in Syria in order to crush the last pockets of resistance to President Bashar al-Assad, according to an investigation by The New York Times.

An analysis of previously unpublished Russian Air Force radio recordings, plane spotter logs and witness accounts allowed The Times to trace bombings of four hospitals in just 12 hours in May and tie Russian pilots to each one.

The 12-hour period beginning on May 5 represents a small slice of the air war in Syria, but it is a microcosm of Russia's four-year military intervention in Syria's civil war. A new front in the conflict opened this week, when Turkish forces crossed the border as part of a campaign against a Kurdish-led militia.

Russia has long been accused of carrying out systematic attacks against hospitals and clinics in rebel-held areas as part of a strategy to help Mr. Assad secure victory in the eight-year-old war.

Physicians for Human Rights, an advocacy group that tracks attacks on medical workers in Syria, has documented at least 583 such attacks since 2011, 266 of them since Russia intervened in September 2015. At least 916 medical workers have been killed since 2011.

The Times assembled a large body of evidence to analyze the hospital bombings on May 5 and 6.

Social media posts from Syria, interviews with witnesses, and records from charities that supported the four hospitals provided the approximate time of each strike. The Times obtained logs kept by flight spotters on the ground who warn civilians about incoming airstrikes and crosschecked the time of each strike to confirm that Russian warplanes were overhead. We then listened to and deciphered thousands of Russian Air Force radio transmissions, which recorded months' worth of pilot activities in the skies above northwestern Syria. The recordings were provided to The Times by a network of observers who insisted on anonymity for their safety.

The spotter logs from May 5 and 6 put Russian pilots above each hospital at the time they were struck, and the Air Force audio recordings from that day feature Russian pilots confirming each bombing. Videos ob-

tained from witnesses and verified by The Times confirmed three of the strikes.

Recklessly or intentionally bombing hospitals is a war crime, but proving culpability amid a complex civil war is extremely difficult, and until now, Syrian medical workers and human rights groups lacked proof.

Russia's position as a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council has shielded it from scrutiny and made United Nations agencies reluctant to accuse the Russian Air Force of responsibility.

"The attacks on health in Syria, as well as the indiscriminate bombing of civilian facilities, are definitely war crimes, and they should be prosecuted at the level of the International Criminal Court in The Hague," said Susannah Sirkin, director of policy at Physicians for Human Rights. But Russia and China "shamefully" vetoed a Security Council resolution that would have referred those and other crimes in Syria to the court, she said.

The Russian government did not directly respond to questions about the four hospital bombings. Instead, a Foreign Ministry spokesman pointed to past statements saying that the Russian Air Force carries out precision strikes only on "accurately researched targets."

The United Nations secretary general, António Guterres, opened an investigation into the hospital bombings in August. The investigation, still going on, is meant in part to determine why hospitals that voluntarily added their locations to a United Nations-sponsored deconfliction list, which was provided to Russia and other combatants to prevent them from being attacked, nevertheless came under attack.

Syrian health care workers said they believed that the United Nations list actually became a target menu for the Russian and Syrian air forces.

Stéphane Dujarric, a spokesman for the secretary general, said in September that the investigation—an internal board of inquiry—would not produce a public report or identify "legal responsibility." Vassily Nebenzia, the Russian permanent representative to the United Nations, cast doubt on the process shortly after it was announced, saying he hoped the inquiry would not investigate perpetrators but rather what he said was the United Nations' use of false information in its deconfliction process.

From April 29 to mid-September, as Russian and Syrian government forces assaulted the last rebel pocket in the northwest, 54 hospitals and clinics in opposition territory were attacked, the United Nations human rights office said. At least seven had tried to protect themselves by adding their location to the deconfliction list, according to the World Health Organization.

On May 5 and 6, Russia attacked four. All were on the list.

The first was Nabad al Hayat Surgical Hospital, a major underground trauma center in southern Idlib Province serving about 200,000 people. The hospital performed on average around 500 operations and saw more than 5,000 patients a month, according to Syria Relief and Development, the United States-based charity that supported it.

Nabad al Hayat had been attacked three times since it opened in 2013 and had recently relocated to an underground complex on agricultural land, hoping to be protected from airstrikes.

At 2:32 p.m. on May 5, a Russian ground control officer can be heard in an Air Force transmission providing a pilot with a longitude and latitude that correspond to Nabad al Hayat's exact location.

At 2:38 p.m., the pilot reports that he can see the target and has the "correction," code for locking the target on a screen in his

cockpit. Ground control responds with the green light for the strike, saying, "Three sevens."

At the same moment, a flight spotter on the ground logs a Russian jet circling in the area.

At 2:40 p.m., the same time the charity said that Nabad al Hayat was struck, the pilot confirms the release of his weapons, saying, "Worked it." Seconds later, local journalists filming the hospital in anticipation of an attack record three precision bombs penetrating the roof of the hospital and blowing it out from the inside in geysers of dirt and concrete.

The staff of Nabad al Hayat had evacuated three days earlier after receiving warnings and anticipating a bombing, but Kafr Nabl Surgical Hospital, three miles northwest, was not as lucky.

A doctor who worked there said that the hospital was struck four times, beginning at 5:30 p.m. The strikes landed about five minutes apart, without warning, he said, killing a man who was standing outside and forcing patients and members of the medical staff to use oxygen tanks to breathe through the choking dust.

A spotter logged a Russian jet circling above at the time of the strike, and in another Russian Air Force transmission, a pilot reports that he has "worked" his target at 5:30 p.m., the time of the strike. He then reports three more strikes, each about five minutes apart, matching the doctor's chronology.

Russian pilots bombed two other hospitals in the same 12-hour span: Kafr Zita Cave Hospital and Al Amal Orthopedic Hospital. In both cases, spotters recorded Russian Air Force jets in the skies at the time of the strike, and Russian pilots can be heard in radio transmissions "working" their targets at the times the strikes were reported.

Since May 5, at least two dozen hospitals and clinics in the rebel-held northwest have been hit by airstrikes. Syrian medical workers said they expected hospital bombings to continue, given the inability of the United Nations and other countries to find a way to hold Russia to account.

"The argument by the Russians or the regime is always that hospitals are run by terrorists," said Nabad al Hayat's head nurse, who asked to remain anonymous because he feared being targeted. "Is it really possible that all the people are terrorists?"

"The truth is that after hospitals are hit, and in areas like this where there is just one hospital, our houses have become hospitals."

#### CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I am going to turn to another matter of importance for U.S. national security, and that is climate change. Climate change is the most significant challenge our world faces right now, transcending borders and affecting every aspect of our lives.

Climate change is a threat to human life. It is caused by human activity, and we must confront it. Our Nation has a moral imperative to protect the Earth, God's creation, and the people living on that Earth, particularly children whose health and well-being will be affected—I would say adversely affected—by climate change in incomprehensible ways.

For far too long we have discussed climate change, food insecurity, and political stability in separate silos. However, these issues are inextricably

linked, and we must apply an integrated approach to ensuring that global food supply keeps pace with population growth amidst a continuing trend of climate change in a way that promotes stable, transparent democratic societies around the world.

The late Senator Dick Lugar from the State of Indiana asked me to work with him to introduce the Global Food Security Act way back in the 2007–2008 time period. At that time, Senator Lugar wanted to try to pass legislation that would authorize USAID's Feed the Future Program. Senator JOHNNY ISAKSON was a steadfast partner in actually passing the Global Food Security Act. We passed that legislation years after Senator Lugar and I were starting the work.

The Global Food Security Act is empowering the USAID to develop a more integrated, interagency approach to food security across agricultural value chains and expanding farmers' access to local and international markets through the Feed the Future Program.

We, as a body, must continue to advocate for the next generation of agricultural policy: Promote sustainable agriculture that will be able to keep pace with growing global demand, population growth, and climate change.

As a member of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry, I am increasingly concerned about our ability to keep pace with agricultural production as global population grows. The global population is expected to grow from 7.7 billion to 10 billion by 2050, and with that, demand for meat and dairy could increase between 59 and 98 percent, according to Columbia University's Earth Institute.

The impact of climate change on food systems across the globe will be almost incomprehensible, but perhaps nowhere larger than Sub-Saharan Africa. Now, 90 percent of the region's cropland, meaning Sub-Saharan Africa—90 percent of that region's cropland is expected to see yield losses of up to 40 percent—90 percent seeing yield losses of up to 40 percent.

We face some of the same challenges here at home, and we are working to help farmers adapt to these pressures while also being part of the solution through climate-friendly agricultural policies.

While we have made advances in recent decades, we still have high rates of undernourishment and child stunting around the world. The number of chronically hungry people around the world has increased today to 821 million people, representing one out of every nine people on the planet, many of whom are women and children. I will say that again. The number of chronically hungry people around the world has increased to one in every nine people on the planet.

The number of children under 5 affected by stunting has decreased by 10 percent in the past 6 years. That is a little bit of good news, but 149 million children are still stunted. This pace is

too slow to meet our United Nations Sustainable Development Goal to cut stunting in half by 2030—just 11 years away.

Our own intelligence community has linked global food insecurity to instability, which can lead to a rise in violent extremism and international crime that will affect the United States. In January 2014, the worldwide threat assessment of the U.S. intelligence community reported that “lack of adequate food will be a destabilizing factor in countries important to [U.S.] national security.”

The “2010 Quadrennial Defense Review” marked a turning point in how the United States grappled with the issue of climate change. For the first time, in 2010, climate change was cited as a “threat multiplier” by the Department of Defense, noting “the impacts of climate change may increase the frequency, scale, and complexity of future missions.”

From Syria to Nigeria and the Lake Chad Basin, but also in urban upheaval in Sudan, we see the impacts of environmental stress and high food prices on political stability in regions vital to U.S. national security interests.

This brings me to political stability. According to the U.S. Global Food Security Strategy, food insecurity exacerbated by climate change will contribute to “social disruptions and political instability. . . . Projections indicate that more than two-thirds of the world's poor could be living in fragile countries, where state-society relations are already strained, by 2030.”

When societies break down because governments are unable to provide resilient infrastructure against climate events, as well as protect local markets from vulnerabilities due to climate events, trust in institutions erodes and nations are ripe for conflict. If we permit climate change to proceed without aggressive action, investment, and coordination with partners around the world, we are not only allowing millions around the world to suffer extreme hunger resulting from climate-related disasters, but we are also allowing conditions for the rise of extremism and the breakdown of democratic institutions to foment unchecked.

For millions of people across Africa, Asia, and Latin America, climate change means more frequent and intense floods, droughts, and storms, accounting each year for up to 90 percent of all natural disasters. These disasters can quickly spiral into full-blown food and nutrition crises.

I will wrap up with this: As we look to the hard work of congressional oversight over the Feed the Future Program, I am pleased that USAID has already begun to bridge its emergency humanitarian programming with its longer term development efforts to build resilience for communities affected by conflict and climate change.

The United States cannot do this alone. We need to work together on a global scale not only to reduce green-

house gas emissions but also to mitigate economic risk and ensure that agricultural and food supply chains can withstand climate events. This administration's decision to withdraw from the Paris climate agreement was a huge blow to U.S. leadership in climate policy. I and many Members of Congress and individuals throughout the U.S. Government, along with our State and local government partners, as well as leaders in the business community across the United States, will continue to fight for policies that bring the United States in line with its Paris goals, ensuring we are doing our part to address this global threat to human life.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

#### JUDICIAL CONFIRMATIONS

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I come to the floor to talk about the work we have been doing in the Senate this week and the work we have been doing in the Senate the last 3 years, and that is the work of confirming a record number of judicial nominees.

I want to specifically focus on our record on circuit court judges. As you know, these are the courts just one layer below the Supreme Court, and their decisions have enormous consequences for the country. We have confirmed 45 highly qualified circuit court judges. We have done it across all 12 appeals courts nationwide. These judges will decide 99 percent of the Federal cases in America.

President Trump has nominated each of these judges. Senate Republicans confirmed each of these judges. These judges now hold a full one-quarter—one out of every four—circuit court seats in America. All of these judges have lifetime appointments. These circuit court judges are ruling right now, and they are doing it on major cases all across the country.

How are they making a difference in people's lives? No. 1, by protecting Americans' constitutional rights, by upholding our individual freedoms, by putting a check on government power, and above all, these judges are applying the law as written, not legislating from the bench.

Based on the 45 circuit court judges we have seated and the judges we will continue to seat, Senate Republicans have delivered conservative judges who will serve our Nation for decades to come.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

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

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

VETERANS DAY

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, I am wearing a pin on my right lapel that was presented to me by some folks today who appreciate veterans, and I appreciate being recognized.

I am a veteran of the U.S. Air Force and Air Force Reserve. I retired from that organization, and I appreciate their coming to put an extra pin on me today.

We will celebrate Veterans Day on November 11, and I will be making speeches. Hopefully, many of us will be properly recognizing those of us who have worn the uniform and taken the oath and are serving in that respect.

Today I want to talk about another group of folks, and those are the future veterans. By that, of course, I mean the soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines, and servicemembers who are serving their country now on Active Duty. I make a plea to my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, at both ends of this building, to get our work done at least for national security.

We are at a time of heightened politics. There are tensions in this building as there often have been, but at this critical juncture, with so much at stake around the world, it seems to me we ought to be able to pass the National Defense Authorization Act, of which the distinguished chairman, Chairman INHOFE, and his ranking member, Senator REED from Rhode Island, have prepared and are ready to go on. It seems we ought to be able to come to an agreement with the other body and get that to the President for his signature.

We are now 5 weeks into the current fiscal year, and we don't have an appropriations bill done for the Department of Defense. We have to have the authorization act, which I mentioned, but at the beginning of October, we are supposed to have the government funded, and we don't.

We are under a continuing resolution, a CR, and it sounds so harmless, like we are just continuing the funding until we get all the numbers right. That is not true. Every defense expert in the government—formally in the government and outside of the government—will tell you that a continuing resolution is harmful to our Nation's defense. It not only sends the wrong signal, it has us sending money in the wrong direction and has us not spending money where we need to spend it.

At the end of this month, when the current CR ends, we need to be ready with a permanent appropriations bill for the Department of Defense for this current fiscal year. Just think of what we are looking at right now. Iran is the largest State sponsor of terror, and it is on the warpath. Iran knocked out the world's largest oil facility in Saudi Arabia just a couple of months ago and is attacking tankers in the gulf. This is no time to not have a permanent appropriations bill for this fiscal year.

Vladimir Putin's Russia is in a shooting war against our partners in Ukraine. The Communist Government of China is brutalizing its own people on the streets of Hong Kong violating the "one nation, two systems" policy.

That is not the half of it. The Chinese dictator, Xi Jinping, is not keeping his repressive ambitions at home as we know from what is going on in the Pacific. As my friend, the chairman of the full Armed Services Committee, pointed out, the People's Republic of China has increased military spending by 83 percent. China has increased military spending by 83 percent over the last decade at a time when we can't even agree on the funding for the current fiscal year we are in. That sends a signal around the world. You best believe Xi Jinping knows we can't get our act together through a funding bill.

Now my hat is off to the leaders, both Republican and Democratic, in this body who have done their job and are ready to go forward with the funding bill, but we need to join hands and actually get it done. For some reason, we have not been able to do that. I am begging my colleagues, let's fund our military, and let's fund these future veterans who are serving on Active Duty right now. The current continuing resolution is doing real damage to our national security. It is harming the progress we have already made to rebuild our military since the sequester—and wasn't that a disaster. It is harming our military men and women and making it harder for them to do their jobs going forward.

I want to quote General Mattis, former Secretary Mattis, who said this, as Secretary, about continuing resolutions:

It's not like we even maintain the status quo if we go into one of these situations yet again. We actually lose ground.

I urge my fellow colleagues in the Senate and in the other body to heed the words of this great military leader. We are losing ground today, November 6, 2019, because we are under a CR. We have seen it before, and unfortunately we are losing money and losing readiness right now. Extending the CR any further will harm military personnel in every branch. The Air Force is short 2,100 pilots. Keeping the CR going would cut \$123 million from undergraduate pilot training.

Under a continuation of the CR further than the end of this month, naval training will be scaled back dramatically. We will not be able to fix dangerous housing that we have had hearings about and there has been a scandal about in the press. We will not be able to attend to that because we are working under a continuation of last year's old-fashioned numbers. Vital research and development programs will go unbegun. Not only that, keeping a CR going not only doesn't save money, it actually costs us money because we are spending dollars on programs we have decided not to be involved in anymore. We want to move in a different direc-

tion. The House and Senate leaders have decided to do that, the Members of the Pentagon have decided to do that, but under the CR we are forced to keep spending money on programs we don't need anymore.

According to General Martin, Vice Chief of Staff of the Army, delays and misallocated funds cost \$7 billion every month, and that is just for the Army.

We have an opportunity to correct this, or we have an opportunity to waste another \$20 billion on a yearlong CR. I am urging the American public to make it known to those of us at Veterans Day programs this weekend and next week. I am urging my colleagues to stress this when they talk to the public.

There are appropriations bills that are not yet worked out, but for heaven's sake, let's at least do the bill that pays the troops and sends a signal to the rest of the world in these trying times that we are at least going to fund our Defense Department and our future veterans who are on Active Duty and who have taken the oath today and that we will do them in a modern and timely fashion. We are 5 weeks late. Let's not make it another 5 weeks after this and another 5 months after that.

Pass a full-funding appropriations bill for our troops, for the Department of Defense, and give them the type of representation and government that they deserve based upon their worthy service.

I yield the floor.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

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

The bill clerk read the nomination of Danielle J. Hunsaker, of Oregon, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Ninth Circuit.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Hunsaker nomination?

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR), the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON), and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. KENNEDY).

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 Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN), are necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 73, nays 17, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 348 Ex.]

YEAS—73

Alexander	Graham	Roberts
Baldwin	Grassley	Romney
Barrasso	Hassan	Rosen
Blackburn	Hawley	Rounds
Blunt	Hoeven	Rubio
Boozman	Hyde-Smith	Sasse
Braun	Inhofe	Scott (FL)
Brown	Johnson	Scott (SC)
Capito	Jones	Shaheen
Carper	Kaine	Shelby
Casey	King	Sinema
Collins	Lankford	Smith
Coons	Leahy	Sullivan
Cornyn	Lee	Tester
Cortez Masto	Manchin	Thune
Cotton	McConnell	Tillis
Cramer	McSally	Toomey
Crapo	Moran	Van Hollen
Cruz	Murkowski	Warner
Daines	Murphy	Whitehouse
Enzi	Paul	Wicker
Ernst	Perdue	Wyden
Feinstein	Peters	Young
Fischer	Portman	
Gardner	Risch	

NAYS—17

Blumenthal	Heinrich	Reed
Cantwell	Hirono	Schatz
Cardin	Markey	Schumer
Duckworth	Menendez	Stabenow
Durbin	Merkley	Udall
Gillibrand	Murray	

NOT VOTING—10

Bennet	Harris	Sanders
Booker	Isakson	Warren
Burr	Kennedy	
Cassidy	Klobuchar	

The nomination was confirmed.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of William Joseph Nardini, of Connecticut, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Second Circuit.

John Thune, Thom Tillis, Chuck Grassley, Mike Crapo, James E. Risch, Cindy Hyde-Smith, Mike Rounds, Lindsey Graham, Mitch McConnell, John Boozman, Tom Cotton, John Cornyn, Joni Ernst, Roy Blunt, Roger F. Wicker, Jerry Moran, Shelley Moore Capito.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of William Joseph Nardini, of Connecticut, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Second Circuit, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator

from North Carolina (Mr. BURR), the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON), and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. KENNEDY).

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 Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) are necessarily absent.

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 87, nays 3, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 349 Ex.]

YEAS—87

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

NAYS—3

Gillibrand	Hirono	Markey
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NOT VOTING—10

Bennet	Harris	Sanders
Booker	Isakson	Warren
Burr	Kennedy	
Cassidy	Klobuchar	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 87, the nays are 3.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of William Joseph Nardini, of Connecticut, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Second Circuit.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, with respect to the Hunsaker nomination, I ask unanimous consent that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

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

The Senator from New Hampshire.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 1743

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to express my concern and my disappointment over the decision by the President to formally withdraw the United States from the Paris climate agreement.

Though the President announced this decision over 2 years ago, this past Monday marked the first day his administration could send a letter to the United Nations formalizing the year-long withdrawal process. Of course, we know that they did that.

American leadership on climate action is being ceded to other countries before our very eyes. With this move, the President is betraying the trust of the American people and betraying the trust of our international allies in the fight against climate change.

Climate change is a very real and present threat to our environment, to our national security, to our economy, to our health, and to our very way of life. That is why I introduced the International Climate Accountability Act, to prevent the President from using funds to withdraw the United States from the Paris climate agreement. This bipartisan bill would also require the administration to develop a strategic plan for meeting the commitments we made in Paris in 2015.

We can see on this chart that the House passed legislation over 6 months ago. It has been 188 days since the House passed their legislation, the Climate Action Now Act. Yet in the Senate the majority leadership has refused to call up this bill for a vote.

The administration's withdrawal from the Paris climate agreement and the general refusal to bring climate change legislation to the floor is out of step with the desires of the American people.

Approximately two out of every three Americans believe it is the job of the Federal Government to combat climate change, according to a recent poll from the Associated Press. The same poll found that 64 percent of Americans disapprove of the President's climate change policies.

Unfortunately, the Senate majority leadership continues to refuse to act on climate change. Yet what we hear from our scientists and experts is that they tell us that we need to act and act now on climate change before it is too late. This poll shows us, as others have, that a supermajority of the American public wants us to do just that.

I have come before this body a number of times in the past to highlight the impact of climate change in my home State of New Hampshire. We see very directly the effects of climate change. The farther north you go, the more you see those impacts. Our fall foliage season is shortened. Our maple syrup production season is disrupted. Our outdoor recreation industries are hampered. Our ski and our snowmobiling industries are hampered. Our lobsters are moving north to colder waters. Our moose population is

down 40 percent, and Lyme disease is on the rise.

But today what I really want to highlight are the revelations that have been made clear in recent weeks by our national security experts. A report entitled “Implications of Climate Change for the U.S. Army,” which was commissioned by the current Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, GEN Mark Milley reads: “The Department of Defense is precariously unprepared for the national security implications of climate change-induced global security challenges.”

The Pentagon’s “Report on Effects of a Changing Climate to the Department of Defense” reads, as we can see right here: “The effects of a changing climate are a national security issue with potential impacts to Department of Defense missions, operational plans, and installations.”

When former Secretary of Defense James Mattis was before the Senate Armed Services Committee for his confirmation hearing in 2017, his testimony read, in part: “Climate change is impacting stability in areas of the world where our troops are operating today.”

I had the chance to ask him in that hearing: “Do you believe climate change is a security threat?”

He responded this way: “Climate change can be a driver of instability, and the Department of Defense must pay attention to potential adverse impacts generated by this phenomenon.”

He went on to say: “Climate change is a challenge that requires a broader, whole-of-government response.”

I could go on detailing the calamitous conclusions of our national security experts, but, instead, I ask unanimous consent that a letter addressed to the President from nearly 60 national security and military leaders be printed in the RECORD.

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

AMERICAN SECURITY PROJECT,  
THE CENTER FOR CLIMATE AND  
SECURITY,  
March 5, 2019.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: We write to you as former US national security leaders to offer our support to our uniformed military, civilian national security professionals, and members of the scientific community, who across the past four Administrations have found that climate change is a threat to US national security.

Climate change is real, it is happening now, it is driven by humans, and it is accelerating. The overwhelming majority of scientists agree: less than 0.2% of peer-reviewed climate science papers dispute these facts. In this context, we are deeply concerned by reports that National Security Council officials are considering forming a committee to dispute and undermine military and intelligence judgments on the threat posed by climate change. This includes second-guessing the scientific sources used to assess the threat, such as the rigorously peer-reviewed National Climate Assessment, and applying that to national security policy. Imposing a political test on reports issued by the science agencies, and forcing a blind spot onto the

national security assessments that depend on them, will erode our national security.

It is dangerous to have national security analysis conform to politics. Our officials’ job is to ensure that we are prepared for current threats and future contingencies. We cannot do that if the scientific studies that inform our threat assessments are undermined. Our national security community will not remain the best in the world if it cannot make decisions based on the best available evidence.

When extreme weather hits the United States, it degrades the fighting force. Just last year, Hurricane Florence caused \$3.6 billion in damages to Camp Lejeune, home of the Marines’ expeditionary units on the East Coast. You called Florence “One of the biggest to ever hit our country.” Stronger storms and storm surges have long featured in predictions about a changing climate. Around the world, climate change is a “threat multiplier”—making other security threats worse. Its effects are even used by our adversaries as a weapon of war; ISIS used water shortages in Iraq, in part driven by a changing climate, to cement their hold on the population during their reign of terror from 2014 to 2017.

We support the science-driven patriots in our national security community who have rightly seen addressing climate change as a threat reduction issue, not a political one, since 1989. We support the bipartisan finding of the US Congress, which you signed into law on December 2017, stating that “climate change is a direct threat to the national security of the United States.” We urge you to trust and heed the analysis of your own national security agencies and the science agencies on which their assessments depend, including the 21 senior defense officials that have identified climate change as a security threat during your Administration. A committee designed to undermine the many years of work they have done will weaken our ability to respond to real threats, putting American lives at risk.

Our climate will continue to change, and the threats will continue to grow. We spent our careers pledged to protect the United States from all threats, including this one. Let’s drop the politics, and allow our national security and science agencies to do their jobs.

Sincerely,

Hon. John Kerry, Former Secretary of State; Hon. Ray Mabus, Former Secretary of the Navy; General Gordon R. Sullivan, US Army (Ret), Former Chief of Staff of the US Army; Admiral Samuel J. Locklear III, USN (Ret), Former Commander, US Pacific Command; Admiral James Stavridis, USN (Ret), Former Supreme Allied Commander Europe; Nancy Soderberg, Former Deputy Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs; Hon. Sharon Burke, Former Assistant Secretary of Defense for Operational Energy; Hon. David Goldwyn, Former Assistant Secretary of Energy and Special Envoy for International Energy Affairs; Hon. Miranda AA Ballentine, Former Assistant Secretary of the Air Force (Installations, Environment, and Energy); Leon Fuerth, Former National Security Adviser to the Vice President.

Dr. Geoffrey Kemp, Former Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs; General Paul Kern, USA (Ret.), Former Commanding General, US Army Materiel Command; Lieutenant General John Castellaw, USMC (Ret), Former Chief of Staff, US Central Command; Lieutenant General Arlen D. Jameson, USAF (Ret), Former Deputy Commander, US Strategic

Command; Lieutenant General Norm Seip, USAF (Ret), Former Commander, 12th Air Force; Hon. Sherri Goodman, Former Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Environmental Security); Hon. Chuck Hagel, Former Secretary of Defense; Vice Admiral Richard Truly, USN (Ret), Former Administrator of NASA; Admiral Paul Zukunft, USCG (Ret), Former Commandant of the Coast Guard; General Stanley McChrystal, USA (Ret), Former Commander, US and International Security.

Lieutenant General Donald Kerrick, USA (Ret), Former Deputy National Security Advisor to the President of the United States; Tom Hicks, Former Acting Under Secretary of the Navy and Deputy Under Secretary of the Navy for Management; Hon. John Conger, Former Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller) and Assistant Secretary of Defense for Energy, Installations and Environment; Eric Rosenbach, Former Chief of Staff, Department of Defense, and Assistant Secretary of Defense for Global Security; Vice Admiral Dennis McGinn, USN (Ret), Former Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Energy, Installations and Environment; Hon. Alice Hill, Former Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Resilience Policy, National Security Council; Major General Randy Manner, USA (Ret), Former Acting Vice Chief, National Guard Bureau; General Ron Keys, USAF (Ret), Former Commander, Air Combat Command; Vice Admiral Philip Cullom, USN (Ret), Former Deputy Chief of Naval Operations, Fleet Readiness and Logistics.

Lieutenant General Kenneth E. Eickmann, USAF (Ret), Former Commander, Aeronautical Systems Center, Headquarters Air Force Materiel Command; Vice Admiral Robert C. Parker, USCG (Ret), Commander, Coast Guard Atlantic Area; Greg Treverton, Former Chair, National Intelligence Council; Major General Jerry Harrison, USA (Ret), Former Chief, Office of Legislative Liaison, Army Staff; Rear Admiral Leendert R. Hering USN (Ret), Former Commander, Navy Region Southwest; Major General Jeff Phillips, USA (Ret), Executive Director, Reserve Officers Association; Rear Admiral Michael Smith, USN (Ret), Former Commander, Carrier Strike Group 3; Rear Admiral Jonathan White, USN (Ret), Former Oceanographer & Navigator, US Navy; Captain James C. Goudreau, SC, USN (Ret), Former Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Energy); Brigadier General Steven Anderson, USA (Ret), Former Director, Operations and Logistics Readiness, Headquarters, Department of the Army.

Brigadier General Donald Bolduc, USA (Ret), Former Commander, Special Operations Command-Africa; Brigadier General Robert Felderman, USA (Ret), Former Deputy Director of Plans, Policy and Strategy, United States Northern Command and North American Aerospace Defense Command; Brigadier General Carlos Martinez, USAF (Ret), Former Mobilization Assistant, Chief of Warfighting Integration and Chief Information Officer, Office of the Secretary of the Air Force; Joan VanDervort, Former Deputy Director, Ranges, Sea, and Airspace, Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Readiness); Commander David

Slayton, USN (Ret), Executive Director, the Arctic Security Initiative The Hoover Institution; Hon. Richard Morningstar, Former Ambassador to the European Union; Major General Richard T. Devereaux, USAF (Ret), Former Director, Operational Planning, Policy and Strategy, Headquarters US Air Force; Rear Admiral Sinclair M. Harris, USN (Ret), Former Commander, United States Fourth Fleet; Rear Admiral Michael G. Mathis, USN (Ret), Chief Engineer to the Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Research, Development and Acquisition); Rear Admiral Fernandez L. Ponds, USN (Ret), Commander, Expeditionary Strike Group (ESG) 3.

Rear Admiral Kevin Slates, USN (Ret), Former Director of Energy and Environmental Readiness Division, US Navy; Rear Admiral David W. Titley, USN (Ret), Former Oceanographer & Navigator, US Navy; Joe Bryan, Former Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Energy); Brigadier General John Adams, USA (Ret), Former Deputy United States Military Representative to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization Military Committee; Brigadier General Joseph R. Barnes, USA (Ret), Former Assistant Judge Advocate General of the Army; Brigadier General Stephen Cheney, USMC (Ret), Former Commanding General Marine Corps Recruit Depot, Parris Island; Brigadier General Gerald E. Galloway, USA (Ret), Former Dean of the Academic Board, US Military Academy, West Point; Brigadier General Stephen Xenakis, USA (Ret), Former Commanding General, Southeast Regional Medical Command; Colonel Lawrence B. Wilkerson, USA (Ret), Former Chief of Staff to the US Secretary of State.

This letter very directly rebukes the attempt by the President to create a committee within the National Security Council that would undermine military and intelligence judgments on the threats that are posed by climate change. So instead of recognizing those and developing a plan to address them, what the President has been trying to do is to figure out how to undermine those very judgments.

At this time, as in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be discharged from further consideration of S. 1743 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration; that the bill be considered read a third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Idaho.

Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, I am reserving the right to object.

With all due respect to my good friend and colleague from New Hampshire, we both served on the Foreign Relations Committee. The Foreign Relations Committee is, as it has been noted, the committee of jurisdiction on this matter. We are talking about the Paris climate agreement. What Senator SHAHEEN is attempting to do with this—and, again, with all due respect, I understand where she is coming from

on it—is to stop the President from withdrawing from the Paris climate agreement that was made by his predecessor, President Obama.

Let me say, first of all, that the Senator is right that the changes we are experiencing are great. They have large effects. They are of great magnitude. Just as importantly, the changes we make attempting to address this are going to have great magnitude. In a great magnitude, they are going to affect the American people both financially and in the quality of life and the lifestyle they enjoy.

We can't do anything about the changes that are occurring right now, but what we can do is to do something about the way we attack this, the way we make changes to our lifestyle and what we will give up and what people are willing to give up in order to address this.

The way this is done is nations get together to talk about this—the 200 nations get together. They did, and they came up with the Paris climate agreement. Under article II of the U.S. Constitution, section 2, the President is given the power to make treaties with other countries, and that is what President Obama attempted to do with this. However, section 2 goes on to say that the President can make these treaties provided two-thirds of the Senate present concur. So that is a treaty, and that is how ordinarily agreements are made between nations.

Obviously, we can do things ourselves without having a two-thirds vote—with a 60-percent vote in the Senate and a simple majority vote in the House. We can do that amongst ourselves if we want to change U.S. law as to how we are going to change the way we do industry and the way we lead our lives. We can do that with that kind of a vote. If we are going to agree with other countries, on the other hand, it takes a two-thirds vote.

Now, at the time this was negotiated, I disagreed with President Obama, and I disagree with the accord at this time. The reason I do is I really believe this is a bad deal for the people of the United States. I really believe we can get a better deal. I think what we need to do, if we are going to do that, is we need to do it on a bipartisan basis. There is not going to be a two-thirds vote without a bipartisan agreement on this issue.

I would like to see this addressed. I would like to see us, as the Foreign Relations Committee, and us, as the first branch of government, constitutionally protected as such, be a part of this and not just the second branch negotiating and then entering into the agreement.

The President has, No. 1, every right to withdraw from this agreement, just as President Obama had the right to enter into this executive agreement. I, for one, agree that he should withdraw from the Paris accord. In fact, I encouraged him to do so personally when he was running and then when he was elected and continuously since then.

That doesn't mean we should walk away from this by any stretch of the imagination. I think what we should do is do what the U.S. Constitution envisions; that is, you have a negotiation between us, the United States, and other countries, and then the matter is submitted to the U.S. Senate for a vote to see if two-thirds of us can agree that this is the way to do this.

So based on that, with all due respect to my good friend from New Hampshire, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I am not surprised by my colleague's objection. I am, however, disappointed, and I have to disagree, to some extent, with the rationale because in fact this was not a treaty. It was a voluntary, non-binding agreement that the United States entered into voluntarily.

I am not saying President Trump doesn't have the authority to withdraw from the agreement. I am saying he is wrong to withdraw because it is not in the U.S. national interest to withdraw from this agreement.

There is an international race to develop clean energy technologies and practices that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and this race exists, in large part, because of the goals that were established in the Paris climate agreement.

Instead of leading the pack in this race, which the United States should be doing, the President has chosen to put us on the sidelines. We are going to watch our allies and our adversaries clamor to fill the void he has created. After decades of American leadership in clean energy technology innovations, other countries are now poised to develop new low-carbon technologies to help countries throughout the world meet their Paris commitments. Those could be American technologies. Those could be American jobs. Instead of being developed in the United States, too many of these new technologies and the jobs that go with them will be developed outside of our shores. This is a missed opportunity for the United States. It is a setback for the American economy and for American workers.

The scientists are in agreement worldwide. Climate change is the single greatest environmental public health and economic challenge our world has ever faced. Right now, watching this President withdraw the United States from the Paris Agreement, sitting idly by, this Congress is surrendering American leadership in the fight against climate change.

I hope that as time goes by, the President and our Republican colleagues will rethink the position and acknowledge the need to do something to address the climate challenge we are facing and to make sure the United States is in line for those jobs and the new energy economy that is being created.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Idaho.

Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, first of all, I don't question the sincerity whatsoever of my good friend from New Hampshire. Indeed, she is quite correct that the United States has been a leader as far as developing methods by which we clean up the air and clean up the water.

There is nothing that is happening here today, at this moment, that is going to affect that at all. American companies are going to continue to be on the front edge of this, on a very innovative basis, and I have every confidence that American businesses will rise to the occasion and will continue to actually be the world leader in this regard.

What I object to is making an agreement with other countries that truly binds U.S. citizens by doing it without going through the constitutional process of submitting the agreement that is between our country and others, as is specifically—very specifically provided in article II, section 2.

I think if we did that, I think we would wind up with a better agreement. I think we would wind up with a bipartisan agreement. We all know that when we have a bipartisan agreement, we do substantially better as far as rising to the occasion and all getting behind the effort.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, yesterday a bipartisan group met with seven Fortune 500 companies. They were all on the cutting edge of new energy technologies, and everyone around the table said what they need is to see policies at the Federal level that encouraged the development of new energy technologies and what we can do to address climate change.

I like what my colleague said about being able to work together to address this. I hope we can do that, and I am ready to sit down anytime he is to look at things we might be able to agree on that will help us move forward to address climate change. I appreciate his willingness to work in a bipartisan way.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

#### VETERANS DAY

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I rise this evening to pay tribute to all the men and women who have worn our Nation's uniform in defense of our freedom. Veterans Day is a deeply meaningful day for our Nation. Our country sets this day aside to honor her servicemembers.

In Nebraska, we remember the sacrifices of our own heroes. We admire the courage required to leave your home in Nebraska and serve America in her hour of need. It was over 100 years ago, at the 11th hour, on the 11th day, during the 11th month of the year that the roars of battle in World War I

fell silent. Since then, Nebraskans and all Americans have come together every year to renew our appreciation for our Nation's heroes. We pledge that no matter how much time has passed, we will never forget their valor, their service, and their selflessness.

In June, it was one of the greatest honors of my life to gather at freedom's altar in Normandy, France, to commemorate the 75th anniversary of D-day. I was overwhelmed with both gratitude and pride for our men and women who ensure that our freedom lives on, and evil is vanquished.

Now, 75 years earlier, minutes from where I was standing, Omaha's own CPL Ed Morrisette arrived at the beaches of Normandy with the 6th Infantry Regiment. As the Omaha World Herald reports, "He leaped over the side of the landing craft into shoulder-deep water, carrying a roll of communications wire."

Morrisette recalled holding the wire and his rifle above the water as he waded through, dodging an onslaught of enemy artillery fire. By the grace of God, he completed his mission, and he survived the Normandy invasion.

Corporal Morrisette continued fighting for our Nation in France and Germany. Following the war, his career as a civilian engineer eventually led him to Offutt Air Force Base. Recently, his courage and his dedication were recognized.

At the age of 96, the Government of France awarded Corporal Morrisette the highest military or civilian medal—the French Legion of Honor. Corporal Morrisette's story inspires all of us to remember that our duty to honor our Nation's heroes is never finished. The responsibility falls to all of us to listen to their stories and to carry them on. Not only do we honor our troops with our words, we salute them with our actions.

Nebraskans have always taken this to heart. It is why you read stories like that of Chuck Ogle from Kearney. He was a pilot in the 498th U.S. Army Medical Corps air ambulance company during the Tet Offensive in Vietnam. Every single day, he carries with him a list of his 14 fellow servicemembers who were killed in action. It is why you see stories of hero flights for Nebraska veterans to visit Washington, DC.

Last October, a plane carried 80 Korean veterans from Hall County to our Nation's Capital to visit the monuments dedicated to their service. This marked the 10th flight for the county's veterans to Washington. Now, every living veteran in Hall County has been given the opportunity to make this trip. It is why over the last few years business leaders and members of the Omaha community rallied around the goal of building a new ambulatory clinic at the Omaha VA hospital.

In response to delays to update the aging Omaha VA facility, I introduced and President Obama signed into law the CHIP IN for Vets Act in 2016. The

bill allows control of VA projects to be placed where it should be—back in the hands of local communities. It allows communities like Omaha to take the lead on new projects by permitting the VA to accept private contributions to ensure VA projects are finished both on time and on budget. Omaha's community and business leaders came up with this idea in the first place, and they have delivered.

Construction began on a new ambulatory center on the Omaha VA campus in May of 2018. After the original cost estimate of \$120 million, the Government Accountability Office released a preliminary report that found that the implementation of the CHIP IN for Vets Act would reduce the total estimated cost to \$86 million. The report projected that the new facility is now \$34 million under budget and it is 4½ months ahead of schedule.

In the same report, a VA official stated that because of the agency's current major construction backlog, the CHIP IN approach allowed work on the Omaha project to begin at least 5 years sooner than it would have under a normal process. Now Nebraska's veterans may get the quality of care they need and deserve earlier than expected. The success of this project is a testament to the deep respect and admiration Nebraskans have for our veterans.

Scripture encourages us to pay our dues wherever they may be. If someone is due respect, show them respect. If honor is due, honor them. The amount of honor and respect our State and Nation owe our veterans is something we can never fully repay. Our country could not live on without their service and sacrifice.

I want to sincerely thank our veterans for their service when our country needed it the most.

Whether it was in the trenches of Europe while liberating a continent from evil or in the Pacific theater during World War II or stopping the threat of communism in Korea or Vietnam or defending our Nation against terrorism in Iraq and Afghanistan, the rescue of human freedom began with you. I can promise you that America will never forget your incredible courage and patriotism, and we will continue to strive to be worthy of the freedom that burns brighter today because of your service. On behalf of all Nebraskans and a grateful country, thank you.

May God bless our Nation's veterans and their families, and may God bless the United States of America.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to be recognized as in morning business for such time as I may consume.

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

Mr. INHOFE. You know, we don't hear that very often. I just heard the term from the Senator from Nebraska "under budget and ahead of schedule."

You did something right. Good for you.

APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. President, I have been asked several times in the last couple, 3 days where we are with regard to what I consider to be the most significant bill of the year every year, which is the Defense authorization bill, and I have been having to give the same answer for the last 3 or 4 days, and it is unfortunate, but I think it is going to ultimately happen.

Last week, I came down here and I talked about why we needed to pass the National Defense Authorization Act and why a full-year continuing resolution is totally unacceptable and would be devastating to us. I am back here again because in the last week, nothing has changed. That is not OK. The reason it has not changed is because many of the Members of the House are off someplace. I think they are in Afghanistan or someplace on a trip when we are in the middle of negotiating.

Let me just make sure we all understand what I am talking about. For 58 consecutive years, we passed the national defense authorization bill, so we will ultimately pass it. We did that. And I have to say that this is not a partisan statement I am making about this because the House and Senate Democrats and Republicans did a good job.

I particularly want to thank JACK REED, JACK REED and I—I am the chairman of the committee, and he is the ranking member—did our bill in record time. We set a record, actually, a year ago. We did this in a shorter period of time than has been done in 40 years, and we were anticipating doing that again. We did our bill in the Senate, and everything came out fine. We ended up passing it with only two votes in opposition to it. So there is no reason we are not doing it right now.

The reason this is critical is that if for some reason we didn't get this done until December, our kids over there would not be funded. I am talking about payroll and everything else. Our military would stop in its tracks. That is not going to happen. One reason we know it is not going to happen is because we introduced the short version of the bill that upset everyone. That was taking everything out of the bill that had nothing to do with defense and just doing it. That is getting kind of in the weeds, and it is complicated. Nevertheless, we need to get to it just in a matter of days now, as soon as the members of the committee in the House are back in town.

What kind of a message do my Democratic colleagues think they are sending our troops who lay their lives on the line every day if we don't prioritize their pay, their housing, and their programs to care for their families while they are away? What kind of a message do our Democratic colleagues think we are sending our allies and our partners, those who depend on us? What kind of a message are we sending those who are not our allies?

This is the problem we are having. I say to the Democrats in the House—because it is not the Republicans in the House, and it is not the Democrats in the Senate. This is just the Democrats in the House. We passed our bill in a bipartisan way here in the Senate, and we just need to get this finished. It is the most important bill of the year.

Now they claim we are not supporting our partners in Syria, and then they turn around on a dime and refuse to authorize the very funds that keep our partners safe and effective in the fight against ISIS.

I am concerned about the kind of message our colleagues are sending to our adversaries. Our adversaries enjoy this dysfunction. They want defense funding mired in partisan debate. They don't want us to catch up.

If we don't take action now, partisan bickering over supporting our troops and investing in national defense will be our Achilles' heel.

At the end of the day, these challenges won't go away because we want them to go away. They are out there. To meet these challenges, our troops need equipment, training, and weapons.

Everything is outlined in this blueprint. This is the blueprint that is the National Defense Strategy of the Nation. This was put together by an equal number of Democrats and Republicans well over a year ago as to how we want to handle our national defense and what our strategy is going to be. The President adopted this, it is a good strategy, and we have been following this in our committee to the letter.

We have this National Defense Strategy Commission report. There is a quote from GEN Creighton Abrams, a military leader from World War II on through Vietnam. His name may sound familiar because the Abrams tank was named after him. He talked about how after World War II the United States failed to properly modernize and train our military. And who paid for it? Our soldiers, airmen, Marines, and sailors. They paid for it with their lives. He said: "The monuments we raise to their heroism and sacrifice are really surrogates for the monuments we owe ourselves for our blindness to reality . . . for our unsubstantiated wishful thinking about how war could not come."

That is exactly what happened. It was true then, and it is true now. So to say that these things can wait while the House goes on another recess or to use them as a bargaining chip or to forgo them to instead wage war on our own President is at best a waste of time and resources and at worse a dangerous abdication of our constitutional duty.

Unfortunately, the truth is, if we kick the can down the road on these defense policy and funding bills, we are just adding another challenge to our defense.

We were off to a great start last year. Defense appropriations were enacted on time for the first time in a decade, and,

as I said, we passed the NDAA over here faster than we had ever done in 40 years.

All of the service leaders who came before the Senate Armed Services Committee said that having on-time appropriations and authorization is critical to rebuilding the force. We have the National Defense Strategy and the commission report as a roadmap. We have a budget deal. There is no reason we can't get this done. There is no good reason our Democratic colleagues are dragging their feet. Our senior military leaders said that a continuing resolution is absolutely the worst thing we can do.

By the way, a lot of people don't know what a continuing resolution is. If you pass a continuing resolution because you can't get appropriations bills passed, then you are continuing what you did the previous year. That doesn't work when you are carrying on a military because the needs we have in the coming year are not the same needs. We could have those programs already complete. Yet we would still have funding for them under a continuing resolution. It is a separate issue, but it is one that is critically important today and is being considered today.

So I am surprised that the Democrats in the House—not the Senate. The Senate Democrats and Republicans worked very well together. I am surprised that the Democrats in the House are willing to resort to a full-year CR. It is throwing in the towel. It is quitting when our troops need us the most.

My Republican colleagues in the House, led by House Armed Services Ranking Member THORBERRY, put out this document that talks about how America's military will be damaged under a full-year CR. No one has talked about this before. I am glad he came out with it. I will mention five examples that he mentioned.

It would extend the pilot shortage in our Air Force—extend, because we are still climbing out of the current shortage. We have a problem. We have a problem in the Air Force, and we have a problem everywhere we are using flying equipment, whether it is fixed wing or otherwise. This is a problem, and it is a serious problem. If we were to somehow have to do a full-year CR, that problem wouldn't be solved.

It would prevent the military from managing its personnel, including necessary efforts to grow the force, pay for military moves, and lock in bonuses for our troops. That won't happen if we end up with a full-year CR.

It would force the Navy to cancel ship maintenance and training. Repairs for 14 ships would be canceled.

It would worsen the existing munitions shortage by preventing DOD from buying more than 6,000 weapons.

Finally, we would fall even further behind our competitors on hypersonic weapons, artificial intelligence, and next-generation equipment that we need to face all the challenges I just talked about.

With regard to hypersonic weapons, as an example, I saw the other day for the first time—in fact, I used this picture down on the Senate floor. A hypersonic weapon is kind of the weapon of the future. It is one that works at 5 times the speed of sound. It is a type of artillery. It is a type of munition.

Prior to the last administration, the Obama administration, we were ahead of our peer competitors, which are China and Russia. Now we are actually behind China and Russia. That is how serious this is.

I talk to people in the real world. When I go back to Oklahoma, I talk to people, and they assume that we in the United States have the very best of everything. We don't. We have allowed other countries—primarily China and Russia—to catch up with us and actually put us behind in some areas, not to mention the waste of taxpayer dollars.

A CR wastes billions of dollars by creating repetitive work, injecting uncertainty into the contracting process, and forcing rushed work at year's end. It is something that is totally unnecessary and is something that should not be happening.

I have been meeting with my fellow conferees regularly—more than we ever have before NDAA negotiations. I am making sure we have a backup plan if we can't reach an agreement on the NDAA, but time is running out.

Here is the reality. We only have 20 legislative days left in the Senate. The House has even less than that because of the recess week they took. If the House sends us articles of impeachment, that would eat up all the time in December and could spill into January. That would mean we go beyond the deadline our troops need to be funded, and that is a reality we never had to face before.

We don't have time left. We need to make these bills a priority the way we always have done before. The NDAA has passed for the last 58 years. It is the most important thing we do each year.

In June, the Senate bill passed 86 to 8. That is a landslide, and that was not down party lines; that was on a bipartisan basis. I am grateful to the Senate Democrats for their partnership and their work in creating and passing this bipartisan bill. JACK REED is my counterpart over there. He is the ranking member in the Senate Armed Services Committee. We worked hand in glove throughout this process and even set records. We did our job, and it has to be completed in the House. This happened in line with the best traditions of the Senate Armed Services Committee—a tradition that spans almost six decades.

Usually, this is a bipartisan process; both sides give and take. So it concerns me to see partisan politics being inserted into this must-pass bill when we go to conference between the House and the Senate. It concerns me to see Democrats filibustering Defense appropriations to prove a political point. It

concerns me to see them prioritizing their misguided attempts to undo the results of the 2016 election through impeachment, instead of taking care of our troops with the NDAA. If we can't keep Defense authorizations free of partisan gridlock, what kind of message does that send to Americans who rely on our troops for protection and our allies who rely on us?

I said before: The world is watching. We are sending a message. We need to make that a successful message.

Let me say one more thing about the skinny bill. This is now a reality. When I filed this, we thought the chances we would have to use that were very remote. If they should go through with this thing they are threatening to do over on the House side—an impeachment process—people don't realize that if you want to impeach somebody, it not a simple vote of the majority. It is the second step that is significant. If they impeach, they don't have to have any evidence, any documentation, any problem at all if they just want to get the majority of people and say: Let's impeach the President, they can say: We will impeach the President.

The problem there is, then it comes over to the Senate, and the Senate has to go through this long process, and that is what we would be competing with when we are not getting the Defense authorization bill done. The skinny bill is important. It is now filed. It is ready to pass, if we should have to do that. Nobody wants to do it, but we may end up having to do it. That is the good news and the bad news. This is the most important bill of the year. We need to get it passed.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I thank the chairman of the Armed Services Committee for his bipartisan work with my senior Senator, JACK REED, year after year on the National Defense authorizations.

#### CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. President, this 257th "Time to Wake Up" speech reports on my trip to Colorado to see how climate change is affecting the Centennial State and to learn more about the remarkable action that Coloradans are taking to confront climate change.

Colorado is the 18th State I have visited on my climate road trips. Typically, these trips land me in States where people fighting for climate action need some bucking up. Often, I remind those people that there is hope, even if their State legislature may be captured by fossil fuel interests, even if climate change is a dirty word in local hangouts. That was not the case in Colorado. In fact, it is a State on a major climate change winning streak.

Coloradans were the ones bucking me up. I saw that right off the bat at the Alliance Center in downtown Denver. The center's chief operating officer, Jason Page, took me around this LEED-certified space, which is part

business incubator, part rallying point for an array of organizations fighting for climate action in Colorado and throughout the country. Jason and his colleagues hosted me and local environmental leaders to discuss the work they have done, and they have done a lot.

Just in the last year, Colorado passed and signed into law seven important climate and clean energy bills. They include legislation to set targets for cutting the State's climate pollution relative to 2005 levels by at least 90 percent by 2050. The legislature passed four measures to boost the adoption of electric vehicles, and it passed bills to help move to new energy-efficient home appliances, to ease the transition to renewable energy for Xcel, Colorado's largest utility, and to collect long-term climate data so the State can craft even more smart legislation to combat climate change and build resiliency to climate consequences.

To hear how Colorado is going to hit its renewable targets, I met with Xcel, State public utility commissioners, and Gov. Jared Polis. Their message to me was simple: It is a challenge, and we are going to do it. They certainly aren't backing away from the challenge. On top of the State's renewable goal, Xcel has committed to an 80-percent cut in carbon emissions across its portfolio by 2030 and to reach 100 percent carbon-free energy by 2050. Xcel, supported by the Colorado Public Utilities Commission, is now incorporating the social cost of carbon—a key measure of the long-term damage done by carbon pollution—into its planning process.

On top of forward-looking policy, Colorado is fortunate to be a leader in developing clean energy technology. For that, I visited Panasonic's Pena Station NEXT project, they call it. It is a collaboration between the city of Denver, the utility Xcel, the Denver International Airport, the State Department of Transportation, and Panasonic. The project is designed to show what a smart city powered by renewable energy looks like. It includes two megawatts of solar, a massive battery storage system, which I am looking at right here, a facility to test autonomous vehicles, and an operation center that can integrate all that technology for better efficiency.

At the National Renewable Energy Laboratory in Golden, I saw some of the most advanced wind, solar, and other renewable energy technologies in the world. This National Lab is testing the next generation of wind turbines, hydrogen fuel cells, autonomous vehicles, solar panels, smart grid technology, and more. NREL's job isn't just to develop these technologies but also to help private industry adopt them, bringing clean energy to scale and creating jobs in the process.

This is me at NREL. I am painting a solar-activated fluid that they have come up with onto a plate and instantly generating energy from the

lamp coming above. As I painted it, you could see the dials come up as energy was generated off that freshly painted plate. It was like putting nail polish down on a surface. They are doing some pretty amazing stuff. At NREL, I could not help but notice a familiar logo, TPI Composites, a company that makes top-of-the-line composite materials in Rhode Island. Naturally, because NREL needs the best, they work with this company with a Rhode Island footprint to develop next-generation materials. I am proud to report that our Composites Alliance of Rhode Island includes TPI. They have a big role in building wind turbine blades and other technologies.

Colorado feels this urgency because the Mountain West is feeling the effects of climate change more and more every day. I met with leading climate scientists for a briefing at the National Center for Atmospheric Research in Boulder, overlooking the Flatirons at the feet of the Rocky Mountains. NCAR's Doctors James Done, Laura Reed, Daniel Swain, Jackie Schuman, and Bill Mahoney told me about their important research into climate change's effects in the West; how vegetation is withering; how wildfires grow more frequent, have longer duration and are more intense; how hydrology changes as weather patterns shift and temperatures rise throughout the region; and how extreme weather events like sudden downpours and prolonged droughts are becoming a new unfortunate normal.

In Fort Collins, I met with truly dedicated public servants from across the Federal Government who specialize in land management and climate adaptation and have gotten together to coordinate their efforts. These exceptional public servants spent their careers protecting our public lands. They are witnessing firsthand the devastation wrought on our public lands by climate change. They described to me their battles to safeguard stands of old-growth sequoias—a national treasure—and to rebuild beaches and dunes in the face of rising seas and stronger oceanic storms and even to cover melting glaciers with sheeting to try to help prevent them from melting quite so quickly.

They love these lands. They work all their lives to help and save and protect these lands. They do everything in their power to honor and serve these lands. The fact that they battle on in spite of the heartbreaking pace and severity of the destruction climate change is causing is a human inspiration.

Speaking of inspiration, I closed out my trip with an event organized by the group POW—Protect Our Winters—to hear what climate change means to the winter sports and outdoor industry. Skiers, snowboarders, and industry executives told me about the climate threat to the multibillion-dollar winter sports industry in Colorado, which relies on plenty of snow and cold weather

to thrive. Professional skier Cody Cirillo told me:

I fear there will be no more snow by the end of the century. I fear a whole ski culture will cease to exist. I fear economic impacts on Summit County and all other mountain towns. I fear the loss of an industry that has given me so much. . . . I fear the kids will not get the opportunity to see a first snow, to feel winter's inaugural bite on the nose, and to miss out on so many wonderful lessons.

These fears are driving Cody and other world-class athletes to speak out. He and his fellow POW members aren't giving in; they are speaking up.

There are many reasons Coloradans are acting on climate and transitioning their energy mix away from fossil fuels. Colorado has the benefit of fossil fuels, but Coloradans want to protect their beautiful, natural landscape. They want to sustain their winter sports and hospitality industries. They want a healthy, prosperous future for their children, and they understand the risks of developing and using those fossil fuels. They also recognize that there are strong forces coming in the energy market—forces that will shift away from fracked natural gas and coal to carbon-free wind and solar. Coloradans know it is better to lead that shift than to wait until the bottom drops out.

We have known for a while that coal is facing big problems. Murray Energy, which is a major coal company with cozy ties to the Trump administration, just filed for bankruptcy last week. Alarms are going off about natural gas, which is a type of fuel that the fossil fuel industry touts as less dirty.

In Boulder, Paul Bodnar, the managing director of the Rocky Mountain Institute, highlighted a report RMI issued in September showing just how quickly this shift, this cost reduction across the renewable spectrum, is going to make the economics of natural gas untenable.

RMI's report foretells of "a turning point for the relative economics of clean energy resources (including wind, solar, storage; energy efficiency; and demand flexibility) versus new gas-fired generation."

The report continues: "For the first time, the rapidly falling costs of renewables and batteries are allowing optimized combinations of these resources . . . to systematically outcompete gas-fired generation on a cost basis while providing all the same grid services." The "same grid services" means the same reliability and the same availability but at a lower cost.

Here is a graph showing how fast clean energy will overtake gas plants.

This has been the falling cost of clean energy. This is the cost of building and operating a new gas plant. This is the cost of operating an existing gas plant. So we are now at the crossover point where it is cheaper to use renewables—clean energy power—than it is to build new natural gas plants.

Setting aside the pollution and the other extraneous costs, all of which

economists would call externalities that come with burning natural gas, which is the methane leakage, the CO<sub>2</sub> from the burn—all of it—on even just the heavily subsidized existing natural gas pricing, clean energy still beats them right now. They are projecting that it is going to go ahead, and by about 2035, it will be cheaper to build a new clean energy power facility than it will be to continue to feed natural gas into your existing, already built, depreciated natural gas facilities. Just on price is where we are going. So somebody building natural gas facilities into this projected future has a real problem on his hands.

RMI has found that clean energy resources beat on price alone—on price—over 80 percent of proposed gas-fired powerplant capacity, and that clean energy will render 70 percent of proposed gas plants "uneconomic"—can't compete—just on price by 2035. In other words, it will not make sense even to run, let alone build, those uneconomic natural gas plants. They will be shuttered, stranded assets, which will deal a financial blow to the company or the investors who own them, and if the utilities can shove that cost through to their consumers, it will leave consumers in the lurch. If over half of your fleet is stranded, that is catastrophic for a utility company just on the economics.

It actually gets worse for natural gas in a new investigation by the watchdog group Unearthed, based on data from a very respected fossil fuel industry firm, the expert consulting firm Rystad. Based on Rystad's data, the new report finds that the big oil companies' promises to curb the methane emissions from natural gas extraction appear to be completely bogus. The report found that the biggest industry players, including ExxonMobil and BP, were among the worst when it comes to wasting and burning off methane.

Natural gas is facing a double whammy. First, natural gas is worsening our climate crisis faster than we knew, and some of our biggest fossil fuel companies are driving the problem.

Now, while we are finding out how the fossil fuel industry has misled us about its methane emissions and about how much leakage and burning off there is, we are being treated to the spectacle of one of the biggest fossil fuel industry trade groups—the American Petroleum Institute—in its launching of a seven-figure ad campaign to convince America that "we're are on it." We are America's natural gas industry, and we are on it when it comes to greenhouse gas emissions.

Well, it is on it not so much, apparently.

This ad campaign looks like just more fossil fuel industry disinformation. It is an industry that just can't seem to help itself from saying things that aren't true.

Anyway, if you pair natural gas's rapidly becoming "uneconomic" against renewables with emerging data

showing a much bigger methane problem for the industry, that pairing—that combined result—is very gloomy for natural gas investors. That is why, in getting back to Colorado, it is such a smart move to unhitch your energy market from those fuels while you can.

A savvy move, Colorado.

Across this country, Americans are already acting on climate. In the face of the President's extraordinarily ill-advised decision to pursue a departure from the Paris Agreement, States, municipalities, and major corporations are all standing up and saying: Nope, we are still in.

They get the problem that we face, and they get how important it is. It is time for us in the Senate to join them in waking up and coming up with a solution to this evident problem.

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

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

TRIBUTE TO JOSHUA HALL, JENNIFER CHILDRESS, DAWN WILCOX, AND ANGIE WRIGHT

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, it is one of my favorite times during the week, when I get to come to the Senate floor—I know it is the pages' favorite time—to talk a little bit about Alaska and talk about my State and present what we weekly call the "Alaskan of the Week."

It is the opportunity to talk about someone in the community who has done something great for their community, for the State, maybe for America, and I would like to recognize this great variety of wonderful Alaskans, great Americans, whom we have in my State and talk about them.

By the way, I always like to give a little update on what is going on in Alaska and to talk to people who are in the Gallery and who are watching on TV and encourage them—now is the time to plan your next trip to Alaska if you are going to come next summer. But, also, you should know that winter, which is coming—it has pretty much come to Alaska—is a great time to visit too. It is a winter wonderland. You can ski, snowboard, and at end of the day, sit back and drink something warm and watch the northern lights dance in the sky. You can't do that in many States in our great Nation. So come on up for the trip of a lifetime. We want you to come whether it is summer, winter, fall, spring; it doesn't matter. You will not be disappointed if you come visit us in the great State of Alaska.

I am going to break the rules a little bit on the Alaskan of the Week because I usually recognize one, but today I am going to recognize four extraordinary Alaskans. They are four teachers in my State who are the recent recipients of

the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching. Joshua Hall is a math teacher at Dimond High School in Anchorage and the chair of the math program there. Jennifer Childress is also a teacher at Dimond, teaching science and engineering courses. She currently teaches 11th and 12th grade physics and Advanced Placement physics. Dawn Wilcox teaches second grade at Campbell Elementary School in Anchorage, and Angie Wright teaches 4th and 5th grade math at Auke Bay Elementary in Juneau, AK.

We are very, very proud of them. This is a great achievement for all four of these wonderful teachers.

This award is the highest honor bestowed by the U.S. Government specifically for K–12 science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and computer science teaching—something we need more of, not just in Alaska but in America. And we need great teachers who can do this, and that is what this award recognizes.

As any State has—Alaska, North Dakota—we have thousands of teachers in my State who do such great work day in and day out to make sure our next generation is not only educated on the facts but who also understand, in the words of the great leader Nelson Mandela, "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world." Nelson Mandela said that.

These four teachers have been working hard every day for years so that their students will go out and do just that—change the world; make Alaska, America, the world a better place.

They, as well as our teachers all across the country, all across Alaska, certainly have one of the most important and most difficult jobs, so we salute all of them, but I want to salute these four teachers in a little bit more detail. They have chosen not only to master these science, engineering, physics subjects, but to teach it to the next generation.

Despite a slight improvement in the STEM skills of Americans over the last 20 years, it is widely recognized that the United States is still being outpaced by countries all over the world in these critical subject matters.

Now, more than ever, our country desperately needs skilled Americans, skilled professionals, who can innovate for our Nation, who can improve our Nation's infrastructure, advance our healthcare system, build the tools that defend our country, and ensure our Nation's prosperity and a strong economy. We need STEM education.

There is so much to say about all four of these teachers, but let me give you a brief example of how they are teaching the youth of Alaska in these critical areas.

Mr. Hall is a math teacher at Dimond High School who, by the way, has former students and fans in my office. This is a bit of a theme. A lot of these teachers have taught a lot of my staff

right now, including Jesse here. Mr. Hall has been an educator for more than 20 years. He has been teaching math for the past 14 years at Dimond High, and as the department chair, he decided that the school needed an event where math students could show and take pride in the skills they are learning.

He worked with another math teacher to design and organize a schoolwide math competition. They just had their fourth annual event, and 175 students participated. The audience cheered; students were excited. It was a huge deal. Studying math is really cool. It is great. Gosh, there were 175 students. So that is Mr. Hall.

Mrs. Childress is also at Dimond High and also has a big fan base in my office of former students, including Jesse, I believe. She has taught for over 20 years, 14 of which have been teaching science and engineering courses at Dimond.

She helped found the Engineering Academy at Dimond, and she and another teacher developed and ran a program called Smart Girls Rock! Smart Girls Rock! exposes freshman and sophomore girls to female engineers from Anchorage and encourages young women to pursue STEM careers. As a father of three daughters, I know just how important it is to do that.

Here is a fun fact: Mrs. Childress and Mr. Hall have been married for 23 years, which makes this award all the more special for both of them. I would call them a true power couple in Alaska STEM education.

Miss Wilcox, a teacher from Campbell Elementary, has had a 20-year career and has been teaching at Campbell for the past 3 years. Working with her colleagues, she created a STEM school at Campbell—the first STEM elementary school in Anchorage.

Again, these are innovators. You can tell these teachers are innovators.

Also, as a project for the Iditarod Teacher in Every Classroom, which is a science program based on our famous sled dog race, the Iditarod, she worked with another colleague to get their classroom to adopt and improve a local park.

Miss Wilcox's second graders appeared before the school board, the community council, and the parks commission to advocate for their idea. So not only are they learning STEM, but they are learning civics. For their efforts, they were awarded a \$20,000 Anchorage Parks Foundation matching grant, and the park now has outdoor learning labs, paths, signs, and is a joy to visit. So all of you visitors who are going to come to Alaska have to make sure you check out this great new innovation in our parks.

Finally, let me talk about Ms. Wright. Ms. Wright has been an educator for over 16 years. She began her career teaching in rural Alaska, which I view as the heart and soul of our State. For the last 7 years she taught at Auke Bay in Juneau, where she was born and raised.

She is passionate about incorporating place-based knowledge into the classroom. She says that every year her students participate in place-based learning. They pick berries, a traditional part of the Alaska Native subsistence lifestyle, in order to gather the data and more detailed information about our incredible environments throughout the State.

“Students in my classroom learn a lot of Alaskan Native languages and participate in a Tlingit dance group, performing around southeast Alaska.” She also takes her fourth and fifth grade students on a field trip to the muskeg ecosystem to learn how animals adapt to survive in different environments.

“Teaching in Alaska is a gift and taking advantage of it is something I value very much,” Ms. Wright said. It was, in fact, Mr. President, a sentiment expressed by all four of these teachers who won this very prestigious award.

Henry Adams once wrote, “A teacher affects eternity; he or she can never tell where their influence actually stops.” Think about that. A teacher impacts eternity.

The influence that these teachers have over the lives of so many young Alaskans will really never stop. As I mentioned, many staff members of my office are direct recipients of this influence, which will continue help to grow the next generation of leaders, of workers, of thinkers, of doers, and I am sure the next generation of teachers, through their example. I see students who, in turn, will continue to make our State and our country the great places that they are. We cannot thank these teachers enough for what they have done.

So I want to congratulate Mr. Hall, Ms. Childress, Ms. Wilcox, and Ms. Wright for all they have done for this great award, for all they continue to do, for your dedication to your profession, for your passion for math and science, and for your commitment to Alaska’s next generation.

And, of course, I want to congratulate them on being this week’s Alaskans of the Week.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

#### ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. SULLIVAN. For the information of Senators, tomorrow the Senate will vote on the confirmation of the Rudofsky and Wilson nominations at 11:45 a.m. and the confirmation of the Nardini nomination at 1:45 p.m.

### LEGISLATIVE SESSION

#### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session for a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

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

#### VOTE EXPLANATION

• Ms. HARRIS. Mr. President, I was absent but had I been present, I would have voted no on rollcall vote No. 344 the confirmation of Executive Calendar No. 355, David Austin Tapp, of Kentucky, to be a Judge of the United States Court of Federal Claims. •

#### S. RES. 150

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, this week, the United States House of Representatives made history. For the very first time, an overwhelming majority of its members—more than 400—adopted a resolution recognizing the Armenian genocide. I rise today to urge my colleagues in the Senate to do the same thing—the right thing—and pass S. Res. 150.

It has now been 104 years since the Armenian people became targets of the most evil and hate-filled campaign of violence that the world had ever seen. From 1915 to 1923, a million and a half Armenian men, women, and children were murdered at the hands of the Ottoman Turkish Government. It was so atrocious that no word yet existed to describe what was happening—not until the creation of the word “genocide,” the deliberate and systematic destruction of a racial, political, or cultural group.

Unfortunately, nobody has ever been held accountable, and the events surrounding the Armenian genocide continue to be denied, but the truth is simple: What happened to the Armenian people was absolutely genocide, and the Armenian community is right to insist that it be described that way.

This is why I have always supported Senate resolutions calling for the recognition of the Armenian genocide and urged my colleagues to join me.

We know that the deeper the wound, the longer it takes to heal, and nothing cuts deeper into the collective consciousness of a people than genocide.

At the same time, we know now that the Ottoman Empire’s determination to exterminate the Armenian people was no match for their will to survive, and those who survived embodied the best qualities of the human spirit: hope, resilience, perseverance, and love.

Some survivors made their way to America, and many of them built their new lives in Michigan. They have created thriving communities, built businesses, raised families, founded schools, and contributed their rich culture to the fabric of our State.

The more than 20,000 Armenians who are living in Michigan today have not forgotten what happened—none of us should, for we know that, if we do not recognize the atrocities of the past, we

risk blinding ourselves to atrocities in the future.

Recognition of the Armenian genocide is long overdue. A crime like this casts a long shadow, and this shadow can be conquered only by light, the light of truth that comes from fully acknowledging the full scale of the horror that the Armenians endured.

I urge my colleagues to take up and support this resolution.

Thank you.

#### REMEMBERING KAY HAGAN

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of the late Senator Kay Hagan. Her loss will be deeply felt by us here in the Senate, both by those who served with her as well as the many staff and individuals she worked with over time. Senator Hagan was a dedicated public servant who touched many lives faithfully serving her home State of North Carolina.

Born in Shelby, NC, Senator Hagan attended Florida State University and then returned to North Carolina to attend law school at Wake Forest University. She worked at North Carolina National Bank, a predecessor to Bank of America, for 10 years, becoming a vice president in the estates and trust division. She was a loving wife and mother deeply committed to her family. She left the bank to raise her three children—Jeanette, Tilden, and Carrie—and became actively involved in the Greensboro community.

Senator Hagan started early in politics helping her uncle, former Florida Governor and U.S. Senator Lawton Chiles, paste bumper stickers on supporters’ cars. She was active in North Carolina politics and ran Governor Jim Hunt’s campaign in Guilford County in 1992 and 1996. In 1998, she ran for the North Carolina State Senate and served there for 10 years, where she co-chaired the budget committee. During her 6-year tenure as cochair of the budget, she increased North Carolina’s Rainy Day fund and balanced five straight budgets. I commend her commitment to fiscal responsibility and achieving a balanced budget. In 2008, she won the election for the U.S. Senate seat and showed up in Congress ready to work for North Carolinians back home.

One thing Senator Hagan was known for here in the Senate was the effort she put in to be as open and accessible to her constituents. As a dedicated public servant, Senator Hagan made constituent services a priority and often traveled the State hosting “Conversations with Kay.”

It is difficult to pinpoint Senator Hagan’s single most greatest achievement. During her political career at the local, State, and Federal level, Senator Hagan championed many important issues and served as a tireless advocate for her constituents.

Representing one of the most military-friendly States in the Nation,

Senator Hagan advocated for Active-Duty military, veterans, and their families in her role serving on the Senate Armed Services Committee. Coming from a military family, Senator Hagan understood the needs of those who serve our country and their families. Along with Senator BURR, she was key in getting documents released pertaining to contaminated water at Camp Lejeune, giving families the answers they deserved. She was constantly reminding us all to remember and understand the sacrifices made by our military and their families, often telling their stories on the Senate floor.

I had the privilege of working with Senator Hagan on issues before the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee. From her time in the State senate, Senator Hagan was a champion for financial literacy education, and I greatly enjoyed our work together on financial literacy initiatives for children. I worked very closely with Senator Hagan on the Biologics Price Competition and Innovation Act, which we offered as an amendment together, along with Senator Hatch, to the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act when it was being considered in committee. She was instrumental in the creation of a new pathway for biosimilars, a lower cost alternative to biologic drugs. Our work together has fostered competition and improved choices for American patients.

Senator Hagan understood the true value of bipartisan work and developed strong relationships with Members of both parties. I admired her commitment to work across the aisle and reconcile shared goals of bettering the lives of Americans.

She was a committed woman of faith, serving as a Sunday school teacher for many years. A member of the Presbyterian Church, she was always one to do what she thought was right rather than what was easiest.

My wife Diana joins me in sending our deepest condolences to her loved ones. We hope she will find eternal peace and happiness knowing she had a profound effect on all that knew her as a colleague, as a mother and as a friend.

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#### REMEMBERING CHRISTA MCAULIFFE

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I rise today to commemorate the life and legacy of Christa McAuliffe.

Christa McAuliffe was born on September 2, 1948, in Boston, MA. She grew up in suburban Massachusetts, and she studied American history and education in college and graduate school. After some time teaching high school in Maryland, she moved in 1978 with her family to New Hampshire, where she started work as a teacher at Concord High School.

She was a passionate and dedicated teacher. She taught a variety of subjects, including history, economics,

and law. Her former students describe her enthusiasm and her creativity in planning lessons and activities for students. She even developed an original course, called "The American Woman."

One of her former students says, "She was very exuberant in her teaching and excited about what she was teaching. She was always willing to help outside of the classroom if you needed it. I remember her constantly, every day that I stayed late after school to make up work that I'd missed for other classes. . . . checking in to see if there was anything she could do to help me."

Christa believed strongly in the importance of the teaching profession and in working creatively to help students understand the human side of historical events. When NASA launched its Teacher in Space Program in 1984, Christa seized the opportunity and applied for what she called the "ultimate field trip." She wrote in her application to NASA:

In developing my course, The American Woman, I have discovered that much information about the social history of the United States has been found in diaries, travel accounts and personal letters. This social history of the common people . . . gives my students an awareness of what the whole society was doing at a particular time in history. They get the complete story. Just as the pioneer travelers of the Conestoga wagon days kept personal diaries, I, as a pioneer space traveler, would do the same . . . My perceptions as a non-astronaut would help complete and humanize the technology of the Space Age. Future historians would use my eyewitness accounts to help in their studies of the impact of the Space Age on the general population.

Her application was chosen out of more than 11,000 applications submitted by teachers from around the country.

Even during her busy NASA training schedule and newfound public attention, she remained dedicated to her students back home in New Hampshire. She flew all the way back from Houston, in the middle of training, in order to be there for the first day of school at Concord High. She even somehow found the time to write college recommendations for her students on the day before the Challenger launch.

She planned to keep a journal and teach lessons from space. She wanted to humanize space travel and make the experience accessible to regular people. She said that she hoped her experience and the public attention would inspire more people to become teachers.

Tragically, on January 28, 1986, the Challenger shuttle exploded just 73 seconds after launching, killing Christa as well as the rest of the crew: Gregory Jarvis, Ronald McNair, Ellison Onizuka, Judy Resnik and Dick Scobee.

Many people know that Christa's motto was "I touch the future, I teach," and that statement remains as true today as it ever was. More than 30 years later, Christa McAuliffe continues to inspire new generations of students and teachers. In fact, a num-

ber of Christa's former students have gone on to become teachers themselves. One in particular says she at times turns to the question "What would Christa do?" for guidance.

Schools and science centers across the country are named for her. In New Hampshire, we have the McAuliffe-Shepard Discovery Center, an air and space museum and planetarium, as well as the Christa McAuliffe School, an elementary school in Concord. There have even been an asteroid and a crater on the moon named after her.

The Christa McAuliffe Commemorative Coin Act was signed into law by the President on October 9. The enactment of this legislation means that a commemorative coin in Christa's honor will be minted by the U.S. Treasury in 2021. Proceeds from the sale of this coin will go to support science, technology, engineering and math, STEM, education.

Christa McAuliffe demonstrated throughout her life how to make the world a better place, not only through once-in-a-lifetime feats of bravery but also through her everyday actions and interactions with those around her. I hope we can all continue to look to her example for inspiration and ask ourselves "What would Christa do?"

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#### REMEMBERING CHIEF GREGORY E. PYLE

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the memory of Gregory E. Pyle, Chief of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, who passed away last week. Chief Pyle was a dedicated servant and leader of the Choctaw Nation for 30 years. After more than 13 years as the Assistant Chief of the Tribe, in 1997, he became Chief of the Choctaw Nation until his retirement in 2014.

Chief Pyle was a man of vision and action. He put families first by focusing on health, jobs, and education. Under his thoughtful leadership, the Choctaw Nation focused on economic development, which resulted in new business and job opportunities for Tribal members.

One of my fondest memories with Chief Pyle was when we worked together to pass the historic Code Talkers legislation, which awarded Congressional Commemorative Medals to the Code Talkers of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, along with other Tribes, in recognition of their service during World Wars I and II. Not many people remember this, but Chief Pyle and I started on our journey to honor these heroes in 2002, and it wasn't until 2008 that we were able to get it done. This measure along with many others not only speaks to his character, but also to his unwavering dedication to the Choctaw people.

The Choctaw Nation and the State of Oklahoma are grateful for his dedication and humble leadership. His legacy will benefit generations to come.

TRIBUTE TO MASTER SERGEANT  
MATTHEW WILLIAMS

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize and honor MSG Matthew Williams who was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor by the President of the United States of America on October 30, 2019.

Throughout his life, MSG Matthew Williams displayed tremendous confidence, competence, and determination. He graduated from Angelo State University with a bachelor's degree in criminal justice and completed the hardest training the U.S. Army has to offer: Special Forces Assessment and Selection, the Special Forces Qualification Course, and SERE training.

Master Sergeant Williams is a master and expert in his chosen profession—18 Bravo, U.S. Army Special Forces weapons sergeant—and has proven himself to be a consummate professional with service in numerous positions: weapons Sergeant operational Detachment Alpha 3336, senior weapons sergeant Operational Detachment Alpha 332, senior instructor/writer, Delta Company, 2nd Battalion, 1st Special Warfare Training Group, and operations sergeant, Alpha Company 2nd Battalion, 3rd SFG (A).

Master Sergeant Williams has a proven commitment to service and to this Nation by repeatedly answering the call to action with a deployment in support of Operation JUNIPER SHIELD and multiple deployments in support of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM. He displayed conspicuous gallantry on April 6, 2008, as a member of Operational Detachment Alpha 3336, during Operation Commando Wrath, a mission to capture or kill high-value targets of the Hezbe Islami al Gulbadin in the Shok Valley of Afghanistan. With numerous U.S. soldiers and Afghan commandos pinned down by intense enemy fire, Master Sergeant Williams continuously disregarded his own safety and concern, braved rocket-propelled-grenade and heavy machinegun fire in order to lead a group of Afghan commandos on a counterattack across ice-covered boulders and a fast-moving, ice-cold, waist-deep river to help reinforce and evacuate four wounded teammates and set-up a critical firing position to allow his other teammates and Afghan commandos to escape safely.

For his actions that day, Master Sergeant Williams was awarded the Medal of Honor, the Nation's highest medal, on 30 October 2019, by the President of the United States, Donald J. Trump.

Kevin Stitt, Governor of Oklahoma, proclaimed November 6, as Master Sergeant Matthew Williams Day, and I encourage all citizens to recognize the achievements and contributions by Master Sergeant Williams to the U.S. of America and to the United States Army Special Forces.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO EDNA BOYCE

• Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, this week I have the honor of recognizing Edna Boyce of Dawson County for her impact on the Glendive community.

When young schoolchildren begin their day in Glendive, Edna is the first face they see because, for 41 years, Edna has been driving the school bus for the Glendive School District!

In April of 1978, Edna decided she wanted a change in her career from working at the Glendive Bakery. That April, she marched into the school district supervisor's office for an interview. When the district supervisor asked if she had any experience, Edna said she had experience driving sugar-beet trucks. The supervisor gave her the job as bus driver, and Edna has been happily serving the Glendive School District ever since.

It is my honor to recognize Edna Boyce for her commitment to the Glendive community. She has been a committed bus driver, and her bright smile and cheerful attitude has brightened the morning for so many young Montanans. She has made a tremendous impact on Glendive and the State of Montana, and I thank her for all of her years of hard work. •

40TH ANNIVERSARY OF NEW  
VENTURES MAINE

• Mr. KING. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the 40th anniversary of New Ventures Maine, NVM. NVM is a nonprofit that provides adults with the tools they need to succeed in a changing economy. Through free classes and individualized coaching, NVM has helped thousands of Maine people find jobs, start their own businesses, and manage their finances.

In 1978, Merle Nelson, a representative from Portland, ME, and Barbara Trafton, a senator from Lewiston, ME, spearheaded a bill that established what was then called the "Displaced Homemakers Project." The program was designed to support Maine women transitioning into the workforce after focusing on raising their families. Since its inception, Gilda Nardone has served as executive director and she, along with her skillful team, have steadfastly executed the vision of its founders while seamlessly addressing the changing needs of the community around them for the last four decades.

Fueled by the successes and tenacity of the people they serve, the organization has expanded its mission, adding courses on business management, financial literacy, and leadership. Other initiatives have been introduced as well, including innovative mini-grant programs, loan funding, and matched savings accounts. In 2015, the project officially became New Ventures Maine and rededicated itself to serving all Maine adults, men and women alike.

Throughout its history, NVM has committed to providing access to the

organization's services, regardless of wealth or status, and has always prioritized serving the historically disadvantaged and those with limited resources. There are NVM offices and opportunities in all 16 counties in Maine, and they continued to expand access to their resources with the adoption of online courses.

I am not the first to stand up and applaud NVM's contributions to the State. In 1993, Ms. Nardone was inducted into the Maine Women's Hall of Fame for her work with the organization. In 2004, Representative Nelson was given the first annual Women Making a Difference Award, named in her honor, for her pioneering role in creating New Ventures Maine. These are some of the public accolades but there are countless Maine people who quietly praise the work of NVM because of the difference this remarkable organization has made in their lives. A tribute to their advocacy that has lifted so many out of uncertainty and into the light of strength and courage.

I am proud to recognize the great work of New Ventures Maine over the last 40 years. Their team of professionals, and the paths they have cleared, truly exemplify Maine's motto of "Dirigo," I Lead. •

RECOGNIZING POPULAR PATCH

• Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, as a member and former chairman of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, each month I recognize and celebrate the American entrepreneurial spirit by highlighting the success of a small business in my home State of Idaho. However, in honor of Veterans Day on November 11 this month, I will honor a veteran-owned small business for each of the 10 days the Senate is in legislative session. The personal sacrifices made by America's veterans have protected the very freedoms and values that give each of us and our children the ability to achieve the American dream. The skills veterans learn as members of the military are invaluable and undoubtedly contribute to Idaho's flourishing veteran business community. I am proud of the sacrifices veterans have made to protect our country and that they are choosing Idaho to call home when they complete their service in the military.

As your Senator from the great State of Idaho, it is my pleasure to recognize Popular Patch in Hayden as the Veteran-owned Idaho Small Business of the Day for November 6, 2019. Don McGrogan joined the U.S. Navy at age 18 and served for the next 26 years, bearing witness to the Cuban missile crisis, the Dominican Republic occupation, and the Vietnam war. Over the course of his Navy career, McGrogan collected more than 1,000 military patches as a hobby. Upon reentering civilian life, he drew inspiration from his experiences in the Navy and opened McGrogan's Patch Designs, a small

business dedicated to preserving America's history. Recently, McGrogan merged his business with his grandson's company, Popular Patch, where he works as a business partner with his son and grandson.

Popular Patch's goal is to become the world's foremost military patch business by replicating designs for each U.S. military patch ever made. The company has an inventory of more than 8,000 military patches, and its selection of Navy patches is one of the largest in the world. The company also creates custom patches using original designs, including patches for hunters, fishermen, bikers, and zombie fans. Its designs are popular among veterans, collectors, and actors, such as Hollywood actors in "Saving Private Ryan" and "Clear and Present Danger."

Congratulations to Dan McGrogan and all of the employees at Popular Patch for being selected as the Veteran-owned Idaho Small Business of the Day for November 6, 2019. You make our great State proud, and I look forward to your continued growth and success.●

#### REMEMBERING ARTURO COBO

● Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, today, I honor the life and legacy of Cuban-American, Arturo Cobo, who died on Sunday, October 27, 2019, at the Lower Keys Medical Center in Key West, FL.

Arturo, a beloved south Florida resident, founded the Transit Home in Key West, a sanctuary for Cuban refugees fleeing the country's tyrannical regime by boat and raft. Arturo fled Cuba in 1960 to escape Fidel Castro's communist revolution but returned to Cuba in 1961 to fight in Brigade 2506 during the Bay of Pigs. After being imprisoned, Arturo returned to the United States in 1962 and dedicated the rest of his life to supporting Cuban refugees and fighting for a democratic Cuba. The Transit Home not only provided a safe haven for Cuban refugees, but also provided hope for a new life for them in a free society. All who came to the Transit Home received food, clothing, and assistance to help rebuild their lives in America.

I pay tribute to Arturo's life with immense gratitude for his invaluable work during such difficult circumstances and for his dedication to the South Florida community.●

#### RECOGNIZING GLOBAL FREIGHT & COMMERCE LLC

● Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, as chairman of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, it is my privilege to honor small businesses that embody the entrepreneurial spirit of our American economy. I am proud to recognize Global Freight & Commerce of Jacksonville, FL—a veteran-owned small business—as we celebrate this National Veterans Small Business Week.

Following his retirement from the U.S. Army in 2014, founder Jesus Garay

started Global Freight & Commerce using the precision and skill gained from more than 20 years of military experience. During his years of Active Duty, Jesus specialized in strategic operations and completed six combat tours in Iraq and Bosnia. The Armed Forces of the United States provides individuals, such as Jesus, with leadership skills that are practically applicable to entrepreneurial pursuits. Because of Jesus's leadership experience, Global Freight & Commerce has become a successful, 100 percent owner-operated trucking, logistics, and transportation company. This business not only provides quality service but also makes a dedicated effort to extend dignified employment opportunities to our nation's veterans.

Through its website, Global Freight & Commerce assists semi-truck owner-operators with the buying and selling process of their vehicles, a feature that enables owner-operators to gain independence and grow a potential fleet of vehicles. Additionally, Global Freight & Commerce makes the safety of its drivers and those around them a priority. It follows national safety protocols in all operations to provide the best, and safest, service possible for its customers.

A member of the Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce, Global Freight & Commerce is also involved in the community through events such as job fairs and conferences. These community events provide leadership training to assist and develop the local workforce. Such efforts are valuable to the Jacksonville economy as they help to provide skilled and reliable employees.

Even after leaving the service, our Nation's veterans continue to serve our country. Making up nearly 10 percent of all businesses in the United States, veteran-owned small businesses ensure that our unique economy remains robust. Veteran-owned businesses like Global Freight & Commerce are examples of the talent and dedication of our Nation's veterans. This National Veterans Small Business Week, I would like to thank Jesus Garay for his service and congratulate him on the creation of a successful small business. I look forward to watching Global Freight & Commerce's continued growth and success.●

#### MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

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

H.R. 4842. An act to authorize the Secretary of State to provide funds for a United States pavilion at Expo 2020 Dubai, 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-3103. A communication from the Senior Advisor, Office of the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Inspector General, Department of Health and Human Services, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 30, 2019; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-3104. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel, General Law, Ethics, and Regulation, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Inspector General, Department of Treasury received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 31, 2019; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-3105. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Information Reporting for Certain Life Insurance Contract Transactions and Modifications to the Transfer for Valuable Consideration Rules" (RIN1545-BO49) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 30, 2019; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-3106. A communication from the Regulations Coordinator, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Medicare Program; End-Stage Renal Disease Prospective Payment System" (RIN0938-AT70) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 5, 2019; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-3107. A communication from the Regulations Coordinator, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Medicare and Medicaid Programs; CY 2020 Home Health Prospective Payment System Rate Update; Home Health Value-Based Purchasing Model; Home Health Quality Reporting Requirements; and Home Infusion Therapy Requirements" (RIN0938-AT68) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 5, 2019; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-3108. A communication from the Regulations Coordinator, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Medicare Program; Changes to Hospital Outpatient Prospective Payment and Ambulatory Surgical Center Payment Systems and Quality Reporting Programs" (RIN0938-AT74) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 5, 2019; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-3109. A communication from the Regulations Coordinator, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Medicare Program; CY 2020 Revisions to Payment Politics under the Physician Fee Schedule and Other Changes to Part B Payment Policies" (RIN0938-AT72) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 5, 2019; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-3110. A communication from the Assistant Legal Adviser for Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to the Case-Zablocki Act, 1 U.S.C. 112b, as amended, the report of the texts and background statements of international agreements, other than treaties (List 2019-0104 - 2019-0107); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-3111. A communication from the White House Liaison, Department of Education, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of

a vacancy in the position of Assistant Secretary, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Department of Education, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 30, 2019; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-3112. A communication from the White House Liaison, Department of Education, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a vacancy in the position of Commissioner, Rehabilitative Services Administrative, Department of Education, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 30, 2019; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-3113. A communication from the Regulations Coordinator, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Administrative Simplification: Rescinding the Adoption of the Standard Unique Health Plan Identifier and Other Entity Identifier" (RIN0938-AT42) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 29, 2019; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-3114. A communication from the Deputy Assistant General Counsel for Regulatory Affairs, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Benefits Payable in Terminated Single-Employer Plans; Interest Assumptions for Paying Benefits" (29 CFR Part 4022) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 29, 2019; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-3115. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Visas: Ineligibility Based on Public Charge Grounds" (RIN1400-AE87) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 25, 2019; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-3116. A communication from the Executive Director, National Mining Hall of Fame and Museum, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Museum's 2018 annual report and financial audit; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-3117. A communication from the Chief of the Regulatory Coordination Division, Citizenship and Immigration Services, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Adjustment to Premium Processing Fee" (RIN1615-ZB81) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 31, 2019; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-3118. A communication from the Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 (USERRA) Quarterly Report to Congress; Fourth Quarter of Fiscal Year 2019"; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

EC-3119. A communication from the Director, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Center for Innovation for Care and Payment" (RIN2900-AQ56) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 31, 2019; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

## REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. JOHNSON, from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Af-

fairs, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 1874. A bill to amend title 40, United States Code, to require the Administrator of General Services to procure the most life-cycle cost effective and energy efficiency lighting products and to issue guidance on the efficiency, effectiveness, and economy of those products, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 116-157).

## EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEE

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. JOHNSON for the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

\*Joshua A. Deahl, of the District of Columbia, to be an Associate Judge of the District of Columbia Court of Appeals for the term of fifteen years.

\*Deborah J. Israel, of the District of Columbia, to be an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia for the term of fifteen years.

\*Andrea L. Hertzfeld, of the District of Columbia, to be an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia for the term of fifteen years.

\*Robert Anthony Dixon, of the District of Columbia, to be United States Marshal for the Superior Court of the District of Columbia for the term of four years.

\*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. WYDEN:

S. 2787. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to require reporting for qualified opportunity funds, to make modifications to opportunity zones, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MANCHIN (for himself, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. JONES, Mr. KAINE, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. BROWN, Mr. CASEY, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. WARNER, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. SINEMA, and Mr. VAN HOLLEN):

S. 2788. 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; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. WICKER:

S. 2789. A bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 and title 17, United States Code, to extend expiring provisions relating to the retransmission of signals of television broadcast stations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. CASEY (for himself and Mrs. MURRAY):

S. 2790. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Act of 1986 to strengthen the earned income tax credit and expand eligibility for childless individuals, homeless youth, and youth formerly in foster care; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. RUBIO (for himself, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. ROMNEY, Mrs. GILLIBRAND,

Mr. SCOTT of Florida, Mr. HAWLEY, and Mr. BRAUN):

S. 2791. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to provide that sums in the Thrift Savings Fund may not be invested in securities that are listed on certain foreign exchanges, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. PAUL:

S. 2792. A bill to amend the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 to establish a discretionary spending limit for infrastructure spending; to the Committee on the Budget.

By Mr. KING:

S. 2793. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to require coverage without a deductible of certain primary care services by high deductible health plans; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. CRAPO (for himself and Mrs. SHAHEEN):

S. 2794. A bill to provide for the creation of the Missing Armed Forces Personnel Records Collection at the National Archives, to require the expeditious public transmission to the Archivist and public disclosure of Missing Armed Forces Personnel records, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Ms. MCSALLY (for herself and Ms. SINEMA):

S. 2795. A bill to designate the community-based outpatient clinic of the Department of Veterans Affairs in Gilbert, Arizona, as the "Staff Sergeant Alexander W. Conrad Veterans Affairs Health Care Clinic"; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. TILLIS (for himself and Mr. BURR):

S. 2796. A bill to expedite disaster assistance to States, insular areas, units of general local government, and Indian tribes under a community development block grant disaster recovery program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Ms. DUCKWORTH (for herself, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. COONS, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. WYDEN, and Mr. KAINE):

S. 2797. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to parole into the United States certain relatives of current and former members of the Armed Forces, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. PAUL:

S. 2798. A bill to ensure whistleblowers who are Government employees or contractors receive adequate protection; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Ms. MURKOWSKI:

S. 2799. A bill to require the Secretary of Energy and the Secretary of the Interior to establish a joint Nexus of Energy and Water Sustainability Office, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. CRUZ (for himself, Ms. SINEMA, Mr. WICKER, and Ms. CANTWELL):

S. 2800. A bill to authorize programs of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. REED (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, and Mr. VAN HOLLEN):

S. 2801. A bill to strengthen the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Ms. CANTWELL:

S. 2802. A bill to amend the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972 to reauthorize

and modify the John H. Prescott Marine Mammal Rescue and Response Grant Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

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

S. 2803. A bill to provide Federal housing assistance on behalf of youths who are aging out of foster care, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Ms. CORTEZ MASTO (for herself and Ms. ROSEN):

S. 2804. A bill to promote conservation, improve public land management, and provide for sensible development in Pershing County, Nevada, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. WICKER (for himself, Mr. CASIDY, and Ms. DUCKWORTH):

S. 2805. A bill to improve transit-oriented development financing, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. WYDEN (for himself and Mr. BOOZMAN):

S. 2806. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to expand authority for certain qualifying work-study activities for purposes of the educational assistance programs of the Department of Veterans Affairs to include outreach services provided through congressional offices, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

#### SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Ms. HIRONO (for herself, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. CASEY, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. BROWN, Mr. WYDEN, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. KING, Mr. SANDERS, Ms. BALDWIN, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. BOOKER, Ms. HARRIS, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, and Mr. MENENDEZ):

S. Res. 408. A resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that Members of Congress and their staffs, employees of the Executive Office of the President and executive branch agencies, and the President of the United States have a duty to protect the identities of whistleblowers and safeguard whistleblowers from retaliation; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

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

S. Res. 409. A resolution requesting information on Turkey's human rights practices in Syria pursuant to section 502B(c) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

#### ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 12

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 12, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to improve access to health care through expanded health savings accounts, and for other purposes.

S. 170

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 170, a bill to amend the

Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to limit the amount of certain qualified conservation contributions.

S. 206

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 206, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the female telephone operators of the Army Signal Corps, known as the "Hello Girls".

S. 430

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 430, a bill to extend the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000.

S. 460

At the request of Mr. WARNER, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) 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. 473

At the request of Ms. HASSAN, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. 473, a bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to include certain Federal positions within the definition of law enforcement officer for retirement purposes, and for other purposes.

S. 518

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 518, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for Medicare coverage of certain lymphedema compression treatment items as items of durable medical equipment.

S. 565

At the request of Ms. ERNST, the names of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) and the Senator from Florida (Mr. SCOTT) were added as cosponsors of S. 565, a bill to require the Director of the Office of Management and Budget to submit to Congress an annual report on projects that are over budget and behind schedule, and for other purposes.

S. 604

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 604, a bill to limit the authority of States to tax certain income of employees for employment duties performed in other States.

S. 642

At the request of Mr. ALEXANDER, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 642, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to Master Sergeant Rodrick "Roddie" Edmonds in recognition of his heroic actions during World War II.

S. 655

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Ms.

DUCKWORTH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 655, a bill to impose additional restrictions on tobacco flavors for use in e-cigarettes.

S. 670

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the names of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) and the Senator from Mississippi (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH) were added as cosponsors of S. 670, a bill to make daylight savings time permanent, and for other purposes.

S. 685

At the request of Mr. LEE, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 685, a bill to amend the Inspector General Act of 1978 relative to the powers of the Department of Justice Inspector General.

S. 743

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. 743, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the soldiers of the 5307th Composite Unit (Provisional), commonly known as "Merrill's Marauders", in recognition of their bravery and outstanding service in the jungles of Burma during World War II.

At the request of Mr. CRUZ, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 743, supra.

At the request of Mr. BROWN, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 743, supra.

S. 765

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 765, a bill to promote neutrality, simplicity, and fairness in the taxation of digital goods and digital services.

S. 851

At the request of Ms. BALDWIN, the names of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) and the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 851, a bill to direct the Secretary of Labor to issue an occupational safety and health standard that requires covered employers within the health care and social service industries to develop and implement a comprehensive workplace violence prevention plan, and for other purposes.

S. 901

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 901, a bill to amend the Older Americans Act of 1965 to support individuals with younger onset Alzheimer's disease.

S. 907

At the request of Mr. YOUNG, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 907, a bill to preserve open competition and Federal Government neutrality towards the labor relations of Federal Government contractors on Federal and federally funded construction projects, and for other purposes.

S. 966

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 966, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to modernize the physician self-referral prohibitions to promote care coordination in the merit-based incentive payment system and to facilitate physician practice participation in alternative payment models under the Medicare program, and for other purposes.

S. 1087

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1087, a bill to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to make changes with respect to water quality certification, and for other purposes.

S. 1267

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the names of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) were added as cosponsors of S. 1267, a bill to establish within the Smithsonian Institution the National Museum of the American Latino, and for other purposes.

S. 1390

At the request of Mr. SULLIVAN, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1390, a bill to require plans for military installations for full military funeral honors for veterans at such installations.

S. 1437

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the names of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. SMITH) and the Senator from Florida (Mr. SCOTT) were added as cosponsors of S. 1437, a bill to amend title XI of the Social Security Act to require that direct-to-consumer advertisements for prescription drugs and biological products include truthful and non-misleading pricing information.

S. 1757

At the request of Ms. ERNST, the names of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR) and the Senator from Nevada (Ms. ROSEN) 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. 1781

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1781, a bill to authorize appropriations for the Department of State for fiscal years 2020 through 2022 to provide assistance to El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras through bilateral compacts to increase protection of women and children in their homes and communities and reduce female homicides, domestic violence, and sexual assault.

S. 1903

At the request of Ms. SMITH, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mr.

GRASSLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1903, a bill to establish an inter-agency One Health Program, and for other purposes.

S. 2001

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. SMITH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2001, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to Willie O'Ree, in recognition of his extraordinary contributions and commitment to hockey, inclusion, and recreational opportunity.

S. 2027

At the request of Ms. DUCKWORTH, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2027, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to expand the scope of the Advisory Committee on Minority Veterans, and for other purposes.

S. 2085

At the request of Ms. ROSEN, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO) 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. 2216

At the request of Mr. PETERS, the names of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) were added as cosponsors of S. 2216, a bill to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to formally recognize caregivers of veterans, notify veterans and caregivers of clinical determinations relating to eligibility for caregiver programs, and temporarily extend benefits for veterans who are determined ineligible for the family caregiver program, and for other purposes.

S. 2321

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2321, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint a coin in commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the establishment of Negro Leagues baseball.

S. 2377

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, the names of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE), the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BRAUN) and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. KENNEDY) were added as cosponsors of S. 2377, a bill to apply the Medicaid asset verification program to all applicants for, and recipients of, medical assistance in all States and territories, and for other purposes.

S. 2427

At the request of Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, the names of the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) and the Senator from Arizona (Ms. MCSALLY) were added as cosponsors of S. 2427, a bill to amend title 31, United States Code, to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint and issue quarter dollars in

commemoration of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 2473

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2473, a bill to extend certain provisions of the Caribbean Basin Economic Recovery Act until September 30, 2030, and for other purposes.

S. 2483

At the request of Mr. WICKER, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2483, a bill to counter efforts by foreign governments to pursue, harass, or otherwise persecute individuals for political and other unlawful motives overseas, and for other purposes.

S. 2590

At the request of Mr. BRAUN, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2590, a bill to protect the dignity of fetal remains, and for other purposes.

S. 2625

At the request of Mr. WARNER, the name of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2625, a bill to authorize the admission of a limited number of Kurdish Syrians and other Syrian partners as special immigrants, and for other purposes.

S. 2662

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CRAMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2662, a bill to amend sections 111, 169, and 171 of the Clean Air Act to clarify when a physical change in, or change in the method of operation of, a stationary source constitutes a modification or construction, and for other purposes.

S. 2668

At the request of Ms. SINEMA, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Ms. MCSALLY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2668, a bill to establish a program for research, development, and demonstration of solar energy technologies, and for other purposes.

S. 2680

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2680, a bill to impose sanctions with respect to foreign support for Palestinian terrorism, and for other purposes.

S. 2690

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2690, a bill to reduce mass violence, strengthen mental health collaboration in communities, improve school safety, and for other purposes.

S. 2701

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the names of the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) and the Senator from Mississippi (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH)

were added as cosponsors of S. 2701, a bill to amend the Controlled Substances Act to list fentanyl-related substances as schedule I controlled substances.

S. 2742

At the request of Mr. MCCONNELL, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. LANKFORD) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2742, a bill to require the Director of the Bureau of Prisons to be appointed by and with the advice and consent of the Senate.

S. 2745

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2745, a bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit discrimination by abortion against an unborn child on the basis of Down syndrome.

S. 2770

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2770, a bill to direct the Attorney General to make grants to States that have in place a law providing for the rights of sexual assault survivors, and for other purposes.

S. CON. RES. 5

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) was added as a cosponsor of S. Con. Res. 5, a concurrent resolution supporting the Local Radio Freedom Act.

S. RES. 98

At the request of Mrs. BLACKBURN, the names of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) and the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 98, a resolution establishing the Congressional Gold Star Family Fellowship Program for the placement in offices of Senators of children, spouses, and siblings of members of the Armed Forces who are hostile casualties or who have died from a training-related injury.

S. RES. 371

At the request of Mr. COONS, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 371, a resolution reaffirming the support of the United States for the people of the Republic of South Sudan and calling on all parties to uphold their commitments to peace and dialogue as outlined in the 2018 revitalized peace agreement.

S. RES. 395

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the names of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) and the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 395, a resolution recognizing the 40th anniversary of the Iran Hostage Crisis, and for other purposes.

#### STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. REED (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, and Mr. VAN HOLLEN):

S. 2801. A bill to strengthen the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, along with Senator COLLINS, I am reintroducing legislation that would eliminate the sunset date for the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (the Council) so that this agency can further build upon its success in helping to prevent and end homelessness.

The Council was launched under the Reagan Administration as part of the landmark McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act of 1987. Since then, it has worked across the Federal government and private sector to coordinate homeless assistance nationally. In 2009, the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing, or HEARTH Act, which I introduced along with Senator COLLINS and others, expanded the Council's role to work with stakeholders to develop a national strategic plan to end homelessness, which has guided its work to develop effective strategies to prevent and end homelessness.

Since 2010 when this national strategic plan was first developed, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) reports that overall homelessness has decreased by 13%, chronic homelessness by 16%, and family homelessness by 25%. In addition, we have seen veterans' homelessness drop by 49%. This progress is not only a result of the more than \$600 million federal investment in housing and supportive services through programs like HUD-VASH, but is also because of the direction the Council provides to the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and HUD, as well as public housing agencies administering assistance at the local level. Specifically, the Council helps diverse partners align their resources, efforts, goals, and measures of success for serving homeless veterans. According to the Council, it "has led a process to confirm that 78 communities and 3 entire states have effectively ended Veteran homelessness. 35 states now have at least one community that has ended Veteran homelessness. Some recent confirmations include: Abilene, Texas, Lexington, Kentucky, Little Rock, Arkansas, Poplar Bluff, Missouri, and the 71 counties in Mississippi that make up the Mississippi Balance of State Continuum of Care." In order to further these efforts and also tackle veterans' homelessness on the front end, the Senate's fiscal year 2020 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies (THUD) Appropriations bill includes language I authored directing the Council to improve the coordination between the Department of Defense, the VA, the Department of Labor, and HUD in order to prevent servicemembers from being discharged into homelessness.

In addition to addressing homelessness in our communities, the Council has also helped to save money. We

know that people experiencing homelessness are more likely to use expensive health care services and spend more time in incarceration—which are extremely costly to taxpayers, States, and local governments. According to the National Alliance to End Homelessness, "based on 22 different studies from across the nation providing permanent supportive housing to chronically homeless people creates net savings of \$4,800 per person per year, through reduced spending on jails, hospitals, shelters, and other emergency services."

The Council has extended these estimated savings by identifying and tailoring cost-effective solutions that reduce the use of health care services, as well as recidivism, for individuals experiencing chronic homelessness. In fiscal year 2019 alone, the Council's modest \$3.6 million budget catalyzed more than \$6 billion in combined Federal resources that aim to address homelessness. The Council develops national strategies that inform the work and improve the cost-effectiveness of programs administered by 19 Federal agencies, and as a result, communities and States are able to utilize housing, health, education, and labor funding more strategically and effectively.

In our current budgetary environment we must have a wise and creative arm that helps our communities maximize resources and opportunities where possible, ensuring we are actually addressing homelessness, and not contributing to it. The Council is proof that the government can work and save money in the process, and our bipartisan legislation ensures that the Council's doors remain open until there truly is an end to homelessness nationwide.

I thank the National Alliance to End Homelessness, the Rhode Island Coalition for the Homeless, HousingWorksRI, Council of Large Public Housing Authorities, A Way Home America, Community Solutions International, the National Low Income Housing Coalition, the National Coalition for Homeless Veterans, National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty, Funders Together to End Homelessness, True Colors United, the Children's Defense Fund, the National Housing Trust, the National Health Care for the Homeless Council, the Local Initiatives Support Corporation, National Alliance on Mental Illness, Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities Housing Task Force, the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials, the Public Housing Authorities Directors Association, LeadingAge, Heartland Alliance, National Housing Conference, the National AIDS Housing Coalition, Covenant House International, the Forum for Youth Investment, the Housing Assistance Council, Volunteers of America, the Corporation for Supportive Housing, the Technical Assistance Collaborative, and the National Coalition for the Homeless for their support. I

urge our colleagues to join Senator COLLINS and me in supporting this legislation.

### SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

#### SENATE RESOLUTION 408—EX-PRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE THAT MEMBERS OF CONGRESS AND THEIR STAFFS, EMPLOYEES OF THE EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT AND EXECUTIVE BRANCH AGENCIES, AND THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES HAVE A DUTY TO PROTECT THE IDENTITIES OF WHISTLEBLOWERS AND SAFE-GUARD WHISTLEBLOWERS FROM RETALIATION

Ms. HIRONO (for herself, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. CASEY, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. BROWN, Mr. WYDEN, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. KING, Mr. SANDERS, Ms. BALDWIN, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. BOOKER, Ms. HARRIS, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, and Mr. MENENDEZ) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs:

S. RES. 408

Whereas the United States has historically acknowledged a duty of individuals who serve the United States to report misconduct, fraud, and violations of law, as demonstrated by the first whistleblower legislation in the United States, which was passed unanimously by the Continental Congress on July 30, 1778 and read, “Resolved, That it is the duty of all persons in the service of the United States, as well as all other the inhabitants thereof, to give the earliest information to Congress or other proper authority of any misconduct, frauds or misdemeanors committed by any officers or persons in the service of these states, which may come to their knowledge” (legislation of July 30, 1778, reprinted in *Journals of the Continental Congress, 1774-1789*, ed. Worthington C. Ford et al. (Washington, DC, 1904-37), 11:732);

Whereas the duty to report misconduct, fraud, and violations of law remains, irrespective of the motives of a whistleblower, and, therefore, impugning the motives of whistleblowers has no relevance to the public interest in exposing and correcting improper or illegal conduct;

Whereas, for each of the past 7 years, including most recently in Senate Resolution 194, 116th Congress, agreed to July 23, 2019, the Senate has recognized that “whistleblowers risk their careers, jobs, and reputations by reporting waste, fraud, and abuse to the proper authorities” and “serve the public interest by ensuring that the United States remains an ethical and safe place”;

Whereas a whistleblower lawfully filed a complaint on August 12, 2019, with the Inspector General of the Intelligence Community, who determined that the complaint appeared “credible” and involved a matter of “urgent concern” in accordance with section 17(d)(5) of the Central Intelligence Agency Act of 1949 (50 U.S.C. 3517(d)(5)) (commonly known as the “Intelligence Community Whistleblower Protection Act of 1998”); and

Whereas 90 former national security officials who served in Democratic and Republican administrations wrote an open letter to the people of the United States stating,

“Whatever one’s view of the matters discussed in the whistleblower’s complaint, all Americans should be united in demanding that all branches of our government and all outlets of our media protect this whistleblower and his or her identity. Simply put, he or she has done what our law demands; now he or she deserves our protection.”; Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) appreciates employees and contractors, working on behalf of the taxpayers of the United States, who “blow the whistle” to the appropriate authorities by honest and good faith reporting of misconduct, fraud, misdemeanors, and other crimes;

(2) acknowledges the contributions of whistleblowers to combat abuse, fraud, and violations of laws and regulations of the United States that have helped to safeguard the national security of the United States, democracy, and the rule of law in the United States; and

(3) recognizes that the duty affirmed by Congress since the founding of the United States to report misconduct, fraud, and violations of law calls for a corresponding duty of Members of Congress and their staff, employees of the Executive Office of the President and executive branch agencies, and the President of the United States to—

(A) protect the identities of whistleblowers who report abuse, fraud, and violations of laws and regulations of the United States; and

(B) safeguard whistleblowers from retaliation.

#### SENATE RESOLUTION 409—REQUESTING INFORMATION ON TURKEY’S HUMAN RIGHTS PRACTICES IN SYRIA PURSUANT TO SECTION 502B(C) OF THE FOREIGN ASSISTANCE ACT OF 1961

Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself and Mr. MURPHY) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 409

*Resolved*,

#### SECTION 1. REQUEST FOR INFORMATION ON TURKEY’S HUMAN RIGHTS PRACTICES IN SYRIA.

(a) STATEMENT REQUIRED.—Not later than 30 days after the date of the adoption of this resolution, the Secretary of State shall, pursuant to section 502B(c) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2304(c)), transmit to the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives a statement, prepared with the assistance of the Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor and the Office of the Legal Adviser, with respect to Turkey.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The statement submitted under subsection (a) shall include the following elements:

(1) All available credible information concerning alleged violations of internationally recognized human rights by the Government of Turkey, its armed forces, and associated groups and persons, including the denial of the right to life in the context of their activities in Syria caused by indiscriminate or disproportionate operations, the infliction of civilian casualties, and the displacement of civilian populations;

(2) A description of the steps the United States Government has taken—

(A) to promote respect for and observance of human rights as part of Turkey’s activities in Syria and discourage any practices

that are inimical to internationally recognized human rights; and

(B) to publicly or privately call attention to, and disassociate the United States and any security assistance provided for Turkey from, such practices.

(3) An assessment, notwithstanding any such practices, whether extraordinary circumstances exist that necessitate a continuation of security assistance for Turkey and, if so, a description of the circumstances and the extent to which the assistance should be continued (subject to such conditions as Congress may impose under section 502B of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2304)).

(4) Other information, including—

(A) an assessment from the Secretary of State of the likelihood that United States security assistance, as defined in section 502B(d) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2304(d)), has been and will be used in Syria;

(B) a description of the extent to which the activities of the Government of Turkey, its armed forces, and associated groups or persons have—

(i) caused, assisted, or resulted in the release of ISIS fighters, supporters, and other extremists from detention; or

(ii) promoted conditions that support, assist or have resulted or could result in a strengthening of the military capabilities of such fighters and extremists within Syria, including the practical control over territory;

(C) a description of the extent to which such strengthening of such capabilities of ISIS and other extremist groups and persons could increase the threat to the United States, United States citizens, and United States interests, both in the United States and abroad;

(D) a description of efforts by the Secretary of State and other United States officials to persuade the Government of Turkey to cease its activities in Syria and commitments to support United States and multilateral efforts to comprehensively defeat ISIS within Syria;

(E) a determination whether Turkey’s purchase and acceptance of delivery of the S-400 missile system from the Russian Federation constitutes a “significant transaction” pursuant to section 231 of the Countering America’s Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (22 U.S.C. 9525);

(F) a description of any actions by the Government of Turkey to forcibly repatriate Syrian refugees; and

(G) an assessment of whether the Government of Turkey is blocking humanitarian aid from reaching communities in need of assistance in northeast Syria.

#### AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I have 7 requests for committees to meet during today’s session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority leaders.

Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today’s session of the Senate:

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

The Committee on Environment and Public Works is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, November 06, 2019, at 9 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND  
GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

The Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, November 6, 2019, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing on the following nominations: Joshua A. Deahl, to be an Associate Judge of the District of Columbia Court of Appeals, Deborah J. Israel, and Andrea L. Hertzfeld, both to be an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia, and Robert Anthony Dixon, to be United States Marshal for the Superior Court of the District of Columbia, Department of Justice.

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

The Committee on Indian Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, November 6, 2019, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

The Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, November 6, 2019, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

The Committee on Veterans' Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, November 6, 2019, at 9:30 a.m., to conduct a closed briefing.

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

The Special Committee on Aging is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, November 6, 2019, at 9:30 a.m., to conduct a closed briefing.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON ENERGY

The Subcommittee on Energy of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, November 6, 2019, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Lucia Simonelli, an AAAS fellow in my office, be granted floor privileges for the remainder of this Congress.

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

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Jesse Oney, an intern in my office, be granted floor privileges for the remainder of the Congress.

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

NATIONAL HEALTH LITERACY  
MONTH

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Judiciary Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 396 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior legislative clerk read the resolution, as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 396) designating October 2019 as "National Health Literacy Month".

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to proceeding to the measure?

There being no objection, the committee was discharged, and the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I further ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 396) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of October 31, 2019, under "Submitted Resolutions.")

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY,  
NOVEMBER 7, 2019

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m., Thursday, November 7; further, that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, morning business be closed, and the Senate proceed to executive session and resume consideration of the Rudofsky nomination under the previous order.

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

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M.  
TOMORROW

Mr. SULLIVAN. 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 6:34 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, November 7, 2019, at 10 a.m.

CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by the Senate November 6, 2019:

THE JUDICIARY

DANIELLE J. HUNSAKER, OF OREGON, TO BE UNITED STATES CIRCUIT JUDGE FOR THE NINTH CIRCUIT.

## EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

### SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Thursday, November 7, 2019 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

### MEETINGS SCHEDULED

NOVEMBER 13

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

To hold hearings to examine unprecedented migration at the United States southern border, focusing on the year in review.

SD-342

10 a.m.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

Business meeting to consider S. 10, to require the Inter-Agency Task Force on Harmful Algal Blooms and Hypoxia to develop a plan for reducing, mitigating, and controlling harmful algal blooms and hypoxia in South Florida, S. 481, to encourage States to require the installation of residential carbon monoxide detectors in homes, S. 999, to provide for Federal coordination of activities supporting sustainable chemistry, S. 1069, to require the Secretary of Commerce, acting through the Administrator of the National Oceanic and At-

mospheric Administration, to establish a constituent-driven program to provide a digital information platform capable of efficiently integrating coastal data with decision-support tools, training, and best practices and to support collection of priority coastal geospatial data to inform and improve local, State, regional, and Federal capacities to manage the coastal region, S. 1640, to require compliant flame mitigation devices to be used on portable fuel containers for flammable liquid fuels, S. 1982, to improve efforts to combat marine debris, S. 2330, to amend the Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act to provide for congressional oversight of the board of directors of the United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee and to protect amateur athletes from emotional, physical, and sexual abuse, S. 2346, to improve the Fishery Resource Disaster Relief program of the National Marine Fisheries Service, S. 2429, to reauthorize the Coral Reef Conservation Act of 2000 and to establish the United States Coral Reef Task Force, S. 2453, to assist in the conservation of the North Atlantic right whale by supporting and providing financial resources for North Atlantic right whale conservation programs and projects of persons with expertise required for the conservation of North Atlantic right whales, S. 2472, to redesignate the NASA John H. Glenn Research Center at Plum Brook Station, Ohio, as the NASA John H. Glenn Research Center at the Neil A. Armstrong Test Facility, S. 2525, to require the Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology to conduct a study of personal protective equipment worn by firefighters to determine the prevalence and concentration of per-and polyfluoroalkyl substances, S. 2535, to require the Secretary of Commerce to conduct an assessment and analysis relating to the decline in the business formation rate in the United States, S. 2597, to require the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to make certain operational models available to the public, S. 2693, to improve oversight by the Federal Communications Commission of the wireless and broadcast emergency alert systems, S. 2775, to improve the cyber workforce of the

United States, S. 2782, to improve provisions of law relating to sexual harassment and assault prevention at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, S. 2789, to amend the Communications Act of 1934 and title 17, United States Code, to extend expiring provisions relating to the retransmission of signals of television broadcast stations, S. 2800, to authorize programs of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, S. 2805, to improve transit-oriented development financing, H.R. 3153, to direct the Director of the National Science Foundation to support research on opioid addiction, an original bill entitled, "Marine Mammal Research and Response Act of 2019", the nominations of Ian Paul Steff, of Indiana, to be Assistant Secretary of Commerce and Director General of the United States and Foreign Commercial Service, Michael Graham, of Kansas, to be a Member of the National Transportation Safety Board for a term expiring December 31, 2020, and to be a Member of the National Transportation Safety Board for a term expiring December 31, 2025, Carl Whitney Bentzel, of Maryland, to be a Federal Maritime Commissioner, Theodore Rokita, of Indiana, to be a Director of the Amtrak Board of Directors, and routine lists in the Coast Guard.

SH-216

Committee on Environment and Public Works

To hold hearings to examine preserving and expanding clean, reliable nuclear power, focusing on United States commercial nuclear reactor performance trends and safety initiatives.

SD-406

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

To hold hearings to examine the response to lung illnesses and rising youth electronic cigarette use.

SD-430

Committee on the Judiciary

To hold hearings to examine pending nominations.

SD-226

11 a.m.

Joint Economic Committee

To hold hearings to examine the economic outlook.

SH-216

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

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

# Daily Digest

## Senate

### Chamber Action

*Routine Proceedings, pages S6411–S6452*

**Measures Introduced:** Twenty bills and two resolutions were introduced, as follows: S. 2787–2806, and S. Res. 408–409. **Pages S6447–48**

#### Measures Reported:

S. 1874, to amend title 40, United States Code, to require the Administrator of General Services to procure the most life-cycle cost effective and energy efficiency lighting products and to issue guidance on the efficiency, effectiveness, and economy of those products, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute. (S. Rept. No. 116–157) **Page S6447**

#### Measures Passed:

**National Health Literacy Month:** Committee on the Judiciary was discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 396, designating October 2019 as “National Health Literacy Month”, and the resolution was then agreed to. **Page S6452**

**Rudofsky Nomination—Agreement:** Senate resumed consideration of the nomination of Lee Philip Rudofsky, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Arkansas. **Pages S6413–21**

During consideration of this nomination today, Senate also took the following action:

By 51 yeas to 41 nays (Vote No. EX. 346), Senate agreed to the motion to close further debate on the nomination. **Pages S6420–21**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing for further consideration of the nomination, post-cloture, at approximately 10 a.m., on Thursday, November 7, 2019, under the previous order of Tuesday, November 5, 2019. **Page S6452**

**Wilson Nomination—Cloture:** Senate resumed consideration of the nomination of Jennifer Philpott Wilson, to be United States District Judge for the Middle District of Pennsylvania. **Pages S6421–34**

During consideration of this nomination today, Senate also took the following action:

By 89 yeas to 3 nays (Vote No. EX. 347), Senate agreed to the motion to close further debate on the nomination. **Page S6421**

**Nardini Nomination—Cloture:** Senate resumed consideration of the nomination of William Joseph Nardini, of Connecticut, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Second Circuit. **Pages S6435–43**

During consideration of this nomination today, Senate also took the following action:

By 87 yeas to 3 nays (Vote No. EX. 349), Senate agreed to the motion to close further debate on the nomination. **Page S6435**

**Nomination Confirmed:** Senate confirmed the following nomination:

By 73 yeas to 17 nays (Vote No. EX. 348), Danielle J. Hunsaker, of Oregon, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Ninth Circuit. **Pages S6434–35**

#### Measures Placed on the Calendar:

**Pages S6412–13, S6446**

**Executive Communications:** **Pages S6446–47**

**Executive Reports of Committees:** **Page S6447**

**Additional Cosponsors:** **Pages S6448–50**

**Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions:** **Pages S6450–51**

**Additional Statements:** **Pages S6445–46**

**Authorities for Committees to Meet:** **Pages S6451–52**

**Privileges of the Floor:** **Page S6452**

**Record Votes:** Four record votes were taken today. (Total—349) **Pages S6420–21, S6435**

**Adjournment:** Senate convened at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 6:34 p.m., until 10 a.m. on Thursday, November 7, 2019. (For Senate’s program, see the remarks of the Acting Majority Leader in today’s Record on page S6452.)

### Committee Meetings

*(Committees not listed did not meet)*

#### BUSINESS MEETING

**Committee on the Budget:** Committee ordered favorably reported S. 2765, to improve Federal fiscal controls and the congressional budget process, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute.

**ENERGY LEGISLATION**

*Committee on Energy and Natural Resources:* Subcommittee on Energy concluded a hearing to examine S. 876, to amend the Energy Policy Act of 2005 to require the Secretary of Energy to establish a program to prepare veterans for careers in the energy industry, including the solar, wind, cybersecurity, and other low-carbon emissions sectors or zero-emissions sectors of the energy industry, S. 1890, to provide for grants for energy efficiency improvements and renewable energy improvements at public school facilities, S. 2425, to amend the Energy Policy and Conservation Act to establish the CHP Technical Assistance Partnership Program, S. 2508, to require the Secretary of Energy to establish a council to conduct a survey and analysis of the employment figures and demographics in the energy, energy efficiency, and motor vehicle sectors of the United States, S. 2556, to amend the Federal Power Act to provide energy cybersecurity investment incentives, to establish a grant and technical assistance program for cybersecurity investments, S. 2657, to support innovation in advanced geothermal research and development, S. 2660, to establish a grant program for wind energy research, development, and demonstration, S. 2668, to establish a program for research, development, and demonstration of solar energy technologies, S. 2688, to amend the Energy Policy Act of 2005 to establish an Office of Technology Transitions, S. 2702, to require the Secretary of Energy to establish an integrated energy systems research, development, and demonstration, and S. 2714, to amend the America COMPETES Act to reauthorize the ARPA-E program, after receiving testimony from Senator Smith; and Daniel Simmons, Assistant Secretary of Energy, Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy.

**GROWING AMERICAN INNOVATION NOW ACT**

*Committee on Environment and Public Works:* Committee concluded a hearing to examine S. 2662, to amend sections 111, 169, and 171 of the Clean Air Act to clarify when a physical change in, or change in the method of operation of, a stationary source constitutes a modification or construction, after receiving testimony from Sean Alteri, Kentucky Department for Environmental Protection, Frankfort; and Jeffrey R. Holmstead, Bracewell LLC, and John D. Walke, Natural Resources Defense Council, both of Washington, D.C.

**BUSINESS MEETING**

*Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs:* Committee ordered favorably reported the following business items:

S. 2779, to establish the Federal Clearinghouse on School Safety Best Practices, with amendments;

S. 2162, to require the Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection to annually hire at least 600 new Border Patrol agents, to report quarterly to Congress on the status of the Border Patrol workforce, and to conduct a comprehensive staffing analysis, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 2769, to eliminate or modify certain Federal agency reporting requirements, with an amendment;

S. 1363, to authorize an AI Center of Excellence within the General Services Administration, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 2618, to strengthen employee cost savings suggestions programs within the Federal Government;

S. 2560, to amend the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006, to require the budget justifications and appropriation requests of agencies be made publicly available;

S. 2353, to direct the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to develop guidance for firefighters and other emergency response personnel on best practices to protect them from exposure to PFAS and to limit and prevent the release of PFAS into the environment;

S. 2749, to provide requirements for the .gov domain, with amendments;

S. 2513, to provide for joint reports by relevant Federal agencies to Congress regarding incidents of terrorism, with an amendment;

S. 565, to require the Director of the Office of Management and Budget to submit to Congress an annual report on projects that are over budget and behind schedule, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 2750, to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to authorize the Operation Stonegarden grant program, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

H.R. 1589, to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to establish chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear intelligence and information sharing functions of the Office of Intelligence and Analysis of the Department of Homeland Security and to require dissemination of information analyzed by the Department to entities with responsibilities relating to homeland security, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

H.R. 2066, to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to establish the Intelligence Rotational Assignment Program in the Department of Homeland Security, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

H.R. 495, to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to require an annual report on the Office for

State and Local Law Enforcement, with an amendment;

H.R. 135, to amend the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 to strengthen Federal antidiscrimination laws enforced by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and expand accountability within the Federal Government, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 2712, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 430 South Knowles Avenue in New Richmond, Wisconsin, as the “Captain Robert C. Harmon and Private John R. Peirson Post Office Building”;

H.R. 887, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 877 East 1200 South in Orem, Utah, as the “Jerry C. Washburn Post Office Building”;

H.R. 1252, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 6531 Van Nuys Boulevard in Van Nuys, California, as the “Marilyn Monroe Post Office”;

H.R. 1253, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 13507 Van Nuys Boulevard in Pacoima, California, as the “Ritchie Valens Post Office Building”;

H.R. 1526, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 200 Israel Road Southeast in Tumwater, Washington, as the “Eva G. Hewitt Post Office”;

H.R. 1844, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 66 Grove Court in Elgin, Illinois, as the “Corporal Alex Martinez Memorial Post Office Building”;

H.R. 1972, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1100 West Kent Avenue in Missoula, Montana, as the “Jeannette Rankin Post Office Building”;

H.R. 2151, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 7722 South Main Street in Pine Plains, New York, as the “Senior Chief Petty Officer Shannon M. Kent Post Office”;

H.R. 2325, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 100 Calle Alondra in San Juan, Puerto Rico, as the “65th Infantry Regiment Post Office Building”;

H.R. 3144, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 8520 Michigan Avenue in Whittier, California, as the “Jose Ramos Post Office Building”;

H.R. 3314, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1750 McCulloch Boulevard North in Lake Havasu City, Arizona, as the “Lake Havasu City Combat Veterans Memorial Post Office Building”; and

The nominations of Joshua A. Deahl, to be an Associate Judge of the District of Columbia Court of Appeals, Deborah J. Israel, and Andrea L. Hertzfeld, both to be an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia, and Robert Anthony Dixon, to be United States Marshal for the Superior Court of the District of Columbia, Department of Justice.

## BUSINESS MEETING

*Committee on Indian Affairs:* Committee ordered favorably reported H.R. 317, to reaffirm the action of the Secretary of the Interior to take land into trust for the benefit of the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Mission Indians, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute.

## 477 PROGRAM OVERSIGHT

*Committee on Indian Affairs:* Committee concluded an oversight hearing to examine the 477 program, focusing on reducing red tape while promoting employment and training opportunities in Indian country, after receiving testimony from Spike Bighorn, Acting Deputy Bureau Director, Office of Indian Services, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Department of the Interior; Chuck Hoskin Jr., Cherokee Nation, Tahlequah, Oklahoma; Ralph Andersen, Bristol Bay Native Association, Dillingham, Alaska; and Margaret Zientek, 477 Tribal Work Group, Shawnee, Oklahoma.

## USA FREEDOM ACT

*Committee on the Judiciary:* Committee concluded a hearing to examine reauthorizing the USA FREEDOM Act of 2015, after receiving testimony from J. Bradford Wiegmann, Deputy Assistant Attorney General, and Michael J. Orlando, Deputy Assistant Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation, both of the Department of Justice; Susan Morgan, National Security Agency; Adam I. Klein, Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board, and Elizabeth Goitein, New York University School of Law Brennan Center for Justice, both of Washington, D.C.; and Jamil N. Jaffer, George Mason University Antonin Scalia Law School, Arlington, Virginia.

## NOMINATIONS

*Committee on Veterans' Affairs:* Committee concluded a hearing to examine the nominations of Grant C. Jaquith, of New York, and Scott J. Laurer, of Virginia, both to be a Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims, after the nominees testified and answered questions in their own behalf.

**VETERAN SCAMS**

*Special Committee on Aging:* Committee concluded a hearing to examine veteran scams, focusing on protecting those who protected us, after receiving testimony from Carroll Harris, Acting Inspector in

Charge, Communications, Governance and Strategy Group, Postal Inspection Service; W. Dewayne Richardson, District Attorney, Fourth Judicial District of Mississippi, Indianola; Ben Wells, Vet2Vet Maine, Portland; and LaVerne Foreman, Herndon, Pennsylvania.

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## House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. The House is scheduled to meet in Pro Forma session at 1 p.m. on Friday, November 8, 2019.

**Committee Meetings**

No hearings were held.

**Joint Meetings****PUTIN'S SHADOW WARRIORS**

*Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe:* Commission received a briefing on Putin's shadow warriors, focusing on mercenaries, security contracting, and the way ahead from Deborah Avant, University of Denver Josef Korbel School of International Studies, Denver, Colorado; Dara Massicot, RAND Corporation, Arlington, Virginia; and Colonel Christopher T. Mayer (USA, Ret.), former Department of Defense Director of Armed Contingency Contractor Policies and Programs, Washington, D.C.

*Committee on Energy and Natural Resources:* to hold an oversight hearing to examine federal revenues derived from energy development on Federal and Indian lands as well as Federal offshore areas and programs that share those revenues with state, local, and tribal governments, including S. 2418, to amend the Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act of 2006 to modify a definition and the disposition and authorized uses of qualified outer Continental Shelf revenues under that Act and to exempt State and county payments under that Act from sequestration, to provide for the distribution of certain outer Continental Shelf revenues to the State of Alaska, and S. 2666, to promote the development of renewable energy on public land, 10 a.m., SD-366.

*Committee on Foreign Relations:* to receive a closed briefing on Afghanistan, focusing on the way ahead, 11 a.m., SVC-217.

*Committee on the Judiciary:* business meeting to consider the nominations of Halil Suleyman Ozerden, of Mississippi, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Fifth Circuit, Steven J. Menashi, of New York, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Second Circuit, Barbara Lagoa and Robert J. Luck, both of Florida, both to be a United States Circuit Judge for the Eleventh Circuit, Sylvia Carreno-Coll, to be United States District Judge for the District of Puerto Rico, John M. Gallagher, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, and Sherri A. Lydon, to be United States District Judge for the District of South Carolina, 10 a.m., SD-226.

*Committee on Rules and Administration:* to hold an oversight hearing to examine Library of Congress modernization, 10 a.m., SR-301.

*Select Committee on Intelligence:* to receive a closed briefing on certain intelligence matters, 2 p.m., SH-219.

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### COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 2019

*(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)*

**Senate**

*Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry:* to hold hearings to examine implementation of the 2018 Farm Bill, focusing on rural development and energy programs, 9:30 a.m., SR-328A.

*Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs:* to hold hearings to examine bipartisan bills to promote affordable housing access and safety, 10 a.m., SD-538.

**House**

No hearings are scheduled.

*Next Meeting of the SENATE*

10 a.m., Thursday, November 7

## Senate Chamber

**Program for Thursday:** Senate will continue consideration of the nomination of Lee Philip Rudofsky, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Arkansas, post-cloture. Senate will vote on confirmation of the nominations of Lee Philip Rudofsky, and Jennifer Philpott Wilson, to be United States District Judge for the Middle District of Pennsylvania, at 11:45 a.m. Senate will vote on confirmation of the nomination of William Joseph Nardini, of Connecticut, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Second Circuit, at 1:45 p.m.

*Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES*

1 p.m., Friday, November 8

## House Chamber

**Program for Friday:** House will meet in Pro Forma session at 1 p.m.



## Congressional Record

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